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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

48° VICTORIÆ, 1884-5.

VOL. CCXCIV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE EIGHTEENTH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1884,

TO

THE THIRD DAY OF MARCH, 1885.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1884-5.

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Income Tax Bill [Bill 38]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 283

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read the third time, and *passed*.

MOTION.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—MOTION—

Moved, "That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next,"—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*:)—Observations, Lord Randolph Churchill :—Short debate thereon 284

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—EXECUTION OF JOSEPH POOLE—Observations, Mr. O'Brien :—Debate thereon 302

Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 57, Noes 19; Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 21.) [12.15.]

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Income Tax Bill—Read 2ª (according to order); Committee *negatived*; Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with*; Bill read 3ª, and *passed*. [4.30.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27.

Their Lordships met for the despatch of Judicial Business only. [4.0.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28.

Their Lordships met for the despatch of Judicial Business only. [4.0.]

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COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—CONVENT NATIONAL SCHOOLS—GRANTS IN AID—Question, Lord FitzGerald; Answer, Lord Carlingford 338

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MOTIONS.

Orders of the Day—

Moved, "That the Orders of the Day be postponed untill after the Notice of Motion for leave to bring in a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats,"—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—

Moved, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats at Parliamentary Elections; and for other purposes relative thereto,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) .. 372

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 40.]

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Suspension of Evictions (Scotland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Dick-Peddie, Mr. Henderson, Sir George Campbell, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Bryce*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 41] 394

Industrial and Reformatory Schools (Ireland) Loans Bill—*Ordered* (*Colonel Colthurst, Mr. William Shaw, Mr. Patrick Martin, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Moore*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 42] 394

Peasant Proprietary and Acquisition of Land by Occupiers Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. George Palmer, Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 43] 394
[6.45.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—MOTION FOR A PAPER—

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Tabular Statement of the ships laid down by the Board of Admiralty since 1880, and Diagram illustrating the armoured and unarmoured tonnage built in Her Majesty's dockyards and by contract; and the total naval expenditure from 1865-66 to 1883-84 inclusive,"—(*The Earl of Northbrook*) 395

After debate, Motion *agreed to.* [8.0.]

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MOTIONS.

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Ordered, That the Notice of Motion for a Return of ships in Her Majesty's Navy have precedence of the other Notices of Motions,—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Navy—State of the Navy—Motion for a Return—

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, a Return respecting the Ships built and building for Her Majesty's Navy during the last four years,"—(*Sir Thomas Brassey*) 448

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Metropolitan Board of Works (Further Powers) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Bryce*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 44] 555

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill—

Order for Third Reading read 555

After short debate, Bill read the third time, and *passed*, with a New Title. [1.15.]

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3.

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and to be read 2^a *To-morrow*,—(*The Earl Granville.*) [1.15.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3.

QUESTIONS.

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—Questions, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Dr. Lyons; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 556

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) Bill [Bill 19]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. A. R. D. Elliot*) 558

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

Yorkshire Registries Act (1884) Amendment Bill—

Motion for Leave (*The Judge Advocate General*) 568

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill to amend the forty-third section of "The Yorkshire Registries Act, 1884," *ordered* (*Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Stuart Wortley*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 47.]

Bill read the second time, and *committed*:—After further short debate, Bill *considered* in Committee, and *reported* without Amendment; read the third time, and *passed*.

Metropolis Management Elections (Ballot) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Eugene Collins, Sir Thomas Chambers, Mr. Daniel Grant*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 46] .. 571

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Causton, Sir Thomas Chambers, Mr. Eugene Collins, Mr. Alderman Cotton, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Puleston, Mr. Jesse Collings*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 48] 571

[2.0.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4.

Representation of the People Bill (No. 5)—

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee,"—(*The Earl of Kimberley*) 572

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*; House in Committee accordingly:—Bill *reported* without Amendment; and to be read 3^a *To-morrow.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—

Moved to *resolve*,

"That in the event of two or more Lords rising to address the House at the same time, the Lord Chancellor or Chairman of Committees, whichever then presides, shall call on one of them to speak, and the Lord so called upon shall speak, unless the House do order otherwise,"—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) 585

After short debate, on Question? their Lordships *divided;* Contents 8, Not-Contents 46; Majority 38.

Resolved in the *negative.*

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill [Bill 40]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 658

After debate, Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the principle of Representation in proportion to Population should be adopted in place of arbitrary figures as a basis, in order to obtain a logical, judicious, and permanent settlement of the question of Redistribution of Seats,"—(*Sir Henry Tyler*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After further long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 19th February.

National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill [Bill 11]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy*) 747

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*:)—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 83, Noes 14; Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 22:)—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) Bill [Bill 19]—
Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. A. R. D. Elliot*) 767
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Sexton*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*
Original Question again proposed 778
After debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee 796
Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again on Saturday,"—(*Mr. A. R. D. Elliot*:)—Question put, and *agreed to.*
Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Saturday.*

MOTIONS.

Adjournment of the House—
Moved, "That the House, at its rising on Saturday next, do adjourn till Thursday 19th February,"—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) 796
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Adjournment of the House—
Moved, "That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Saturday,"—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*).. 798
After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 43, Noes 9; Majority 34.—(Div. List, No. 23.)

Westminster Hall (Restoration)—
Moved, "That the Committee on Westminster Hall (Restoration) have leave to sit and proceed, notwithstanding any Adjournment of the House,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)
Motion *agreed to.* [5. 15 a.m.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5.

Yorkshire Registries Act (1884) Amendment Bill (No. 14)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a, and that Standing Order No. XXXV. be considered in order to its being dispensed with,"—(*The Lord FitzGerald*) 833
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2^a accordingly; Committee *negatived:* Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with;* Bill read 3^a, and *passed.*

Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod—Appointment of Select Committee—
Moved, "That the Lords following be named of the Committee" .. 834
Moved, "To leave out the name of the Marquess of Lansdowne,"—(*The Earl of Camperdown*:)—After short debate, on Question? *agreed to*:—Original Motion, as amended, *agreed to*:—Committee appointed accordingly.

Navy—State of the Navy—Admiralty Intelligence Department—Question, Observations, The Earl of Camperdown; Reply, The Earl of Northbrook 835

Egypt—Employment of English Officials—Question, Lord Truro; Answer, The Earl of Northbrook:—Short debate thereon 836
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Their Lordships met;—And the Commons being come with their SPEAKER, and a Royal Commission to that effect having been read, the ROYAL ASSENT was given to several Bills. [1.45.]

COMMONS, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6.

The House met at a quarter after One of the clock.

Message to attend The LORDS COMMISSIONERS:—The House went;—and being returned;—Mr. SPEAKER *reported* the *Royal Assent* to several Bills.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) .. 843

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present,

House counted, and Mr. SPEAKER declared that 37 Members only were present.

The Sitting was then suspended at five minutes to Two o'clock.

The House was adjourned at two minutes after Four o'clock till Thursday 19th February.

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Egypt (Military Operations)—Expeditionary Force up the Nile—General Brackenbury's Column—Observations, The Marquess of Hartington 872

Egypt—Ministerial Statement—

Moved, "That the Copy presented of further Correspondence respecting the affairs of Egypt (by Command) do lie upon the Table,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 873

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill [Bill 40]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke*) 880

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee, and *reported*; as amended, to be *printed* [Bill 49]; *re-committed* for *Monday* next.

Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment Bill [Bill 7]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. W. M. Torrens*) 886

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 5th March.

National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill [Bill 11]—

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [4th December] 896

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Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill [Bill 26]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time," —(*General Sir George Balfour*) 896

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

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Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 53] 897

Shannon Navigation Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Herbert Gladstone*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 54] 897

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 55] 897

Dean and Chapter Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Hibbert*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 56] 898

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Ordered, That Her Majesty's Most Gracious Message be taken into Consideration upon *Monday* 2nd March.
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MOTION.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the several stages of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, up to, and including the Consideration of the Bill, as amended, have precedence of all Orders of the Day, and Notices of Motions, on every day on which it shall be set down, by the Government, as the first business of the day,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) .. 933

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 223, Noes 15; Majority 208.—(Div. List, No. 24.)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

NATIONALIST MEETINGS (DERRY)—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the conduct of those responsible for the action of the Police and Military in Derry was one-sided, tyrannical, and unconstitutional,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)—instead thereof 943

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 59, Noes 15; Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 25.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1884-5)—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £5,000, Surveys, United Kingdom.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 967

(2.) £120, Natural History Museum.

(3.) £3,570, Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of the several Public Buildings under the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, and for the Erection of Fishery Piers, and the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations" 967

After short debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,923, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Biggar:*)—After further short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £50,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, including Rents and Furniture, and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries abroad" 972

After short debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £40,000, be granted, &c.,"—(*Dr. Cameron:*)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 22, Noes 51; Majority 29.—(Div. List, No. 26.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(6.) £536, House of Commons Offices.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 981

(7.) £796, Privy Council Office.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 982

(8.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,825, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Charity Commission for England and Wales" .. 983

After short debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £825, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Jesse Collings:*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(9.) £3,720, Local Government Board.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 994

(10.) £6,730, Patent Office, &c.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 994

(11.) £15,383, Stationery and Printing.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 997

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,271, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Fishery Board in Scotland and for Grants in Aid of Piers or Quays" 998

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Sexton:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1884-5)—Committee—*continued.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(13.) £75, Registrar General's Office, Scotland 999

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*:)—Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next

MOTIONS.

Oaths Bill—

Considered in Committee 999

Moved, "That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law as to Oaths,"—(*Mr. Hopwood*) .. 999

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *reported*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Percy Wyndham, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Noel, Mr. Pennington, Mr. Arthur Elliot*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 62.]

Registration (Occupation Voters) Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. Attorney General*) 1000

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill to assimilate the Law affecting the Registration of Occupation Voters in counties and boroughs, and for other purposes, *ordered* (*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 63.]

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the operation of the existing Law regulating Salmon and Trout Fishing in Ireland, and to Report whether any Amendments in the Law are desirable,"—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*) .. 1000

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Corn Sales Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Rankin, Sir Joseph Bailey, Mr. Biddell, Mr. Duckham, Mr. Davenport, Mr. Williamson*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 57] .. 1000

Sites for Places of Religious Worship Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Burt, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, Mr. Webster*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 58] 1001

Explosive Substances Act (1883) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Herbert Maxwell, Lord Algernon Percy*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 59] .. 1001

Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Richard Power*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 60] 1001

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Dick-Peddie, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. Passmore Edwards, Mr. Stewart Macliver*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 61] 1001

Municipal Voters (Relief) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 64] .. 1001

Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Solicitor General*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 65] 1001

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Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for papers and correspondence between Her Majesty's Government, Turkey, Italy, and other European Powers relative to the occupation of Massowah by Italian troops,"—(*The Earl De La Warr*) 1004

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NAVY—THE "BRITANNIA" CADET TRAINING SHIP—Question, Mr. Halsey; Answer, Mr. Caine 1052

ORDERS OF THE DAY—

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to Egypt and the Soudan,—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MOTION.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE—RESOLUTION [FIRST NIGHT]—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them to assure a good and stable Government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security,"—(*Sir Stafford Northcote*) 1052

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the first word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE—*continued.*

pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi,"—(*Mr. John Morley,*) —instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Goschen:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [20th February] *reported* 1141

First Three Resolutions *agreed to.*

Fourth Resolution read a second time:—After short debate, Amendment proposed, to leave out "£7,500," in order to insert "£6,923,"—(*Mr. Biggar,*)—instead thereof.

Question put, "That '£7,500' stand part of the said Resolution:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 56, Noes 12; Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 28.)

Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Speaker 1142

Theatres, &c. Regulation (Metropolis) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Macfarlane*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 67] 1142

[12.45.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—PARLIAMENT STREET—Question, Observations, Lord Lamington; Reply, The Earl of Rosebery; Observations, The Earl of Redesdale 1143

ARMY—THE 20TH HUSSARS—Question, Observations, The Earl of Longford; Reply, The Earl of Morley 1144

CRIMINAL LAW—THE BABBICOMBE MURDER—OFFICE OF PUBLIC EXECUTIONER—Question, Observations, Earl Cowper; Reply, Lord Monson .. 1146

Prevention of Crimes Amendment Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Milltown*); read 1ª (No. 20) 1148

Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Camperdown*); read 1ª (No. 21) 1148

PRIVATE BILLS—

Ordered, That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill after *Friday* the 13*th day of March* next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice after *Tuesday* the 12*th day of May* next:

That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after *Tuesday* the 12*th day of May* next:

Ordered, That this order be *printed* and *published,* and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall. (No. 23.)

[5.0.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

QUESTIONS.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE XXIII.—MACEDONIA—Questions, Mr. Bryce, Sir George Campbell, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1149

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MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY—EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—THE VOTE OF CENSURE—NOTICES OF MOTIONS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the Notices of Motions be postponed until after the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) .. 1179

After debate, Amendment proposed,

After the word "Motions," to insert the words "except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy),"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*) .. 1186

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Rule 5 (Irrelevance or Repetition)—Mr. W. Redmond directed to discontinue his speech 1185
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Rule 9 (Order in Debate)—Mr. O'Brien suspended from the service of the House 1187
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Moved, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. Gladstone:*)—Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 207, Noes 46; Majority 161.—(Div. List, No. 29.)

Question put, "That the words 'except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy)' be there inserted:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 235, Noes 19; Majority 216.—(Div. List, No. 30.)

Main Question again proposed 1190

After short debate, Main Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 222, Noes 19; Majority 203.—(Div. List, No. 31.)

Ordered, That the Notices of Motions be postponed until after the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE—RESOLUTION [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [SECOND NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [23rd February:]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1193

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chaplin:*)—Motion *agreed to:*—Debate *further adjourned* till *Thursday.*

MOTIONS.

Labourers (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 68] 1263

Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 69] .. 1263

Duration of Parliaments Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. John Morley, Professor Stuart*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 70] 1263

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT [STAMP DUTY]—

Considered in Committee 1264

Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

[12.35.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Private Bill Legislation Bill [Bill 25]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Craig-Sellar*) 1264

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "whilst this House is prepared to take such steps as may be needful to strengthen its own Committees sitting on Private Bills, or by arrangement with the other House of Parliament, to refer opposed Private Bills to Committees consisting of Members of both Houses of Parliament, and thus obviate the present cost to promoters and opponents of having to appear before Committees of both Houses of Parliament, it is unwilling to delegate its legislative functions to paid Judges or tribunals,"—(*Sir Joseph Pease,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 58, Noes 160; Majority 102.—(Div. List, No. 32.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

QUESTION.

NAVY—THE TROOPSHIP "POONAH"—Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. Caine 1309

NOTICE.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE (SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE)—Notice of Amendment, Lord George Hamilton 1310

River Thames Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Elton, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Sellar, Mr. Molloy*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 71] 1310

[5.55.]

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Page

CENTRAL ASIA — THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER—Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, Earl Granville 1311

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE—RESOLUTION—

Moved to *resolve,*

"That this House, having taken into consideration the statements that have been made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, is of opinion that—

(1.) The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided councils of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations;

(2.) That the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations will be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire,"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury*) 1311

Amendment *moved,*

To leave out from "That" to the end of the motion, and insert "an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should not employ British forces to occupy the Soudan or to prevent the exercise by the Egyptian people of their right to select their own government," — (*The Lord Wentworth.*)

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*The Earl of Camperdown*:)—Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.* [12.0.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26.

NOTICES.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE (SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE)—Notices of Amendments, Mr. Heneage, Mr. C. B. M'Laren .. 1394

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QUESTIONS.

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EXPLOSIVES ACT—DYNAMITE EXPLOSION NEAR LARNE—Question, Mr. Greer; Answer, Mr. J. Holms 1396

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MERCHANT SHIPPING—ELECTRIC COMMUNICATION WITH LIGHT VESSELS—Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, Mr. J. Holms 1399

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INDIA—EAST INDIAN RAILWAY COMMUNICATIONS—THE SELECT COMMITTEE—Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1401

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE—RESOLUTION—[ADJOURNED DEBATE] [THIRD NIGHT]—
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [23rd February:]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1425
After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*:)—Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

Private Bill Legislation Bill [Bill 25]—
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment on Second Reading [25th February] 1520
Question again proposed, "That those words be there added:"—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Healy*:)—After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

Post Office Sites Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Hibbert*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 72] 1521

Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. Hibbert*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 73] 1521

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir Joseph Pease, Earl Percy, Mr. Tremayne, Mr. Charles Palmer*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 74] 1521
[1.15.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27.

TURKEY—FEHMY PASHA—Personal Explanation, Earl Granville .. 1522

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE—RESOLUTION [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [SECOND NIGHT]—
Order of the Day read for resuming the debate on the Lord Wentworth's amendment to the Marquess of Salisbury's motion [February 26:]—Debate *resumed* 1522

Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure—*continued.*

After long debate, on question that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the motion? *Resolved* in the *affirmative.*

Original Motion put:—Their Lordships *divided;* Contents 189, Not-Contents 68; Majority 121.

Division List, Contents and Not-Contents 1595

Resolution *agreed to.* [11.45.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27.

QUESTIONS.

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Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881—Licences to Carry Arms—Case of James Lord—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1598

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Mr. Oliver S. Nugent, Co. Cavan—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1598

The Irish Land Commission—Sittings at Nenagh—Questions, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1599

Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act, 1882—Boycotting—Mr. Cusack—Questions, Mr. John O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman; Question, Mr. Sexton [no reply] 1601

Local Government Board (Ireland)—Audit of Accounts, Borough of Athlone—Question, Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1602

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Disorderly Language—Case of George Barker, Cliffoney, Co. Sligo—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1602

The South African Republic—Treaty with the German Empire—Question, Mr. Stuart-Wortley; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley .. 1603

Education Department—Queen's Scholarships at Training Colleges—Question, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answer, Mr. Mundella .. 1604

The Irish Land Commission—Sittings at Enniskillen (Appeals)—Questions, Mr. Tottenham, Mr. Gibson, Lord Arthur Hill, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Beresford; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1604

Egypt—The War in the Soudan—The Force at Suakin—Question, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1606

Egypt—The War in the Soudan—Lord Wolseley's Despatch of February 5—Question, Mr. Brodrick; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1606

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Volunteer Adjutants—Question, Colonel Seely; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1607

South Africa—Damaraland—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1607

Post Office—Acceleration of Mails to Scotland—Questions, Mr. Craig-Sellar, Mr. Barran, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Harrington; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 1608

Education Department—The Constitution—Question, Sir John Lubbock; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1610

Visit of the Prince of Wales to Ireland—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1610

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THE IRISH BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS—LETTER OF THE BISHOP OF RAPHOE—Questions, Mr. Healy, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1611

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—MINISTERIAL POLICY—Questions, Mr. M'Coan, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1612

GENERAL GORDON'S CYPHER—Question, Mr. Finch-Hatton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1615

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN) — KASSALA — Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1615

AFRICA (THE RED SEA COAST) — MASSOWAH — Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1616

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—THE GOVERNORSHIP—PRINCE HASSAN—Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1616

ARMY—ROYAL ARTILLERY AND ENGINEER OFFICERS—THE NEW HALF-PAY RULE—Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1617

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEERS AND GARRISON DUTY—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1617

ARMY (THE EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN) — PROMOTION OF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS—Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1618

EGYPT (THE NILE EXPEDITION)—DAMAGE OF WAR STORES—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1618

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY—Questions, Baron Henry De Worms; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1620

INDIA—THE MEETING BETWEEN THE VICEROY AND THE AMEER OF AFGHANISTAN—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 1620

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—EXPLOSION AT SHOEBURYNESS—Questions, Lord Eustace Cecil, Colonel Nolan; Answers, Mr. Brand, The Marquess of Hartington 1621

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—SIR REDVERS BULLER'S FORCE—Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1622

PARLIAMENT—ORDER OF BUSINESS—THE AMENDMENTS ON THE VOTE OF CENSURE—Questions, Mr. Bryce, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gladstone 1622

MOTION.

ORDERS OF THE DAY—BUSINESS FOR MONDAY—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan have precedence of other Orders of the Day,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1623

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE—RESOLUTION [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [FOURTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [23rd February:]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1627

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE—*continued.*

After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 288, Noes 302: Majority 14.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1719

Question proposed,

"That the words 'This House while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi' be there added,"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment,

To leave out from the word "this" to the end thereof, in order to add the words "Government has failed to indicate any policy in reference to Egypt and the Soudan which justifies the confidence of this House or the Country,"—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 112, Noes 455; Majority 343.—(Div. List, No. 34.)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'Government has failed to indicate any policy in reference to Egypt and the Soudan which justifies the confidence of his House or the Country' be there added."

Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 277, Noes 299; Majority 22.—(Div. List, No. 35.)

MOTIONS.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—Motion for a Return (*Mr. Thomas Lea*) .. 1726

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Waterworks (Local Authorities) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dodds, Mr. Barran, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Coddington, Mr. Slagg*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 75] .. 1730

Public Health Acts Amendment (Improvement Expenses) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dodds, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Arnold Morley*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 76] 1731

[2.45.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MARCH 2.

ARMY RESERVE FORCE—THE MILITIA—MESSAGES FROM THE QUEEN—

Order of the Day for the consideration of, read.

Messages *considered* accordingly.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to direct by Proclamation that certain persons who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in army service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient.

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to order by Proclamation the embodiment of Militia,"—(*The Earl Granville*) 1731

After short debate, Resolutions *agreed to, nemine dissentiente.*

Ordered, That the said Addresses be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

NAVY (SHIPS)—THE RETURN—Question, Viscount Sidmouth; Answer, The Earl of Northbrook 1743

FRANCE AND BURMAH—THE TREATY—Question, Observations, Viscount Sidmouth; Reply, Earl Granville 1743

NAVY—NAVAL DISCIPLINE—SENTENCES OF PENAL SERVITUDE — Question, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Answer, The Earl of Northbrook .. 1745

INDIA—THE WATER ASSESSMENT—Question, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Answer, The Earl of Kimberley 1745

Women's Suffrage Bill [H. L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Denman*); read 1ª (No. 27) .. 1746

[6.0.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, MARCH 2.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) — REPORT OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS—Observations, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1746

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—TRIAL OF CROFTERS AT STORNOWAY—Questions, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Speaker 1746

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND) (PROCLAMATIONS) — MURRINTOWN MEETING — Questions, Mr. Small; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1750

ARMY—ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—110-TON GUNS—Question, Mr. Carbutt; Answer, Mr. Brand 1750

NAVY—H.M.S. "ACTIVE"—BURSTING OF A 6-INCH GUN—Questions, Mr. Carbutt; Answers, Mr. Brand 1751

GRAND JURY ACT, (IRELAND)—FEES TO THE SECRETARY OF THE GRAND JURY, CO. CAVAN—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1751

NAVY (DESIGNS)—UNARMOURED SHIPS—VOTE OF CENSURE—Question, Sir Edward J. Reed; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey 1752

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE BARROW DRAINAGE—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert.. .. 1753

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (IRELAND) — SALARIES — Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1753

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, GALWAY—PROFESSOR D'ARCY THOMPSON—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1754

ARMY—THE 20TH HUSSARS — Question, Mr. Tottenham; Answer, Mr. Brand 1755

ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS—APPOINTMENT OF "QUALIFIED AND MERITORIOUS WARRANT OFFICERS"—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1756

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY FUND—Question, Mr. St. Aubyn; Answer, Mr. H. H. Fowler 1756

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE CAMEROONS—Questions, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1757

CYPRUS (FINANCE, &c.)—Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1757

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES (IRELAND)—REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS—PREMATURE PUBLICATION—Questions, Mr. Corry, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1758

PRISONS (IRELAND) — SANITARY CONDITION OF MARYBOROUGH GAOL—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1759

PRISONS (IRELAND)—CATHOLIC OFFICIALS IN MARYBOROUGH GAOL—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1759

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Inland Revenue—Mr. R. Barnes, Collector at Warrington—Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1762
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—The Irish Boundary Commissioners—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1763
Criminal Law (Ireland)—Case of the Craughwell Prisoners—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Solicitor General for Ireland 1764
Post Office (Ireland)—The Dublin Post Office—Pay for Christmas Overwork—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre .. 1765
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Education (Ireland)—Endowed Borough School of Swords—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1766
Law and Justice (Ireland)—Kilrush Quarter Sessions—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1767
Egypt (Military Operations)—The War in the Soudan—Camels from India—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross .. 1768
India—The Covenanted Civil Service—Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, Mr. J. K. Cross 1768
Egypt (Military Expedition)—The Nile Route—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1769
Fishery Board for England—Question, Mr. Birkbeck; Answer, Mr. H. H. Fowler 1770
New Zealand—The Treaty of Waitangi—Questions, Mr. Gorst; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1770
The Magistracy (Ireland)—Questions, Mr. Marum, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1771
Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Treachery at Khartoum—Questions, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Bourke; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1774
Egypt (War in the Soudan)—Kassala—Questions, Sir Henry Tyler, Lord John Manners, Baron Henry De Worms, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1776
Egypt (Military Operations)—Proclamation of Lord Wolseley—Question, Mr. Gorst; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1777
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Egypt (Finance, &c.)—Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. Gorst, Mr. M'Coan; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1779
Navy—Leading Stokers—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Caine 1781
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Egypt (Military Expedition) — Casualties in the Soudan — Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 1781
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Ireland—Extra Police Tax, Limerick—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1783

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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ARMY RESERVE FORCE—MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY—

Her Majesty's Message *considered* 1784

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to direct, by Proclamation, that certain persons who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in Army Service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient,"—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

Amendment proposed,

To add, at the end thereof, the words "but that this House regrets that Her Majesty's Ministers have thought it right to advise that certain persons, who otherwise would be entitled to be transferred to the Reserve, should continue in Army Service, in connection with a determination to interfere by force of arms in the internal Government of the Soudan, and to engage in military operations in that Country, beyond those required to enable the Troops under the command of Lord Wolseley to withdraw from it,"—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 19, Noes 149; Majority 130.—(Div. List, No. 36.)

Main Question again proposed 1799

After short debate, Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—To be presented by Privy Councillors.

MILITIA—MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY—

Her Majesty's Message *considered* 1803

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to order, by Proclamation, the embodiment of Militia,"—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—To be presented by Privy Councillors.

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 49] [FIRST NIGHT]

Order for Committee read 1806

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power in all cases where an elector is entitled to one vote only, to enable the elector to nominate more than one candidate to whom under certain circumstances that vote might be transferred in the manner indicated by the elector,"—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—((*Mr. Gorst:*)—After further short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) Bill [Bill 19]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1862

After some time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Friday.*

Shannon Navigation Bill [Bill 54]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*) .. 1871

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

QUESTION.

Salmon (Weekly Close Time) (Ireland) Bill—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Lord Richard Grosvenor 1877

County Courts (Divorce) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. James Howard, Mr. Broadhurst*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 77] 1877

[1.45.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 3.

Egypt (War in the Soudan)—The Native Indian Princes—Question, The Earl of Camperdown; Answer, The Earl of Kimberley .. 1878

Central Asia—Russia and Afghanistan—Questions, The Marquess of Salisbury, Lord Ellenborough, The Earl of Camperdown, The Marquess of Lothian; Answers, Earl Granville, The Earl of Kimberley .. 1878

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Militia Training—Question, The Earl of Limerick; Answer, The Earl of Morley 1880

Egypt (The War in the Soudan)—Kassala—Questions, Lord Ellenborough, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answers, Earl Granville .. 1881

Standing Orders Committee—*appointed*:—List of the Committee .. 1881

Private Bills—

All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Standing Orders Committee unless otherwise ordered .. 1881

Committee of Selection—*appointed*:—List of the Committee .. 1881

[4.45.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 3.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Parliament—Standing Orders—

Moved, "That the Select Committee on Standing Orders consist of Twelve Members:—That Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray be added to the Committee,"—(*Mr. Sexton*) .. 1882

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

Parliament—The Committee of Selection—

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection consist of Nine Members:—That Mr. Justin M'Carthy be added to the Committee,—(*Mr. Sexton*) 1882

Bradford Waterworks and Improvement Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1883

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

Scarborough, Bridlington, and West Riding Junction Railways Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1884

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

Railway Rates and Charges Bill—Petitions *presented*, Sir Walter B. Barttelot 1885

Illness of the Prime Minister—Personal Explanation, Mr. Warton .. 1885

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QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—MR. WILLIAM IVORY, SHERIFF OF INVERNESS-SHIRE—Questions, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answers, The Lord Advocate 1886

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE SKYE CROFTERS—POLICE AND MILITARY EXPEDITION—THE "SCOTSMAN" AND THE REPORT OF SHERIFF IVORY—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate .. 1888

AFRICA (SOUTH)—CAPE COLONY—METHUEN'S IRREGULAR HORSE—Question, Major General Alexander; Answer, Mr. Brand 1889

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CASE OF JAMES M'CULLAGH—Questions, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Deasy; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1889

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF THOMAS DEANE — Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1890

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE (NORFOLK) —Questions, Mr. Duckham, Mr. Chaplin; Answers, Mr. Trevelyan .. 1891

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—EXECUTIONS AT LINCOLN GAOL—Question, Mr. Ruston; Answer, Mr. H. H. Fowler 1892

COMMISSION ON ACCIDENTS IN MINES—THE REPORT—Question, Sir John Lubbock; Answer, Mr. H. H. Fowler 1893

IRELAND—THE VICE REGAL COURT—PRECEDENCE AT STATE ENTERTAINMENTS—Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Jerningham, Mr. Callan, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Macartney; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman; Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor [no reply] 1893

THE BRITISH BORNEO COMPANY—Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1895

IRELAND—THE VICE REGAL COURT—FESTIVITIES AT DUBLIN CASTLE DURING THE LYING IN STATE OF THE LATE CARDINAL M'CABE—Question, Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman .. 1895

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—COLONEL LLOYD, CO. CLARE—Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1896

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE SUB-SHERIFF AND SURVEYOR, CO. CAVAN —Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannermon .. 1896

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LICENCES TO CARRY ARMS—CASE OF JAMES LORD—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1897

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE CLARE SLOB LAND SCHEME—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Hibbert.. .. 1897

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK'S REPORT—Questions, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Gibson; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1898

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE ABU KLEA WELLS—Questions, Mr. Storey, Mr. Staveley Hill; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1899

SALMON (WEEKLY CLOSE TIME) (IRELAND) BILL—NOMINATION OF COMMITTEE—Question, Mr. Richard Power; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1900

NEW GUINEA—NEGOTIATIONS WITH GERMANY—Question, Mr. Coleridge Kennard; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1900

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—Questions, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. R. H. Paget, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Bourke; Answers, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1900

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SCHEME FOR CHRIST'S HOSPITAL—Question, Sir John Ellis; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1902

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—EUROPEANS AT KASSALA—Question, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice .. 1903

EGYPT—OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY CONTRACT—Questions, Mr. Chaplin; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1903

THE BURIALS QUESTION—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Richard; Answer, Mr. H. H. Fowler 1903
PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE REGISTRATION BILL—Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, The Attorney General 1904
EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE FORCES IN THE SOUDAN—Questions, Colonel Dawnay, Mr. Brodrick; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 1904
NAVY—THE ROYAL MARINES—Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey 1905
EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—NAVAL OFFICERS AND MEN IN THE SOUDAN—Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey .. 1905
THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1906
THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1906
NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND)—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman 1907
EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—KASSALA—Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1907
EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—CASUALTIES IN LORD WOLSELEY'S FORCE—Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter .. 1907
ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS—REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES—Question, Mr. Causton; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter 1908
CYPRUS (FINANCE, &c.)—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 1908
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES ACT)—EXPENSES OF CANDIDATES—Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, The Attorney General 1909
ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE MILITIA—Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, Sir Arthur Hayter 1909
PUBLIC WORKS LOANS COMMISSIONERS—RAILWAY MORTGAGES—Question, Sir Hervey Bruce; Answer, Mr. Hibbert 1910
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE CROYDON SCHOOL BOARD—Question, Mr. Spencer Balfour; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1910
EGYPT—SIR EVELYN BARING—Question, Mr. Marriott; Answer, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice 1911
PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1911

ADJOURNMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE RULINGS OF MR. SPEAKER—RULING OF MR. SPEAKER ON THE 24TH ULTIMO—Entry in the Votes 1917

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 49] [ADJOURNED DEBATE] [SECOND NIGHT]—
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Motion [2nd March] .. 1917
After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 31, Noes 134; Majority 103.
Division List, Ayes and Noes 1937
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert an Amendment that Medical relief shall not disqualify any voter under £12 valuation,"—(*Mr. Healy*) 1938
After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*
Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" 1943

Parliamentary Elections (*Redistribution*) (*re-committed*) *Bill*—continued.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient that the numbers of this House shall be increased, and, in the opinion of this House, Ireland will be sufficiently represented by ninety Members, and Wales by twenty-five Members,"—(*Admiral Sir John Hay.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy*:)—After further short debate, Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question again proposed 2002

After short debate, Original Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 132, Noes 25; Majority 107.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 2002

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

HOLDINGS NEAR TOWNS (IRELAND)—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the tenure on which Houses and Holdings are held in or near towns in Ireland, and the manner in which the improvements of tenants in or near towns are affected by the existing Laws, and if any changes in the existing Law could be now beneficially made,"—(*Colonel Nolan*) 2004

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 32, Noes 33; Majority 1.—(Div. List, No. 39.)

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE—NOMINATION—

Moved, "That the Select Committee on Public Accounts be nominated,"—(*Mr. Hibbert*) 2013

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—List of the Committee.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Municipal Voters (Relief) Bill [Bill 64]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 2014

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday*.

County Courts (Ireland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Findlater, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Small*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 78] 2016

[2.15.]

LORDS.

SAT FIRST.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1884.

The Lord Howard of Glossop, after the death of his father.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1885.

The Earl of Scarborough, after the death of his father.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26.

The Marquess of Cholmondeley, after the death of his grandfather.

The Earl Vane (Marquess of Londonderry), after the death of his father.

TOOK THE OATH FOR THE FIRST TIME.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1885.

The Lord Bishop of Newcastle.

COMMONS.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1884.

For *Scarborough*, *v.* William Sproston Caine, esquire, one of the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2.

For *Knaresborough*, *v.* Thomas Collins, esquire, deceased.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1885.

For *Tipperary County*, *v.* Patrick James Smyth, esquire, Secretary to the Loan Fund Board in Ireland.

For *Gloucestershire* (*Western Division*), *v.* Colonel Robert Nigel Fitzhardinge Kingscote, C.B., one of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20.

For *Mid Somerset*, *v.* William Stephen Gore-Langton, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1884.

Hackney Borough—James Stuart, esquire.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1.

Scarborough—William Sproston Caine, esquire.

Greenock—Thomas Sutherland, esquire.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4.

Down County—Richard William Blackwood Ker, esquire.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1885.

Knaresborough—Robert Gunter, esquire.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

Tipperary County—John O'Connor, esquire.

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

SIXTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 29 APRIL, 1880, IN THE FORTY-THIRD
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

SECOND VOLUME OF SECOND SESSION 1884-5.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 18*th November*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*Second Reading*—Representation of the People (5).

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—(No. 5.)

(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said: As there is, I believe, now a very general agreement in favour of the principles of this Bill, and the extension of the franchise which it proposes, it is quite unnecessary that I should trouble the House with any advocacy of those principles; and with regard to the measure itself, I may say it is precisely the same as that measure which was before the House during the last Session. It comes before your Lordships in precisely the same shape; and if the Bill should pass into law it will come into effect on the 1st of January, 1886, as regards the admission of new voters to the exercise of the franchise—that is to say, the Bill would apply to the registration of the coming year, and the voters will be qualified, under that registration, from the 1st of January, 1886. I feel on this occasion that I am the less called on to make any observations, because no Notice has been given of opposition to the second reading of this Bill, and we have every reason to believe that no opposition will be offered to it. With regard to another very important question connected with the subject, as to when and how the Bill should pass into law, and the question of the Redistribution Bill, which has engaged so much of the attention of noble Lords, both in and out of this House, I need scarcely say that I have nothing whatever to add to the declaration made by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) last night, and I certainly shall not say anything to detract from that declaration. I trust, therefore, that your Lordships will think that it is not needful that I should detain you any longer, but that I should now content myself with moving the second reading of this Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I entirely concur with the noble Earl who has just sat down that there is no need to enter into any long discussion of the principles of this Bill. As a general rule, a Bill that is unopposed does not require any long discussion; and this Bill has had the advantage of not only such discussion as both Houses of Parliament have been able to give to it during a considerable period, but also of going through a longer period of platform discussion than probably any other measure has ever had the advantage of obtaining before. Under these circumstances, I shall not, any more than the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley), dwell for a moment upon the principles of this Bill. They are generally accepted by political men on both sides of Parliament; and any question that has arisen, or any impediment to the full perfection of legislation that has been created, has resulted from matters extraneous to the questions treated within the four corners of the Bill, though connected with them by very important relations. But, my Lords, I think I may pass at once from the second reading of the Bill to the questions that are raised by the very important statement that was made by the noble Earl the Leader of this House (Earl Granville) yesterday evening. In doing so, I cannot avoid noticing or refrain from congratulating the noble Earl upon the very conciliatory tone which he employed during the whole of his speech—a tone which is, I think, eminently calculated to aid us in arriving at a harmonious conclusion. With respect to the matter of his speech, I was not at first so well satisfied. I drew—no doubt erroneously—from the language the noble Earl used, that before any consultation or communication could take place with respect to the Redistribution Bill for the purpose of coming to an agreement, it was an indispensable condition precedent in the eyes of the Government that we should undertake that the Bill should pass into law before the close of the year. I need not dwell now upon the objections—the fatal objections—that there lay in our eyes to any condition of that kind. It seemed to us that we might be parting with our liberty altogether, and find at the last, through no fault of ours or of the Government, that we had obtained nothing in return. I felt the force of these objections so strongly that I expressed it afterwards to some Friends of mine; and I was informed that they did not understand the statement of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government (Mr. Gladstone) in "another place" to be of the character which I attributed to the remarks of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville). I requested an hon. Gentleman—a relative of mine, Mr. Balfour—to communicate with Members of Her Majesty's Government in "another place," in order to ascertain whether my interpretation of the noble Earl's language was correct, and whether an entire surrender of our liberty with respect to the Franchise Bill was a condition precedent to any consultation as to the details of the Redistribution Bill. The papers that passed on the occasion are so important to a right understanding of this case that your Lordships will, perhaps, pardon me if I read them. I am authorized to do so. This was the question that was submitted to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government—

"An essential part of the arrangement proposed by the Government is that the Leaders of the Conservative Party should pledge themselves to pass the Reform Bill through the House of Lords this Session. Before arriving at any opinion on the merits of this proposal, it is necessary to have it clearly determined whether the pledge is or is not to precede an agreement in regard to the provisions of the Redistribution Bill—in other words, would the Government's proposal, if accepted, render it possible for the House of Lords to be committed to the Reform Bill, and subsequently to find that no common understanding with regard to redistribution could be arrived at between the two Parties?"

That was the question submitted to the Government. This was the answer written by Lord Hartington from Mr. Gladstone's words—

> "We should receive a request for consultation in a spirit of trust, and, assuming that the intention was to come to an agreement, should not ask for an adequate assurance beforehand."

Of course, the importance of that statement it is impossible to exaggerate. According to it, it is now possible for us to go into communication with Her Majesty's Government with respect to the details of the Redistribution Bill. If, as we have every reason to hope from the language that they employ, and from the intentions which we know animate ourselves, we come to an agreement, the Franchise Bill then may pass. If not, we shall be at the end unbound by any pledge, and stand precisely in the position in which we stand now. But the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) says that he will receive the request in a spirit of trust, and I think it is right to say that that spirit is entirely reciprocated on our side, and that we enter into these communications with the sincere and earnest desire of finding a common ground between the two Parties, and we have no *arrière pensée*—no reserve feeling of any kind—which would hinder that desire from being brought to a fortunate issue. Under these circumstances, I yesterday asked my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack (Lord Selborne) a question with respect to time; and he answered that the Government, he was sure, would make no opposition to such time as, within the limit of their proposals, would be reasonable for that purpose. I shall propose, on Thursday, that the Committee on the Franchise Bill be adjourned for a fortnight. But there is another part of the question on which I must say a word or two. If the House carries its mind back to the controversies of last July, they will remember that our objections to the course which the Government then took were that we feared there might be no redistribution, or that there might not be a good redistribution, that would accompany the Franchise Bill. The Government met us with the assurance that they fully intended to legislate—a very emphatic assurance. We replied—"That answers for your goodwill; we entirely believe you; but that does not answer for your power, or for the quality of the Bill you may produce." I may now dismiss the question of the quality of the Bill, because we are to enter into communications, from which it is hoped that there may issue a Bill of a character to which we shall not demur; and if, which I do not in the least believe, by any misfortune, we should not come to any agreement, we shall stand in the same position—precisely the same position—for acting as we do now. But there is the further question as to the power of the Government to carry this Redistribution Bill, which we regard as an essential complement of the Franchise Bill, into law. Now, the security which the Government give us is of a very important kind; and I think—I have been thinking it over carefully—and my noble Friends near me think, that it is an adequate security, if we understand it rightly. Their security is this—that they will press the Redistribution Bill forward, when it has been agreed upon, with all possible speed. I think the noble Earl said last night *de die in diem;* but it is not in the published reports.

EARL GRANVILLE: No; I did not use those words.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Earl says he did not use those words. Well, I thought the noble Earl did; but that does not matter. He said the Government would push forward the Bill "with all possible speed," and—this is the important matter—that they would regard the Bill as vital to their Government. Now, that is the keystone of the arch. If that falls away, there is no common ground for us to meet upon at all, and it is with respect to that that I earnestly ask for information and explanations from Her Majesty's Government. My understanding of the promise, on the part of the Government to its opponents, is that they will regard the Bill as vital, involving these two things—that they will not only regard the second reading as vital, but also that they regard all the provisions to which both Parties are agreed, and which their opponents consider essential, as vital, and that they will make it a question of the existence of the Government that they shall not, by any chance combination of atoms in the House of Commons, be driven off from the provisions considered by us as important, and to which both sides are agreed. That is the first condition, and it is a most essential one. The other condition is that they should consider the passing of the Bill during the Session of 1885 to be vital to their existence—that is, that they will not only not endure defeat, but that they will not endure indefinite delay, and that they will not allow the Bill to be put off, so that by mere efflux of time it will not become law in 1885. That becomes a very important condition, because of a little misunderstanding which appears to have occurred in "another place" last night. The hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) asked the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister whether the undertaking of the Government to regard the Bill as vital extended to a vote in the House of Lords as well as to a vote in the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) was reported as replying that he understood it to extend to the House of Lords as well as to the House of Commons; but I have since received an intimation from the right hon. Gentleman that he requires to reconsider that answer—that he misunderstood the question, and was not to be held bound by it as it appears. Now, it is not my business here to press noble Lords opposite to hold to pledges which have been given in answer to a Radical Member in "another place;" but the alteration is exceedingly important, and it does make me press with all the more earnestness on the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) to include in his definition of failures which shall be vital to the Government the failure of the Bill to pass in the year 1885. I hold that these two conditions are essential to the definition of the word "vital" in a sense which can produce an agreement between the two Parties. I do not think that in doing so I am urging any exaggerated claim, for I feel convinced that that is the interpretation of the word which would naturally occur to most persons if it were used. Now, my Lords, I have nothing further at this present moment to say, except that I have welcomed with very great satisfaction the disposition which Her Majesty's Government have shown to meet this House in a manner which they justly conceive as agreeable to the position which they have taken up, and yet which fully satisfies the requirements which we have made. I only earnestly hope that our communications may commence at a sufficiently early period, and that in conducting them the Government will remember and act up to the full spirit of that which they said last night—namely, that the difficulty, if it arose, would not arise from their side. I believe that it will not arise from our side; and that, reserving always the essential principles for which we have contended—reserving always the great interests which we have sought to protect—there is yet penetrating the minds of both Parties in both Houses of Parliament an earnest desire that this controversy may be brought to a harmonious and successful issue.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, the noble Marquess has been good enough to express satisfaction at the conciliatory tone and the sense in which I addressed your Lordships last night. I hope your Lordships will not consider it a mere phrase if I, in return, most fully acknowledge the spirit in which the noble Marquess has made his remarks on this occasion. I trust that it was not only last night, but, as your Lordships are aware, ever since this discussion was introduced, I have always sought to avoid doing anything that would at all separate the two Houses on a question of which we have always been anxious for a settlement honourable to both Houses; and therefore I am rather anxious to say one word as to a point raised by the noble Marquess. In making the declaration yesterday of what Her Majesty's Government proposed to do with a view to meeting the objections of noble Lords on the opposite side of the House, I naturally used almost exactly the same language which had been settled upon by my Colleagues should be used in both Houses of Parliament. The noble Marquess, very naturally and very properly, asked me with regard to a condition, what that condition was; and I answered in the affirmative as meaning the words which I had already used, and which certainly bore the character that I attributed to them. I believe the noble Marquess is perfectly correct with regard to the communications which subsequently passed between Lord Hartington and Mr. Gladstone and some Members of the Conservative Party; and I am authorized to state that Mr. Gladstone most willingly

—being almost instinctively aware of the favourable reception which the statements have met with in both Houses—puts the most favourable construction upon the declarations we both made; and I am bound to say that the willingness and capacity of Mr. Gladstone to accept that favourable construction have been more than justified by the assurances which the noble Marquess has given as to the spirit in which he and his Friends will come to any communication on the subject. I think the other point the noble Marquess mentioned was with regard to the passing of the Bill and the endeavours we should make to pass the Bill early next year. I do not know that there is anything I can add to the words which were used in both Houses last night with regard to our being engaged to use every possible effort to push the Bill through at an early period of next year; aad I would further remark, with regard to our power of doing so, that there cannot be the slightest doubt of it in my mind if we are really seconded—as I am sure we shall be after what has fallen from the noble Marquess—by the Conservative Party. With regard to the answer which I have given to the noble Marquess, I cannot help thinking of the justice of the doctrine which I have laid down frequently in your Lordships' House—that it is always better on important subjects to have some little Notice of a Question about to be put; but I am authorized by Mr. Gladstone to say that nothing he uttered last night was intended at all to widen the assurances given to your Lordships' and to the other House. I earnestly hope, and I really do anticipate, from what has passed already, and what has passed in this House this evening, that we shall come to a final and satisfactory settlement of this great question.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It is still necessary to ask a question as to the meaning of the words—"We shall make it a vital question." I understand that to apply to the details of the Bill as well as to the principle of the Bill.

EARL GRANVILLE: I do not like answering questions on my own responsibility without any consultation with my Colleagues; but if you ask my personal view of it, I have not the slightest doubt that we mean to make a vital question of the passing of the Bill with regard to all its general principles and characteristics which may be settled upon. Of course, your Lordships would not expect Her Majesty's Government to pledge themselves not to admit any Amendment which may appear to be good to Parliament and agreed upon by both sides.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It is always well at the beginning of these proceedings to be perfectly clear. I understand that it is to be a vital question to pass the Bill in the next Session of Parliament—a vital question not only as against defeat, but also as against protracted delay.

EARL GRANVILLE: I think mistrust sometimes has its limits. I really think we ought not to be suspected, after giving these solemn declarations involving our personal and political honour, of not wishing to do everything in our power to give effect to them. With regard to the day for Committee, perhaps your Lordships will allow me to communicate to the House on Thursday as to the course proposed to be taken.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I understand that we shall not go into Committee on Thursday, but that the Committee will be adjourned. I give Notice that I shall move to adjourn it for a fortnight.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in asking Her Majesty's Government, Whether it is true, as stated in the public journals, that a letter has been received by Lord Wolseley from General Gordon, dated on or about the 4th of November; and, if so, whether the Government, having regard to the intense anxiety which prevails on this subject, will communicate the contents thereof to this House, said, that some surprise had been felt at the shortness of the period that had elapsed between the despatch of General Gordon's letter and its arrival at head-quarters. The letter, it was understood, contained 800 words; but all that had been made known of its contents up to the present was that it said that the writer was still holding out, and was aware of Colonel Stewart's most melancholy fate. It was said that the rest of the contents of the letter could not be published for military reasons. Of course, he did not wish Her Majesty's Government to disclose information which, if made public, might aid the Mahdi in his operations against General Gordon. If, however, the Government could, consistently with their duty, reveal more of the contents of the letter than had been disclosed up to that time, he felt sure that the House and the country would be glad.

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in reply, said, that such a letter as that described by the noble Earl, dated the 4th November, had been received by Lord Wolseley from General Gordon, an abstract of which had reached Her Majesty's Government. The contents of that letter, so far as they had been made public, had been, with fair accuracy, published in the daily papers. In addition to the information already given there, he might add to what was said on the previous night in "another place"—namely, that Lord Wolseley had received a letter from General Gordon, stating that the Greek and Austrian Consuls were safe, and also that he had received three letters—one from Sir Samuel Baker, one from his sister, and one from Mr. Stanley from the Congo. General Gordon requested that no further private letters should be sent to him. He stated that the Mahdi was quite aware of everything that was going on; and, therefore, he (the Earl of Morley) thought it would be clear to the House that it would be extremely undesirable to publish any confidential letters coming from General Gordon which might be of assistance to his enemies. Under these circumstances, he hoped that the House would support Her Majesty's Government in refusing to give any further information of such a character.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Five o'clock, to Thursday next,
a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 19*th November*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Scarborough, *v.* William Sproston Caine, esquire, one of the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee—Resolution* [November 17] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered — First Reading*—Income Tax * [38]; Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) (No. 2) [39].

Second Reading — Compensation for Improvements (Ireland) [35], *negatived.*

Committee—Report—Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act Amendment * [37].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 35.]

(*Colonel Nolan, Mr. Martin, Mr. Biggar, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Small, Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Sullivan.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

COLONEL NOLAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he hoped the Government would not raise any difficulty in the way of passing the second reading of a measure that involved very important principles. The Bill was one which might fairly be regarded as a simple corollary to the Land Act; and by accepting it now without opposition the Government would be enabled without delay to get into the consideration of the Ways and Means. It was right that he should state generally the provisions of the measure, with which, however, the House was doubtless already familiar. It was not introduced, as a matter of fact, for the first time. He believed as early as 1852 such a measure was introduced, and in 1878 a Bill was also introduced very much in the same form as that for which he now claimed the attention of the House. It was then drafted as an original Bill. At present it was merely put forward as an amendment of the Land Act of 1870, its effect being to make the latter more workable and more popular. One point in which the Land Act was defective was the manner in which tenants in country towns and villages were liable to be treated, and were as a matter of fact treated; and the object of the present Bill was to give the tenants a right in regard to the improvements which they effected in their houses in towns and villages. The House was, no doubt, aware that the Land Act might be said to give a claim to tenants to get some compensation or consideration for disturbance, and also for improvements. This Bill purported to extend to the towns only one of the rights recognized in the Land Act, and it was in its terms an obviously fair and just measure. It had reference simply to the *bonâ fide* increase to the letting value brought about by the expenditure of the tenant, and provided compensation for such improvement. That was surely a fair, moderate, and just proposition. When the Land Bill was first projected for Ireland, the claims were confined practically to one for compensation for improvements; and if that most reasonable claim had been conceded at once, it would doubtless have resulted in great satisfaction, and have prevented much of the subsequent demands made being urged so strongly. Now, in this instance the case of a man rebuilding or improving a house to such an extent as to make it practically a new house should clearly claim attention and sympathy; and if that blot was removed early, there would, doubtless, be no further agitation on the subject. But if, on the contrary, they rejected this very simple and just amendment of the existing law, they would very probably have the tenants in the towns making an effort to be included in all the provisions of the Land Act. Though this point now raised was dealt with comparatively quietly up to the present, it would at the next Election form a very important subject of agitation, and attract considerable attention, unless the Government, by a Bill of their own, or by accepting this one, granted a simple measure of justice. There were very few Members of the House who had not, at some time or another, been in Ireland, and they must have been struck by the dilapidation visible in the houses in the country towns and villages. There were certain towns, no doubt, that were more or less an exception to this rule; and if they came to look into the subject they would generally find that where the town looked well, where the houses were good, and where some attention seemed to be paid to appearances as well as comfort, the town would be found to be owned by someone who resided at or near it, and who took a kind of pride in it. Unfortunately, they would find that this was not the case with the great majority of towns. The landlord, as a rule, resided at a distance—in another country it might be—and treated the whole thing with neglect. It was really, in such a case, not the tenant's interest to improve his house, and the landlord only looked to receive his rent, and thus it was a town was permitted to fall into a state of neglect and decay. If anyone took the trouble of going into a good house in a good town, and, addressing the occupier, expressed his pleasure at seeing the house in such a satisfactory condition, attributing it to the landlord, he would find that, in most cases, the reply would assure him that the landlord had really had nothing whatever to do with it—that it was the tenant who had, at his own cost and risk, effected the improvements. The tenant might, no doubt, add an expression of a belief that under the circumstances the landlord would not put him out of a place where he had created a business; but, at the same time, the evil existed so long as the risk of confiscating these improvements and that business prevailed. These improvements were really the property of the tenant, and yet the man who created them would be liable to be swept away without any compensation. In towns where dilapidations were visible tenants would doubtless spend money in improvements if there was any security for it. In the last debate on this subject it was stated in effect that there was freedom of contract, and that in that way a safeguard was provided; but really that was not so, and even landlords in such cases could not be said to have freedom of contract, for in very many instances houses were tied up in settlements, and owners had very often only a life interest. In some cases they might give long leases, no doubt; but in any case the evil prevailed, and the course now suggested by the Bill would tend to remove it. The shop system in Ireland differed in a large measure from that in

England and other places. They often engaged in general business, and had occasion frequently to extend their business premises. He had often seen such extensions effected in a great many towns where the occupiers knew that they were doing so at their own risk, and that the fruits of their own industry and enterprize were liable to be taken away from them without any consideration. This question also affected the labourers. There was great inconsistency in providing special powers for the erection of labourers' cottages, and yet leaving the law in such a state that no one, except the landlord, had any interest in making improvements. Many cottages, which were unfit for occupation, would be improved if security were given for the improvements. He could assure the Chief Secretary for Ireland that there was a good deal of feeling in Ireland in favour of this Bill, although that feeling had not been expressed in a noisy manner. A very large number of shopkeepers, Poor Law Boards, and Town Councils had written to himself, and other Members of Parliament, drawing attention to the necessity for a measure of this kind. Many of the requests which he had received were for a much larger measure; but he thought if this Bill were passed it would remove the real root of the injustice. If, however, this measure were not granted, it would be very hard to prevent those shopowners who saw their property confiscated demanding at the next Election a much larger measure, and raising a cry to include them in the whole of the principles of the Land Act, instead of being satisfied with this one improvement clause. There was one point to which he wished in passing to allude—namely, as to the size of towns to be comprehended within the scope of the Bill. The Bill provided that the Act should not apply to any holding situate in any city, town, or county of a town containing, according to the last published Census, a population of 20,000 and upwards. This was a point, however, that could be settled in Committee. It was also provided by the Bill that the provisions of Section 4 of the Landlord and Tenant Act, 1870, should apply not only to any holding in Ireland which was wholly or partially agricultural or pastoral in character, but also to any holding in Ireland of which the value should not exceed £50 a-year as valued under the Acts relating to the valuation of rateable property. The Bill had been drafted by Queen's Counsel; but if the Government or the House objected to its wording he was quite willing to modify it. All he asked was that they should establish the principle that improvements in buildings in towns should not be confiscated. Moreover, he confined his request to improvements which added to the letting value of the property. If a tenant built a conservatory he might not be entitled to compensation on that account, because it might not add to the letting value of the house. But if the tenant enhanced the value of the premises he ought to be credited with it. That would be nothing out of the landlords' pockets, and it would help greatly to improve the condition of the Irish towns and villages.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I am afraid the Government cannot take the course suggested by the hon. and gallant Member. He has put forward this Bill in a modest way as a mere amendment and corollary of the Land Act of 1870, as if it were an innocent and natural extension of the principles of land legislation in Ireland. But the Government cannot accept any proposal of this sort, at all events on those grounds. The legislation which Parliament has given of late years upon the subject of land in Ireland has been based upon principles which do not apply to this question at all. The habit has been to treat the agricultural industry as different from all other industries there. I will not now go into the reasons and arguments for that conclusion; but it is generally admitted that there are principles which apply to the agricultural industry, and which do not apply to others; and then, in the case of Ireland, there was, as everybody knows, this state of things—that agriculture was practically the only industry of a large part of the country, and, there being an obvious limit to the available land, there was a great competition for holdings; and that created a state of things which required individual treatment; but in the towns to which the hon. and gallant Member wishes to extend a particular clause of the Land Act very different circumstances exist, and, instead of there being too many tenants desirous to occupy the holdings, there are too many holdings for the tenants that present themselves. In fact, the tenant, instead of being at the mercy of the landlord, is the master of the market to a very great extent. The whole conditions are altered when you pass from agricultural holdings to the holdings in the smaller towns, so that whatever ground there may be for interfering in the question which has been brought before the House by the hon. and gallant Member, it cannot be upon the ordinary ground upon which Parliament has proceeded in the case of agricultural tenancies. A very wide description may be applied to the nature of the improvements touched upon by this Bill. The hon. and gallant Member has gone so far as to speak of the creation of a business as being an "improvement" in the ordinary sense—that a business may be got together in a certain shop, and that if the shopkeeper is summarily, and without compensation, ejected, he loses his business. No doubt, there may be cases in which it is a sad blow to a business if a shopkeeper has to remove; but it would be a very nice question how far a business attaches itself to the individual, and how far to the premises. At any rate, I do not think that the principle of compensation for loss of business has ever yet been applied in other cases. Then, as to the improvements, I think before we dealt with that subject we should require to have some sort of understanding as to the nature of the improvements. If anything were done, we might, perhaps, follow somewhat the lines of the Agricultural Holdings Act by dividing improvements into different classes, which are dealt with in different ways. That would probably be a more likely line for the House to follow than the mere extension of a clause in a Land Act which really does not apply to the subject. And, supposing we are to deal with the matter at all, why should we confine our interference to the small towns? The hon. and gallant Member says his proposal does not go beyond tenancies in the small towns; but why? There is, of course, something in what he says about the sentiment of the small towns being in sympathy with the agricultural tenants; but I imagine that if any provision of this sort is required anywhere, it is more required in the large towns than in the small, because there is greater competition for houses and shops in the large towns; and, therefore, the state of things is more nearly related to that which prevails in some parts of the country with regard to agricultural holdings. Again, if this is to be done for tenants in towns in Ireland, why should it not be done for those in England, Scotland, and Wales? There is no reason why a different system should be adopted for one country and not for the others. Therefore, I say that to ask us to extend to the smaller towns in Ireland this principle, on the ground that it is a mere corollary and extension of the Land Act, is to ask Parliament to commit itself to a principle which, if it were accepted, ought to be extended to the whole of the United Kingdom, and to the large as well as the small towns. We have a Royal Commission sitting on the question of the housing of the poor in our large towns. Of course, I do not know what course that Commission will take; but it is quite possible that they might recommend something which might have the effect of protecting and strengthening the interests of tenants in the large towns. But surely we ought to proceed cautiously on one system in this matter, and we cannot be reasonably asked to embark upon any such course of proceeding as this Bill prescribes, upon the ground that it is a mere application to a similar class of subjects of a principle already applied in Ireland to the land, whereas that principle was applied for special reasons which are not applicable to the new subject. If there is a case for dealing with the interests of tenants of houses in towns, it is a case entirely separate and distinct from agricultural questions; and Parliament, if it desired to deal with it, must deal with it on separate principles, and for separate reasons altogether. On these grounds, it is not possible for the Government to assent to the Bill, and I think the House will probably be disposed to decline to proceed with it.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the Chief Secretary had just made what appeared to him to be a rather curious sort of speech. He could not quite understand whether the objection raised by the right hon. Gentleman was that his hon. and gallant Friend did not go nearly far enough and make a more comprehensive measure. Towards the close of his observations the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that if this measure was good for anything it was good for large towns and for England and Scotland. Well, he quite agreed with that; but his hon. and gallant Friend was concerned naturally more for the interests of his own country; and, therefore, he had limited himself in his Bill to Ireland, and modified it so as to give it what he hoped would be a better chance of passing the House. The right hon. Gentleman, however, having said that this Bill should have applied to larger towns, and to England and Scotland, did not go on, as one might at least have expected, to say that the Government intended to do anything for those large towns, or for England or Scotland. On the contrary, he conveyed the idea that the question was so large that the Government ought not to deal with it at all. That was a fair deduction from the reasoning of the right hon. Gentleman, who had gone on to argue that there was a radical difference between the interests of occupiers in the country and in the towns. But the right hon. Gentleman was a Member of a Government which was showing that as to suffrage there was no difference between the country and the towns. The right hon. Gentleman should remember that the tendency of all legislation in recent years had been to remove these imaginary differences and distinctions, and to show that if a man has an interest in a house in a town he is as much entitled to the protection of the law as a man in the country. The right hon. Gentleman had urged that the landlord in the country was the master of the situation, but that in towns the tenant was the master. [MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In the smaller towns.] And yet he went on to speak of the Commission now inquiring into the housing of the poor. Did that not apply to small towns as well as to large? If the Chief Secretary would just go over to Ireland, and take the trouble to inquire into the subject, he would very quickly learn that his statement was anything but accurate, and would get out of his mind the notion that the tenant was the master of the situation. The right hon. Gentleman had not given one single reason against this Bill, except, indeed, that the principle of the Bill erred on the side of too great moderation. He could, however, assure the Chief Secretary and the House that this was but the beginning of a great movement—of a great agitation, with which some Government would have to deal, and perhaps it would be found that the action which the Government now refused to take would then come too late.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he could not altogether concur in the remarks of his right hon. Friend. A Committee of the House of Lords, of which Lord Salisbury was Chairman, had, in 1873, drawn up a Report which stated that a case for Parliamentary consideration had been made out for the question of the improvement of land and the dwellings of the poor as being matters of great public interest. He did not think, therefore, that it was possible altogether to disconnect the towns and the country in this matter. He could not congratulate his right hon. Friend on the observations he had made having an economical character. It had been stated by him that it was not desirable to support the Bill, because in the towns of Ireland a different state of things prevailed from that which was observed in the rural districts. In the towns, it was said, there were too many buildings seeking for tenants, while in the country there was great competition for rural holdings. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would see that this was a strong argument in favour of the principle of the measure. It was precisely because in the agricultural towns there might be many more holdings to be let than there were persons desiring to take them that it was the interest of the landlords not to improve the holdings in the same manner as if there was an eager competition for them. The right hon. Gentleman also spoke of the wide interpretation which might be given to the subject of improvements mentioned in the Bill; and he proceeded to speak of a business established in a shop which would be difficult to separate from the improvement rendered to the real property. That observation had been met, however, by the hon. and gallant Member, who expressed his intention to limit compensation for improvement to the increase in the letting value, and everything really turned upon that. The appointment of the Royal Commission which was now sitting to consider the question of the housing of the poor might be a reason for encouraging this House to look forward to the probability of the subject being dealt with in a more comprehensive manner; but that fact did not absolve the House from expressing an opinion as to whether it was desirable or not that the principle of compensation for improvement in urban districts should be affirmed. He thought the limit of £50 mentioned in the Bill was too low, and the 20,000 population mentioned in the measure too high. Without approving of the form and structure of the Bill, but having regard only to its principle, he should vote for the second reading.

MR. O'KELLY thought that when the Chief Secretary considered the nature of the relations existing between landlords and tenants in agricultural towns in Ireland, and those which existed between landlords and tenants in England, he would find it very difficult to apply the same principles in dealing with them. In the small country towns of Ireland, the improvements were made almost exclusively by the tenants. In many cases, indeed, the houses were really the property of the tenants; they were morally theirs, for they had built and maintained them. The suggested difficulty that improvements might be effected that were not suitable for the tenant might be amended in Committee by the adoption of an Amendment, providing that the interest of the tenant should be circumscribed by the increase of the letting value of the tenement. Under the circumstances, he thought the Government would do well to allow this Bill to proceed, without waiting for the time when they might be able to apply its principles to the whole of the United Kingdom.

COLONEL COLTHURST, in supporting the Bill, said, he did not think the principle involved was a question between landlord and tenant in the same sense as that which was involved in the Land Act. In most of the small towns in Ireland with which he was acquainted the house property was principally in the hands of middlemen. But while he was prepared to support this stage of the Bill, he wished to point out to the hon. and gallant Member that, in his opinion, the Bill, as at present drawn, went far beyond the question of compensation for improvements, and would neutralize one of the most beneficial clauses in the Land Act—namely, the exclusion from the benefits of the Land Act of purely pastoral holdings. ["No, no!"] That, however, was a question for Committee; and he hoped the Government would see their way to affirm the principle of the measure.

MR. M'COAN agreed with the Mover of the Bill that there was practically a very great identity of feeling between the agricultural and small town tenants. Small shopkeepers in Ireland were also, in many instances, occupiers and cultivators of small farms in the neighbourhood; but, while they could claim agricultural improvements, they had no such claim in respect of their dwellings. He failed to see any substantial distinction between agricultural and urban tenants. The Chief Secretary seemed to ignore the fact that the claim for compensation on the part of both classes of tenants was based on a common principle of equity. Surely what was fair and equitable in the one case was equally just in the other. The objection of the right hon. Gentleman to the Bill, because it was in the nature of piecemeal legislation, was answered by the fact that piecemeal legislation had already been given in the case of the Land Act. The same reason which induced piecemeal legislation in the case of agricultural tenants equally applied to holders in towns, and constituted a precedent for further beneficial legislation of the character proposed by this Bill.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, he should give his warm support to the Bill. Tenants in towns required and deserved protection as much as those in the country. In England they knew how many wealthy families had been enriched by confiscating the property of their tenants in their improvements; and his only regret was that the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Nolan) had not framed his Bill to apply to every town in Ireland, be the population 1,000 or 2,000. He was surprised that leaseholders had submitted so long to see their property confiscated.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 32; Noes 40: Majority 8.—(Div. List, No. 18.)

WAYS AND MEANS.

INCOME TAX BILL.

Resolution [November 17] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir ARTHUR OTWAY, Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, and Mr. COURTNEY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [BILL 38.]

MOTION.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) (No. 2) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for extending the Parliamentary Franchise to Women."—(*Mr. Woodall.*)

MR. **WARTON** said, he should like to ask the hon. Member what the Bill really was? A rumour had gone forth that it was a measure which represented the interests of one section of agitators. There were two sets of female agitators in this question—one in favour of the enfranchisement of women, and the other in favour of single women, or widows, or persons who were neither single nor widows, but improper characters. The Bill that was brought forward by the hon. Member, and withdrawn, was one for all women who had the qualification which would enable them to vote, whether they were married, single, or widows; and this Bill was for widows, single women, and improper characters.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 29; Noes 8: Majority 21.—(Div. List, No. 19.)

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. WOODALL, Mr. ILLINGWORTH, Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD, Mr. STANSFELD, Mr. YORKE, and Baron HENRY DE WORMS.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [BILL 39.]

MR. **WARTON**: I rise to Order. I wish, Sir, to call your attention to the fact that there are not 40 Members present.

MR. **SPEAKER**: Including the Tellers there are more than 40 Members present.

After a pause,

MR. **WARTON** said: I wish, Sir, to call your attention to the numbers recorded in the late Division. I am informed that one hon. Member who intended to vote with me in the "No" Lobby found himself in the wrong Lobby, and his name has been recorded with the "Ayes."

MR. **SPEAKER**: The hon. and learned Member is too late in raising that question now.

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. **ARTHUR ARNOLD** inquired if the second reading of the Income Tax Bill would be the first Order of Business for Thursday?

LORD **RICHARD GROSVENOR**: No, Sir. The first Business will be the Report of Supply of the 13th of November.

SIR **WILFRID LAWSON** inquired what Business would be taken on Friday?

LORD **RICHARD GROSVENOR**: The usual Business on going into Committee of Supply—the Notices on the Paper.

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 20th November, 1884.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Lord Howard of Glossop, after the death of his father.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading—Committed to Select Committee*—Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) (6).

Committee—Order discharged—Representation of the People (5).

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—LORD NORTHBROOK'S REPORT.—OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF **NORTHBROOK**: My Lords, I wish to state that I shall postpone my Statement on the Navy from Monday next until Monday week. I wish to ask the indulgence of your Lordships for a moment or two to mention a personal question. Yesterday I saw in the morning newspapers a report, which came by telegraph from Alexandria, giving what purported to be a circumstantial account of the contents of the Report which I made to Her

Majesty's Government on the subject of Egyptian Finance. That report was incorrect. I do not generally take notice of newspaper reports, especially of telegrams from Egypt, which are notoriously full of inaccuracies, and which are sent by persons who telegraph every kind of report, which often have no foundation whatever. But this account was so circumstantial that I thought it necessary to correct it so far as I could at once. I communicated to the Central News, and to all the evening newspapers of the day, information enabling them to correct the report on my authority—not to correct it in the sense of telling them what was in my own Report, because, as your Lordships will see, that Report has been made to the Government. On my authority, however, they were able to say that that Report was incorrect; but to my surprise this morning I saw in *The Times* newspaper an article discussing this particular Report which I had corrected, and apparently correcting that Report on what appeared to be authority. My Lords, I think it is only due to myself to take the first opportunity of informing your Lordships and the public that this Report, purporting to be corrected by *The Times*, is also incorrect in several essential particulars. If it had only rested with myself, or had it only affected my own personal reputation, I should not have thought it worth while to make this explanation in this House; but I can assure your Lordships that reports of this kind, especially when they come, purporting to be based on authority, from a journal of the position of *The Times* newspaper, are most prejudicial to the interests of the people of Egypt. It gives rise to every kind of rumour, and is very prejudicial. I may be allowed to say that I have no personal knowledge of the writer in *The Times* newspaper; but after the extraordinary mistakes which that journal has fallen into—in the first place, in announcing by authority when I was in Egypt that Lord Wolseley was recalled; and, in the second place, in announcing, apparently by authority, that telegrams had been received from the Khedive saying that General Gordon was killed, neither of which pieces of news had the very slightest foundation in fact—I think the managers of that journal might have had a lesson, and might not have been quite so credulous as to unauthentic information which they may receive from Egypt.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I do not wish to complain nor to comment upon the explanation of the noble Earl, which, I think, is very natural; but I only rise to say that rumours of this kind are very apt to arise when a very important document is known to be in existence, and when there is a natural curiosity on the part of the public to know what that important document contains. I only wish to ask the noble Earl whether there is any chance of our having the advantage of seeing that document within a measurable space of time?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: That is a matter as to which I cannot give an answer to the noble Marquess.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Then, may I ask the Question of the noble Earl the Leader of the House?

EARL GRANVILLE: I mentioned last night an instance of the inconvenience of answering a Question without Notice. My idea is that we should not ask a Question without giving Notice, and I understood the noble Marquess assented to that proposition. All I have got to say at present is that this document is a confidential Report of Lord Northbrook to the Government. The suggestions of the noble Earl are under the consideration of the Cabinet at this moment; and it is quite impossible for me to say at present whether they will present that confidential Report or not.

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 6.)

(*The Lord President.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: I have taken charge of this Bill on this occasion, as I did during the last Session of Parliament, and it is precisely the same measure which passed the other House on that occasion, but was not received with favour by this House. The measure not a great while ago passed the other House apparently with very little difference of opinion, and I hope I am not wrong in anticipating that your

Lordships will give it a second reading to-night. There is certainly very little difference of opinion in the other House with respect to Parts I. and II. of the Bill—the parts dealing with Poor Law elections—and I do not think that in this House there was any serious difference of opinion with respect to these two main parts of the Bill. It is not necessary for me to go through the provisions of the Bill, as I described them fully on the last occasion. I ask your Lordships to give the Bill a second reading, and I am glad to see that no Notice of opposition to this stage has been given. I have learned privately from the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Waterford), however, that he proposes to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. I shall be surprised if the noble Marquess thinks it necessary to persevere in that Motion, because there is nothing about the Bill which—so far as I can see—should make it necessary for such a course to be taken. The subject of the Bill is one with which many of your Lordships are particularly familiar, and I certainly do not think that it could be better considered in a Select Committee than in a Committee of the Whole House; if it is thought necessary to refer such a Bill as this to a Select Committee, I hardly know where such a rule would stop. There are very few Bills read a second time in this House which might not, on similar grounds, be referred to a Select Committee, instead of being considered by a Committee of the Whole House. The noble Marquess will, no doubt, state his reasons for making this proposal; but I must say it does not seem to me either necessary or convenient. It could be amply considered in the Committee of the Whole House, and I hope your Lordships will not adopt the course suggested by the noble Marquess. I would, however, now ask your Lordships to give the Bill a second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord President.*)

The Marquess of WATERFORD said, that last year, when the Bill was brought forward by the noble Lord, the House for certain reasons rejected it, and he should like briefly to state those reasons. One was, that the Bill had passed through the House of Commons in a most extraordinary manner. In the Committee stage, the Government declared that there were certain clauses of the Bill which they could not accept, and those provisions were accordingly struck out. The Report stage being taken at 2 o'clock in the morning, the Chief Secretary, in an empty House, put back the obnoxious clauses into the Bill; but there was still more extraordinary conduct on the part of the Government with regard to this measure. The late Chief Secretary, in the strongest way—in language much more eloquent than he (the Marquess of Waterford) could use—had, in 1883, condemned these clauses. The late Chief Secretary had shown unmistakably that they would be unjust to owners of property in Ireland; and yet, in an empty House, on the Report stage, these clauses were put back again by himself. In consequence of that, and of the fact that the Government did not seem able to make up their minds about the Bill, and the time at which it was sent up rendering it impossible to consider so complex a scheme, their Lordships very properly refused to read the measure a second time. The history of the Bill this Session had also been a very curious one. Parliament was brought together, they understood, for the purpose of considering only the Franchise Bill; but, so far as he could see, the whole result of the Session would be the passage through the House of Commons of the Poor Law Guardians Bill, because every other result could have equally been obtained if the same conciliatory spirit had been shown by the Government in the summer as they now exhibited. This spirit did honour to Her Majesty's Government, and had given great satisfaction to every Member of their Lordships' House and to the country generally. But, at the same time, the only thing which would not have happened if a sensible course had been followed in July would have been the passing of this Bill through the House of Commons twice in one year. The present Chief Secretary, whose knowledge of Ireland must of necessity be extremely limited, had said he was in favour of the Bill; but this was a Bill affecting very materially very great interests in Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman must be extremely clever if he had been able, in the short period he had spent in that country, to arrive at the conclusion that this was a Bill which should be passed. They must remember that the right hon. Gentleman was bound by the fact that Mr. Trevelyan accepted the measure last Session, and also by the fact that the noble Lord (Lord Carlingford) had adopted it. It was not adopted by the Government in the other House; but in this House the noble Lord had taken it over as a Government measure. The Chief Secretary had, very naturally, felt himself obliged to declare in favour of it; but it had been passed in a very extraordinary manner. He was told by certain Liberal Members of the House of Commons connected with Ireland that they had no idea the Bill would be read a third time until they saw it had passed in the newspaper; and though it was now said that there was no great difference of opinion about it, Conservative Members had assured him that they had no idea the Bill was coming on until they heard it had been read a third time. It was not usual in, he believed, either House for the Report and third reading stages of a Bill to be taken on the same day; but, with the assistance of the Government, this Bill had been shoved through the House of Commons, the Report and third reading being taken on the same day. He (the Marquess of Waterford) did not now propose to object to the second reading; but after that was agreed to, he should ask their Lordships to accept the very moderate and sensible proposition—which his noble Friend did not seem to agree with—and move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. There was every reason why that course should be adopted; in fact, he believed it to be impossible to go with any minuteness into the Bill, except through the medium of a Select Committee. They could not consider the merits of the clauses in the Whole House. Their Lordships were aware that the difference between England and Ireland was very great with regard to Poor Law matters. In England the owners only paid rates on their own occupation. In Ireland they not only paid rates on their own occupation, but they paid half the rates on their tenants' occupation, and the whole of the rates of tenants under £4. In short, they paid five-eighths of the whole poor rate of the country. In England, again, they had the *ex officio* element on the Boards; every single magistrate became an *ex officio* Guardian. In Ireland, he thought, the landlords had a right to, at least, one-half of the representation on the Board; and in saying this he was only quoting what the late Chief Secretary himself said in 1883. The Bill altered the whole complexion of the law upon the subject. He would be very glad to have the law of Ireland assimilated to that of England; and he thought it would be very easy to deduct from the tenant's rent the rate payable by the landlord on an average of ten years, and then make the occupier pay the whole rate. What he objected to was that they made one body—namely, the landlords—pay the greater proportion of the rates, and gave to another almost an entire disposition of the funds. This Bill reduced the *ex officio* members from one-half to one-third; and if that should be done it would be useless for them to attend at any Board meeting. Then there was the question of proxies. He believed that in England there was no great feeling in favour of proxies, although, he believed, there was a system of proxy voting in England of which people were not very well aware. That was to say, English landlords not living in the district had the right of voting by proxy; but in Ireland, if they had no proxies, they could not possibly vote in the different Unions in which they had property, because they could not be in several different places at the same time. Proxies were more or less necessary. This Bill again proposed to reduce the qualification of voters for elected Poor Law Guardians. He did not think it necessary to go lower in the scale of qualification; but that was a minor detail, to which he did not object very much. Last year, however, Lord Fitzgerald had told them that he objected very strongly to the proposed reduction of *ex officios*. That noble and learned Lord said that there were certain points in the Bill of which he approved. He (the Marquess of Waterford) agreed with him. There were several points in which he did not see any great harm, and others which he thought a decided improvement, among the latter being the provision that elections should take place every three years. He had no objection to the ballot, which, as had been shown, would protect tenants from agitators, and anything which had a tendency in that direction would be cheerfully welcomed by noble Lords connected with Ireland. There was a third point which, under restriction, would, in his opinion, be an advantage; and that was that the petitions against the election of Guardians should be tried by County Court Judges instead of by the Local Government Board. There was another point, however, upon which he wished to say a word, and that was, the extravagance of Boards of Guardians in Ireland. They had been used in this agitation to injure the landlords. He had a quotation from the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) in which he advised Boards of Guardians to pay large sums for the support of suspects and evicted tenants, and promised the Boards that half of these sums would come out of the landlords' pockets, while the other half the Land League would, in some way or another, see defrayed. These Boards had been used, over and over again, for the purpose of supporting the agitators against the landlords. In Tralee, for example, he found that sums of from 15*s.* to 20*s.* a-week were given to the families of suspects and evicted tenants, while families of equal size of ordinary paupers only got 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*, and 3*s.* 6*d.* The extravagance of these Boards was well known, and if the *ex officio* members of the Boards were reduced in number it was impossible to say where this extravagance would end. In fact, this Bill might be called a Bill for the purpose of doubling the poor rate in Ireland, and in any case that would be its effect. They must also remember the Labourers Act had placed new duties on these Boards. That Act had so far been a failure, and he thought it was likely to remain unworkable; but if they removed the *ex officio* members from the Boards of Guardians they might have the most dreadful jobbery committed and the most enormous expense incurred, without any of the persons who had to pay the greater part of it having the slightest opportunity of saying a word in protection of their rights. He was sorry to learn that the Government was inclined to refuse to assent to the Bill being referred to a Select Committee. He believed that a Select Committee would be able to give the matter careful consideration, and to collect valuable evidence on the different points on which they were at issue. The Report of such a Committee would be useful to the people of Ireland, and also to their Lordships' House. He was not prepared to say that the present system of election was the best that could be devised. It had been in operation for a long time, and it was quite possible that a better system might be introduced. The *ex officio* members were probably not the best representatives of the owners of property, and a scheme might be suggested by which owners of property could elect representatives for themselves. Then some mode of dealing with the question of proxies might be discovered. All these things were possible if they took evidence and went into the matter thoroughly; but he objected to the House passing without consideration a Bill that was of such immense importance to the future interests of the ratepayers of Ireland.

LORD WAVENEY said, it was quite evident from the conduct of some of the elected Poor Law Guardians that the *ex officio* element on the Boards of Guardians in Ireland was very requisite, and that some modification of the present system of representation was absolutely necessary, in order to preserve the balance of power equally between the two Parties; and therefore he should support the suggestion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

THE EARL OF BELMORE said, he was also of opinion that the importance of the *ex officio* element could not possibly be overrated. He could wish, however, that *ex officio* Guardians would attend the meetings of the Boards with greater regularity than they did at present, as he thought that would produce a good effect by enabling them to keep touch with the people in Ireland. He hoped the Government would see their way to acquiesce in the suggestion as to a Select Committee. He would remind their Lordships that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland could, and often did, without the recommendation of the Lord Lieutenant of an Irish county, appoint magistrates on his own mere motion; and the men so appointed to the Bench and thus qualified to act as *ex officio* Guardians were usually men of the same class in society as the elected Guardians.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he had listened to the debate. He had heard argument which might be good or bad for alterations in the measure; but he had not heard any strong reasons why the objections that had been urged against the Bill should not be considered in the form of Amendments in Committee of the Whole House. A prominent Member of the other House of Parliament had told him, on one occasion, that he was always struck by the admirable manner in which the House of Lords performed their duty in Committee. He did not wish their Lordships to lose any of their reputation; and he did not see why their Lordships should not have this opportunity of displaying their ability in that respect. Two classes in Ireland took different views, and it was very important for them to know the arguments that would be used in the House of Lords in considering this subject. He certainly did not think their Lordships ought to take the course proposed by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Waterford).

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he very much regretted to hear that the Government were not prepared to accede to what he considered the very moderate proposal that had come not only from the Opposition, but from the Ministerial side of the House. It was obvious that questions relating to local subjects in Ireland were eminently those that ought to be referred to the consideration of Select Committees. All of them had not the knowledge of Irish matters which was necessary to enable them to come to a decision on a question of this kind. In a Select Committee it would be possible to bring forward evidence and collect facts which would be of material assistance to their Lordships. They must remember that the case of Ireland in regard to local taxation was very different from that of this country. In England the poor rate had come to be regarded as a hereditary burden. They had borne it for 300 years, and so had become accustomed to it; but in Ireland it had been imposed for the first time within the memory of persons who were still living. Of course, this was an enormous revolution, and their Lordships ought to consider the matter carefully before they agreed to the important changes in regard to it that were proposed in this Bill. That was not the only difference. There was in Ireland this other important difference—that the proprietors paid half the tenants' rates; and surely it was in accordance with the elementary principles of taxation that those who paid half the rates should also have half the representation. In any case when legislation was proposed which would deprive the proprietor of that which the old doctors of Constitutional Law held to be an elementary and primitive right, such legislation ought to be examined with the greatest possible care, and adopted only after the most careful consideration. He did not wish to refer at length to another and somewhat disagreeable subject; but it was well within their knowledge that the state of society in Ireland was not exactly similar to the state of society in England, and that agreement between the elected and *ex officio* members was not to be looked forward to in Ireland with the same confidence as it was in this country. It seemed to him that while the arguments were strong in favour of referring the Bill to a Select Committee, there were absolutely no arguments against the adoption of that course. This was not one of those measures that had to be passed in hot haste. It was not even one of the Government's main objects to pass it before Christmas. It was, on the contrary, a measure that would do just as well if it were passed next February, or next July, or next December. They were at the beginning of a long Session, and there would be ample time for a thorough consideration of this question; and he thought it would be much more satisfactory if they went to work with full knowledge of the subject, such as could only be obtained by the proposed inquiry. He could not understand the reasons of the Government for objecting to the proposal that had been made; and, for his part, he would certainly vote with the noble Marquess if they went to a division.

LORD INCHIQUIN said, that the *ex officio* Guardians rarely attended the meetings of their Boards. Many of them were selected on the ground of their property qualification only, and looked upon their position as *ex officio* Guardians simply in the light of an honorary distinction, and without any intention of attending to the duties; and he thought that a system of election might be devised which would give them much better Boards than they had. As Chairman of a Board of Guardians, he could say that the *ex officio* members never attended, except on some important occasion, such as the election of a Chairman. If this Bill passed in the state in which it was, the Chairman, in a vast number of cases, would be elected by the Nationalist Party; and the whole control would, consequently, be put into the hands of that Party. That was the reason why the so-called National Party in the House of Commons was so anxious to have this Bill passed. If the Bill was referred to a Select Committee they would be able to see whether, instead of having the *ex officio* Guardians, some scheme might not be devised by which the owners of property would be represented by the men who would attend the meetings of Guardians and give assistance, which the Boards very often wanted. He cordially approved of the suggestion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

The Earl of COURTOWN said, he thought that the Bill ought to be referred to a Select Committee, in order that the views of the officers of the Local Government Board in Ireland on the questions dealt with in the measure might be ascertained.

Viscount MIDLETON, in also supporting the proposal, said, that Mr. Parnell had given this distinct advice—that in all cases where it was possible Land League candidates should be selected; and the consequence was that on almost every Board of Guardians where the Land League predominated the whole of the *ex officio* Guardians had been thrust out of the Chairmanship and other posts they had occupied. One reason he had for wishing to have the Bill referred to a Select Committee was that he would like to know what the experience of the Local Government Board in Ireland had been of the working of the present system. He (Viscount Midleton) had watched the experiment with very considerable attention; and, so far as he had been able to gather, the results had been the reverse of satisfactory. In Dungarvan the whole of the Guardians had resigned in a body, because the rates were so high. In other Unions there had been extreme difficulty in getting the Guardians to discharge the duties imposed upon them, and they had only been induced to do so by the threat of the Local Government Board that they would suspend all Guardians, and appoint officials, if they were to do the work, as there was this unwillingness on the part of Guardians to perform the duties of the office, and especially the duty of collecting the rates and discharging their functions as a Sanitary Authority. He thought that it would be a great mistake to shut the door to those who were willing to do the work. If this question was not settled now it would be necessary for the Government to widen the scope of the inquiries, and to appoint a Commission to inquire into the whole working of the Poor Law system in Ireland. He thought the least that could be asked was that before the passing of a Bill which would effect such vital changes as this Bill would, they should be fully informed, which he ventured to say even the Lord President himself was not, of the facts of the case, and that, instead of being required to depend upon *ex parte* statements, they should have the impartial evidence of men who had spent their lifetimes in the practical working out of the system. He entirely joined in the appeal that had been made to the Government, and, if necessary, he should vote with the noble Marquess.

The Earl of LEITRIM said, that if this Bill were considered in Committee of the Whole House it might be entirely altered, and so give no satisfaction to anyone. If, on the other hand, they took the more moderate course of referring it to a Select Committee, they might evolve a Bill that would give general satisfaction to all Parties.

Lord FITZGERALD said, that when the Bill was previously before their Lordships he had expressed the opinion that it contained two provisions that were objectionable, and nothing had occurred to alter the opinion. One of the provisions to which he objected was that which abolished proxies, and the other was that for reducing the number of *ex officio* Guardians and reducing the qualifications. It would be very easy for their Lordships to strike out these clauses in Committee—it would be merely the work of a few minutes. In his (Lord Fitzgerald's) opinion, the present was not a time in which to reduce still further the just influence of property. He held, however, that if certain alterations were made in it the Bill would be a very good one. He thought his noble Friend (Lord Carlingford) would act rightly if he yielded to the wishes of noble Lords opposite. If the second reading were agreed to he would willingly assist in amending the Bill in Committee of the Whole House, and in that way it might be made a very good measure.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*The Marquess of Waterford.*)

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, that on the merits of this question of procedure he had not heard anything which had changed his opinion. He was not in the least convinced that noble Lords who took an interest in this subject required more information than they had already. He believed it was one of the most familiar of subjects to the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Waterford) and the noble Lords who had spoken on it, and that they did not want any information to help them to form a judgment, or to enable noble Lords who sat with them to do the same. Every one of the noble Lords opposite who were so anxious to refer the Bill to a Select Committee had voted last Session against the second reading; but the speech of his noble and learned Friend (Lord Fitzgerald) had great weight with him, because his noble and learned Friend was a friend of the Bill, as he had voted last Session for the second reading. He would, therefore, consent to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill *referred* to a Select Committee.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—(No. 5.)

(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he understood it would be agreeable to the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) that the Committee stage of the Franchise Bill should be taken on Monday week.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he should have preferred that day fortnight. He believed that they would not be ready before then; but if they were not ready, the Committee stage could be on the Monday again further postponed till the following Thursday—that was, that day fortnight.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that it was not proposed to ask their Lordships to meet next week, except on Monday or Tuesday to pass a Money Bill. Subject to any objection, he would propose on Monday or Tuesday next to move the adjournment of the House till the following Monday.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, that many noble Lords were at this season of the year living a long way from the House; and if the Committee stage of the Franchise Bill was to be taken on Monday week it would be desirable that they should have information in time to make their arrangements to come up to town.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that information would be given in sufficiently good time; and he would undertake, in case of an adjournment, to make it publicly known.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY assured their Lordships that no contentious view of the matter would be taken on Monday week. If it came to contention, they should let it be known in good time.

Order *discharged;* and House to be put into Committee on *Monday* the 1*st of December* next.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY.

QUESTION.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, he wished to know very distinctly, Whether the First Lord of the Admiralty intended to make his promised Statement as to the state of the Navy on Monday week, as he (Viscount Sidmouth) postponed, at the express wish of the noble Earl, the question on the subject which he had had on the Paper for some time?

EARL GRANVILLE said, that the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) had given a sufficient answer to that Question by saying that there would be no contentious Business on Monday week.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE (for Lord CASTLETOWN) asked the Lord President of the Council, Whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce a Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill in the present Session; and, if so, whether in the new Bill they would make alterations to meet the objections which were raised to certain clauses in the former Bill?

Lord CARLINGFORD (Lord President of the Council), in reply, said, that the Government had no intention to introduce such a Bill this Session.

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 20th November, 1884.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—James Stuart, esquire, *for* Hackney Borough.

Supply—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [November 13] *reported.*

Public Bill—*Third Reading*—Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act Amendment* [37], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

STATE OF TRADE AND COMMERCE—DISTRESS IN SUNDERLAND.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that the distress in Sunderland is considerably intensified by the existence of a character note system in use among employers, which renders it difficult, if not impossible, for unemployed Sunderland workmen to obtain employment in other localities by reason of there having been a strike in Sunderland; and, if the Government will propose any legislation to deal with the matter?

Mr. HIBBERT (for Sir William Harcourt): At the request of the Secretary of State, the Local Government Board directed one of their Inspectors to inquire into this matter; and his Report is to the effect that the Relieving Officers in the Sunderland Union know of no instance in which relief has been applied for, and the character note system alleged as the cause of destitution. The Inspector further states that he was informed there was nothing of the character note system in use among employers in any other branch of the industries connected with shipbuilding, except the engine fitters, and that no application has come from those men for relief. But the result of his inquiries appears to indicate that there may have been, in some instances, an indisposition on the part of employers to employ men on strike, though he concludes, on the whole, that the character note system has not affected the distress. Under the circumstances, the Government do not intend to propose any legislation.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—EXAMINATIONS.

Mr. SHEIL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table a Return of the marks made by candidates at the last two examinations of the Army Medical Department; whether the vacancies have, in all cases, been filled by those candidates who obtained the highest marks in the competitive examination; why information as to the number of marks gained by unsuccessful candidates in the examination for the Army Medical Department is refused; and, whether he is aware that this information is supplied to candidates for the Navy Medical Department?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I cannot give the Return beyond what has already been published. For obvious reasons it is not the practice in any examination to give the marks of unsuccessful candidates unless they can be designated by numbers. In the examinations for the Medical Staff, the candidates are examined by name, and no numbers are assigned to them. The vacancies have in all cases been filled by those candidates who obtained the highest aggregate of marks in the compulsory subjects without failing to reach the standard in any of them. This is in accordance with the published terms of the competition. Marks in the voluntary subjects have only a value in determining the place of the candidate on the list of those successful in virtue of their marks in the compulsory subjects. I understand that information as to the number of marks gained by unsuccessful candidates was refused, in consequence of the wish of the Examiners; but I see no sufficient reason why a candidate should not, on his application, be informed of the marks he gained, and I will give directions accordingly. I understand that similar information is afforded in the case of the Naval Medical Department.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)— MOVILLE PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that, at a Petty Sessions held at Moville, in the county of Donegal, on Tuesday the 7th day of October 1884, a case was tried, a game prosecution, at the suit of Mrs. Haslett, of Portsmouth, England, against James Kelly, junior, and others; that, during the trial, Mr. J. G. Harney, land agent, and Mr. Crawford McKay, of Derry, solicitor, both representing complainant, occupied places in Court beside the magistrate, Colonel Lyle, J.P., and Rudoulphus Harney, R.M. and the other justices present on the day in question; is it a fact that when the evidence closed, and the magistrates retired with closed doors to consult as to the decision to be awarded in the case, the above-named agent and solicitor were allowed to remain closeted with the said magistrates during their deliberations, whilst the defendants had to remain outside; and, if true, as stated, what action will the Chancellor take?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The accommodation in Moville Court House—consisting of only two small rooms—is so bad that it is the practice to allow professional men and others to remain at the back of the Bench. This was permitted on the day in question, the Court being inconveniently crowded. If a solicitor for the defence had been employed, he would have had the same facilities as the solicitor on the other side. The magistrates did not retire with closed doors. A screen is drawn across the Bench during their deliberations, and that was done in the present instance for a few minutes. The agent and solicitor were not closeted with the magistrates. It would be very desirable to have such accommodation, provided that no appearance could exist of magistrates and professional men being accommodated together.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' (IRELAND) RESIDENCE ACT—THE SALARIES.

COLONEL NOLAN (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is he aware of the inconvenience, and even hardship, which the present system for repayment of the Board of Works' advances, made under the National School Teachers' Residence Act, entails on managers and teachers who have been induced to adopt the provisions of the Act; and, is it the case that the half-yearly repayments required are about equal to two-thirds the quarterly salary of these teachers; whether the proper authorities can arrange that the Commissioners of National Education, who now recoup at convenience one-half the amount of each instalment paid the Board of Works, may in future, on receiving the usual half-yearly certificate that the residence is in *bonâ fide* occupation of the teacher, and kept in due repair, transmit to the manager within the month allowed for the payment of instalment a money order payable to the Board of Works for amount of the Commissioners' contribution; or, whether the Government will provide some other means whereby the teachers may be relieved from the obligation of parting with, almost as soon as received, so large a portion of their scanty salary in every alternate quarter, in order to discharge a liability amounting to double the sum legally claimable as rent for the occupancy of dwellings under the National School Teachers' Residence Act; and, whether it could be provided for that the cost of residences under the National School Teachers' Residence Act might not so largely fall upon the present generation of teachers by an amendment of the Act extending the period of repayment from thirty-five to fifty years?

MR. COURTNEY replied: This Question discloses the fact that some managers, contrary to both the letter and spirit of the Rules of the Education Commissioners, have stopped the whole of the rent-charge for the residences from the teachers' salaries. They have no right in any case to provide more than one-half the charge in this way, and they ought not to charge any part on the teachers. The Government is not responsible for such misconduct on the part of managers; but, in order to diminish their temptation to it, we will arrange that in future the half of the rent-charge which is repaid from the Education Vote should not pass through their hands at all, but, subject to the regulations being complied with, should be paid over by the Education Commissioners direct to the Board of Works. Thirty-five years seems a fully sufficient period for the repayment of loans for such a purpose as a teacher's house.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—REPAYMENT OF LOANS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is the practice of the Irish Board of Works, in the case of any occupier of land who had obtained a loan of money from the Board, to proceed against him or his sureties if he allowed the prescribed repayments to fall more than six months into arrear; and why, in the case of the owners of land who are sureties for the repayment of the loan of £100,000 by the Irish Board of Works to the Sligo, Leitrim, and Northern Counties Railway Company, the Board have allowed arrears, now standing at a total of £25,000, to go on accumulating for years without taking any step to recover?

Mr. COURTNEY: I think we have carried leniency to the utmost extreme in the case of these gentlemen. But it must be recollected that, unlike borrowers under the Land Acts, they have received no value for their money; that there were unavoidable delays in the completion of the railway; and that the guarantee was given, partly at least, in the public interest. The debt for which these gentlemen are responsible now amounts to £15,000; ever since it began to accrue we have been pressing them for payment; but our patience has now reached a limit, and unless a substantial payment is made before the 1st of January next stringent measures will be taken against them.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—DISTURBANCE AT VICTORIA PARK TABERNACLE, HACKNEY — THE "EX-MONK WIDDOWS."

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General, If his attention has been called to the fact that a person described as the "Ex-Monk Widdows," has, at the Victoria Park Tabernacle, Hackney (as reported in *The East London Press* of the 18th ultimo), and at different other places, before public audiences, gone through a parody of the religious service venerated by members of the Catholic Church as the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; and, whether a public performance of a travesty of a solemn religious Christian rite is an indictable offence, and punishable by law?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, that he had no official knowledge as to the occurrence, nor was it his business to inquire into it. Without full information as to the facts he could not express an opinion on the matter.

Mr. SEXTON: I would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether the public performance of a solemn religious Christian rite is an indictable offence, and punishable by law?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he could not give an answer to the Question as put without a knowledge of all the circumstances.

Mr. SEXTON said, he would ask a further Question on the subject.

BUILDING SOCIETIES — FAILURES —A GOVERNMENT AUDIT, &c.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in consequence of the recent failures of Building Societies, he has considered the desirability of a revision of the Act of 1874, by which the Registrar General may have extended powers, including an official audit, and reliable tables for safety to investors; and, whether Government is prepared to amend the said Act?

Mr. HIBBERT (for Sir William Harcourt), in reply, said, the Secretary of State had consulted the Registrar of Friendly Societies upon this question; and he had pointed out that what determined the safety of Building Societies was mainly the value of their securities. More importance was attached to that than the tables determining the rates at which instalments and interest were repaid. There were about 2,000 Building Societies, and if a compulsory official audit were established there would be greatly increased expenditure. He was of opinion that amendment might be made in the law to give extended powers to members of Building Societies; but the Home Secretary was not prepared to bring in a Bill for that purpose. If the hon. Member would communicate with the Registrar of Friendly Societies, and himself bring in a Bill, it would probably receive the support of the Home Office.

THEATRES AND PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT—SECURITY FROM FIRE.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether it is a fact that, in September 1883, the Board called on the occupier of the Myddelton Hall, Islington, to make certain structural alterations in those premises,

> "With a view to lessen risk to human life n case of panic or fire ;"

whether it is true that such structural alterations are still unmade, whilst licences have been since twice granted; and, whether, if this is correct, he intends to take any steps to have its proper exits provided, and, if the power of his Board is not sufficient for the purpose, whether he intends to at once bring in a short Bill to carry out the suggestion of the Home Secretary—

> "That it should be compulsory that the managers of each place of public entertainment applying for a renewal of their annual licences should produce a certificate from the Metropolitan Board of their safety to the public, making that a condition precedent to the renewal of their licences ?"

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: I beg to inform my hon. Friend that it is not a fact that the Board, in September, 1883, called on the occupier of this Hall to make certain structural alterations. Plans of the Hall have been taken by the Board's Architect, which will be considered in due course; but no requisitions as to structural alterations have been served upon the owner. The Hall is only used occasionally, and there are other places of more importance which require to be dealt with before it. Having answered my hon. Friend's first Question in the negative, I have only to add that it is doubtful whether such a Bill as that referred to by him could be brought in without Notice; but the matter has not escaped the attention of the Board.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—BECHUANALAND.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, with reference to the instructions to the Special Commissioner in Bechuanaland, just presented to Parliament, Whether, since that Country is only to be held "until its further destination is known," and it is the avowed design to annex it to the Cape Colony if practicable, the Chiefs to whom Mr. Mackenzie accorded British protection in May last have been, or will be, immediately informed that this protection is not promised as a permanent arrangement, and that if they come under the Sovereignty of the Queen they are liable to be handed over to a self-governing Colony, over which the British Government and Parliament exercise no control?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: I would draw the hon. Member's attention to page 94 of the Blue Book of last year (C. 3,686), in which he will find a Petition signed by Mankoroane and his Councillors praying for annexation to the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope; also, on page 98, a communication from Montsioa's Agent, in June of last year, in which he states that he would agree to a Colonial Protectorate if the Boers were expelled. There is no reason to suppose that the Chiefs are under any misapprehension as to the proposed destination of the country. By giving this answer it is not intended to acquiesce in any view that annexation to the Cape would be a hardship to the Chiefs, as the conduct of the Cape Government and Parliament towards the Natives within the Cape Colony is marked by justice and wisdom.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he did not mean to imply that annexation would be a hardship to the Chiefs.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—PROPOSED PIER AT MOVILLE, CO. DONEGAL.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If an application for a grant for a fishery pier at Moville, county Donegal, has been made, and inquiry has been held; and, if Mr. T. F. Brady has stated that in no part of his district is there greater necessity for a pier than at Moville ?

Mr. COURTNEY: The Fisheries, Piers, and Harbours Commission, having expressed themselves in favour of the construction of a pier at Moville, a design and an estimate were sent to them on August 28, since which date they have made no further communication to the Board of Works. The hon. and gallant Member for County Galway (Colonel Nolan) may, perhaps, be able to supply later information.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, in reference to the answer, he wished to ask the hon. Gentleman, was it a fact that the application was approved of by the Harbour Commissioners, and that since then several grants had been given in the case of subsequent applications? This was embodied in his Question originally, and he could not conceive why it was struck out.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he knew nothing of any portion of the Question being left out; but the query just put by the hon. Gentleman had nothing to do with the question.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, his Question was, whether it was a fact that, since the application was made for a grant for a fishery pier at Moville, several grants were made to subsequent applications? He could not understand why that was struck out.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not understand that there was anything in the Question struck out, and the Clerk at the Table is not cognizant of such a thing.

Mr. COURTNEY said, it was possible that grants had been made in other cases, because different steps had been taken.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—RIOTING AT COAL ISLAND, TYRONE.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that, on Saturday the 15th instant, a riotous mob took advantage of the absence of all the constables except one, stationed at Coal Island, county of Tyrone, to attack the houses of the Protestants in that place, and to create such disorder as to detain the mail car until a force of police was despatched from Dungannon to quell the riot, and to enable the driver of the mail car to proceed on his way; and, whether he can state the reason why the usual force of Constabulary was on that occasion absent from Coal Island?

Mr. SEXTON said, before the Question was answered he desired to ask, whether on the occasion referred to the police were absent from the town because the force was drafted off to protect an Orange band which was occupied playing provocative Orange tunes; and, whether the disturbance resulted from an assault committed by a body of Protestants on a few Catholics; whether one of the Protestant party made a bet that he would go into the Catholic quarter and curse the Pope; whether he did so, and thus created a disturbance; whether the Orange party used firearms; whether the Orange party was the only party that used firearms; and, whether, in the event of any prosecution being undertaken arising out of this occurrence, the Government would take care not to submit the hearing of cases to the local Protestant and Orange Bench, but would send down special magistrates under the Prevention of Crime Act to hear the cases?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Member for Sligo cannot expect me to answer all the details of his Question. I will state what I have been able to learn. I regret to say that the occurrences mentioned in this Question of the hon. Member for Tyrone did take place. The Coal Island Constabulary, with the exception of one man, had been withdrawn to Stewartstown, where disturbance was immediately apprehended, in consequence of the Conservative flute band from Dungannon going through Stewartstown to Cookstown, where there was a hiring market going on. A number of the rioters have been identified and will be prosecuted.

Mr. MACARTNEY wished to know whether, in consequence of the statements and allegations of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), an investigation would be made?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, an investigation would not be held as the result of anything that the hon. Member said; but he wished to repeat that a number of rioters had been identified and would be prosecuted.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PROMOTION.

Mr. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many promotions from the rank of Head Constable of Police to that of District Inspector have been made in Ireland since 1st November 1882; whether it is a rule in the force that one-fourth of the vacancies in the rank of District Inspector should be given to deserving and qualified Head Constables; and, whether this rule has been strictly observed, and, if not, on what grounds?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is no such rule as the hon. Member suggests; but the Inspector General has usually, with the sanction of the Government, given a fourth of the places to deserving Head Constables. No such promotions have taken place since the 1st of November, 1882; but, on the other hand, 10 out of 17 vacancies which had occurred in the previous month were given to Head Constables, and this unusually large proportion leaves them now only two short of the ordinary proportion. It is not at present practicable to fill up these two; but it will be done when opportunity offers.

IRELAND — SEED LOANS TO IRISH TENANTS — COLLECTION OF THE SEED RATE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, having regard to the fact that the advances of money by the State, in Ireland, for the purchase of seed, were made at a time of extreme destitution, to tenants of small holdings, the Irish Government, in view of the resolutions of the Ballina and other Boards of Guardians, declaring that the general poverty of the Country renders the collection of the Seed Rate "extremely difficult, and almost impossible," will sustain the appeal made in those resolutions by recommending the remission of the amount of Seed Rate now outstanding; and, whether a Return will be laid upon the Table, showing the amount advanced for seed to each Board of Guardians, and the amount for which each remains now liable?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: This is a Question in which the Treasury is involved, and I cannot hold out any hope of a different view being taken from that which has been on several occasions expressed. There will be no objection to the presentation of such a Return as the hon. Member suggests, if he wishes to move for it; but it will take some time to prepare.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—JUDICIAL RENTS, CO. CLARE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Lord Lieutenant has been drawn to the resolution of the Corofin Board of Guardians, unanimously adopted on the 15th ultimo, desiring the earnest notice of His Excellency to the numerous complaints respecting the excessive judicial rents fixed by the Clare Sub-Commission; declaring the payment of the rents so fixed to be utterly beyond the power of the tenants; and desiring a thorough and searching investigation into the merits of the several cases of appeal by the tenants to the Land Commission Court of Appeal; whether an identical resolution was adopted by every Poor Law Board in county Clare, except that of Ennis, in which case the chairman, Lord Inchiquin, refused to put the motion from the chair; whether, in the case of James Griffey, of Poulnalour, Walter Russell, landlord, rent £40, although it was proved that till 1858, when Mr. Russell bought the property, the rent of the holding had been £17, the Sub-Commission fixed the rent at £36, the Poor Law valuation being £20; whether, in the case of three tenants in Garrynacallagha, the valuation had been £43 10*s.* and the rent £40, when Mr. O'Gorman bought the estate in 1853, but, by repeated notices to quit and increases on each occasion, he has raised the rent to £60, and though bog and waste lands have been taken away from the tenants since 1853, the rent of £60 has been confirmed by the Sub-Commission; whether the Lord Lieutenant has communicated with the Land Commission; and, whether care will be taken to secure a thorough and searching inquiry into the appeals referred to in the resolution?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: The resolution mentioned was adopted by the Corofin Board of Guardians. I cannot at present speak with certainty as to the other Boards. The Lord Lieutenant forwarded a copy of the resolution to the Land Commissioners. The Government could not properly interfere further in the matter, nor can I now enter into the merits of the particular cases mentioned. They are all the subject of pending appeals which will be heard by the Land Commissioners as soon as possible, but cannot be taken out of their turn.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—EDENDERRY DISTRICT, KING'S CO.

MR. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it be a fact that there is not a single Catholic magistrate for the district of Edenderry; whether there are not many Catholic gentlemen of large landed property in the neighbourhood well qualified to share in the administration of justice in this Catholic district; whether, amongst many others, there is not Mr. Robinson, residing in the district, with about one housand acres in fee; whether, upon his application, an official answer was sent from Dublin Castle in the name of the Lord Lieutenant containing a refusal in these words:—"Without considering your qualification, I see no necessity for the appointment;" whether he can state why only Orange magistrates preside in this Catholic district; and, why the Commission of the Peace is refused to Catholic gentlemen of large independent property?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I informed the hon. Member on the 10th instant what the facts are as to the constitution of the magistracy of the Edenderry district; and I stated that the Lord Chancellor and the Lieutenant of the county, whilst most anxious to redress any existing inequality, have not had before them the name of any Roman Catholic gentleman whom they considered qualified. I cannot enter into discussion of the merits of any particular case. I think there must be some misapprehension as to such a letter as the hon. Member quotes from having been sent to Mr. Robinson from Dublin Castle. I have not been able to trace any such letter; but if the hon. Member will mention the date I will have further inquiry made.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE CLERK TO THE MAGISTRATES, EDENDERRY DISTRICT, KING'S CO.

Mr. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that in some recent cases tried before Messrs. Tyrrell and Ridgeway, Justices of the Peace for the Edenderry district, in the King's County, certain convictions being considered illegal, the parties convicted were intimidated from appealing by the said magistrates' clerk, upon the threat that in case of their appeal being successful that should they chance to come before the said magistrates again, they would not deal leniently with them;

two of the cases here referred to are Constable Patrick Gibeony, Complainant, William Murphy, Defendant, and Constable John Brown, Complainant, William Murphy, Defendant, both cases tried at Edenderry Petty Sessions on the 8th October last, the Defendant having to pay a fine and costs; whether in another case, Constable McAlroy v. W. Murphy, in the same Court, about fifteen months since, the clerk of the court, the Defendant, wishing to appeal, paid the said clerk the necessary fees, who nevertheless failed to serve the notices; whether one of the said magistrates is practically the only one who ever presides; whether both are Orangemen; and, what course the Chief Secretary proposes to take in the matter?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Clerk of Petty Sessions states that he gave no advice and made no suggestion to the defendant in these cases, either on the ground alleged in the Question or on any other ground, but that the defendant, after taking out the necessary certificates to prosecute an appeal in the two cases, decided on the 8th of October last, and, paying the required sum of 2*s.* for stamp duty on the certificate of conviction, paid the amount of the fines and costs, thus allowing the appeals to drop. With regard to the earlier case mentioned, the County Court Judge dismissed the appeal, because of the non-service on the Petty Sessions Clerk of the notice to Justices required by Section 24 of the Petty Sessions Act. The Clerk of Petty Sessions could not be held responsible for this. He had, in the ordinary course of his duty, prepared an appeal under the direction of the defendant, who paid him 3*s.* to cover stamp duty for the appeal, recognizance, and notice to the respondent; but he did not undertake the service of any document. Both of the magistrates named in the Question attend the Edenderry Petty Sessions with great regularity. I am not aware whether they are Orangemen. I see nothing in the case calling for my interference.

CURRENCY—THE IMPORTATION AND CIRCULATION OF FRENCH BRONZE COIN.

Mr. FIRTH asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What steps he proposes to take to arrest the importation and circulation of the French dix-centimes piece in England?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, that this subject had been for some time past occupying some attention. As to what steps the Government would take to arrest the importation, he could only reply in the negative, for he was afraid that such an interference with persons bringing coin from France would be useless, vexatious, and unwarrantable. There was no reason to believe that French coin was imported commercially. If it were, the profit would only be 4 per cent, against which would have to be set the freight and insurance, to say nothing of the difficulty of putting any large amount in circulation. As to the circulation in this country, all that the Government could do was to refuse to accept these coins if tendered; and this was done at the Post Office, the Custom House, and the Inland Revenue Office. The English penny piece was largely circulated in Paris, just as the French dix-centimes piece was brought over here in the pockets of travellers.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—“BROTHER” ALPHONSE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is true, as reported in the public Press, that one John James Moore, described as “an anti-Popery lecturer,” and also known as “Brother Alphonse, an ex-Monk,” has been arrested at Dundee, on a warrant issued by Sheriff Cheyne, and has been judicially examined before the Sheriff on charges of having, at various times, attempted to commit a grossly immoral offence; and, if the facts be as stated, what is the present stage of the case?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): The case has been reported to the Procurator Fiscal, and I expect that papers will be sent from him in a few days for consideration and disposal.

THE CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE)—MR. MACDONALD, SHERIFF OF PERTHSHIRE.

DR. FARQUHARSON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, considering the answer given by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reference to the candidature of Sir William Brampton Gurdon, he is aware that Mr. Macdonald, Sheriff of Perthshire, is a candidate for the Universities of Edinburgh and Saint Andrews; whether a Sheriff being a Judge of the Crown, does not hold a place of profit as a salaried officer, in the terms of 6 *Anne*, c. 7, s. 35; and, whether it does not come within the enactment of 21 *Geo.* II., c. 19, s. 11, that a Sheriff cannot be elected to sit in Parliament; and, whether, under the circumstances, the Government will make to Mr. Macdonald an official communication of a similar character to that made to Sir William Gurdon, to the effect that a salaried Judge cannot be a candidate while he remains in office?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I understand that Mr. Macdonald, who is Sheriff of Perthshire, has accepted a requisition to contest the representation in Parliament of the Universities of Edinburgh and Saint Andrews on the first opportunity, and that an address which he delivered on the occasion of his acceptance has been printed and circulated to all the electors, accompanied by a printed form, which they are invited to sign, requesting their names to be added to the list of his supporters. If this was done with Mr. Macdonald's knowledge and consent, it is a method of soliciting the suffrages of the electors; and, in my opinion, it constitutes him a candidate for the seat. A Sheriff in Scotland is not, in my judgment, a member of the permanent Civil Service under the control of the Treasury; and it appears to me that the Treasury Minute recently laid upon the Table of the House is not applicable to Sheriffs or other Judges. Further, it may be doubted whether the Act of Anne, which refers to new offices of profit under the Crown, extends to the office of Sheriff as now constituted in Scotland. It is, however, provided by the Act of 21 *Geo.* II., c. 19, s. 2, that no Sheriff shall be capable of being elected or of sitting or of voting as a Member of the House of Commons. This prohibition is expressed in the same terms as that contained in an earlier Statute of the same reign—7 *Geo.* II., c. 16, s. 4—with reference to the Judges of the Supreme Courts in Scotland, and it is to precisely the same effect as the provisions of more modern statutes with respect to the Judges of the High Court of Justice and of the County Courts in England. It being thus clear that Mr. Macdonald is incapable of being elected, or of sitting or voting as a Member of the House of Commons while he holds his Sheriffship, the only remaining question is, whether a Judge so disqualified from being elected or sitting is disabled from pursuing a declared candidature for election while he continues to hold his office. I am not aware of any decision upon this question; but, having regard to the considerations of policy upon which the disability is founded, I think it would be held to extend to the preliminary steps towards election generally known as pursuing a candidature, especially in a case like the present, where, as I understand, many of the electors are resident within the jurisdiction of the Judge on whose behalf their suffrages are solicited.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether Sir William Gurdon had yet arrived at any decision as to whether he would pursue his candidature for Norfolk, or resign his position in the Civil Service?

Mr. ONSLOW also asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether Sir Richard Wyatt, an official in the Private Bill Office of the House of Commons, was not candidate for a certain county; and, whether, if so, he did not come under the category of a permanent Civil Servant?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I know nothing about the gentleman referred to, and cannot answer the Question. As to the Question of the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), I have not received any conclusive statement from Sir William Gurdon. Perhaps the hon. Member will ask the Question again in a day or two.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he would do so on Monday.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE SHERIFF OF ABERDEENSHIRE AND PROCURATOR FISCAL OF BERWICKSHIRE.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, in filling up the vacant offices of Sheriff and Commissary Clerk of Aberdeenshire and Procurator Fiscal of Berwickshire (the respective salaries, according to the Estimates, being £850 and £590, with allowances, per annum) care will be taken to provide that the future holders shall be prohibited, directly or indirectly, from engaging in other business, and strictly limited to the sole and personal discharge of the duties appertaining to these offices?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): The Sheriff Clerkship of Aberdeenshire is in the gift of the Home Secretary, and the gentleman to be appointed will be restricted from engaging in other business. This principle has been acted upon in recent appointments where the amount of the salary has made it practicable. The same principle has been applied in the appointments of Procurator Fiscal, where the amount of salary and of business has made its application possible. I am glad to learn from the Sheriff, with whom the appointment rests, subject to the approval of the Home Secretary, that he concurs in the propriety of such a restriction. The last appointment in Berwickshire was made under this condition, and in the present case the same course will be adopted.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE PROCURATOR FISCAL AT PORTREE.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I wish to ask, Whether it is to be understood, as is stated in the papers, that the Procurator Fiscal at Portree has gone with the Sheriff Substitute to inquire into the alleged outrages in Uig; if it is the case that the Procurator Fiscal of Portree is a solicitor in practice in that town; and, if it would not be possible, in the public interest, to obtain some outside person, uninfluenced by local excitement, to make an independent inquiry into alleged outrages in Uig?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): It is the duty of the Procurator Fiscal, in pursuance of his ordinary business, to investigate this particular case of alleged outrage as well as any other. I understand that, although the gentleman referred to is a solicitor in Portree, he has little or no private practice, and I understand he does not act for any proprietor in the Island. I may further say that I know this gentleman has, with great propriety, declined to act for proprietors where there was any possibility of discontent on their estates.

THE WEST AFRICAN CONFERENCE—ACTION OF THE ENGLISH REPRESENTATIVE.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has seen the following statement from the London Correspondent of *The Manchester Guardian*, and if there is any truth in it:—

> "It is, I understand, finally decided that our representative at the forthcoming Conference on the Affairs of the Congo at Berlin shall be instructed to support with firmness the claims of Portugal, which had been practically conceded before the Conference was proposed?"

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government must decline at present to give any information in regard to the instructions given to their Representatives; but I have already stated that the decision of territorial claims is not among the bases of the Conference.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT: What I wish to ask is this—Whether the noble Lord is not aware that the proposition for conceding the Sovereignty of the Congo to Portugal has been all but universally condemned in this House and in the country?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am aware that considerable hostility was manifested, both in this House and "elsewhere," towards the Treaty of last year.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked whether, if the Conference at Berlin should arrive at any conclusion on this subject, it would be laid before this House before it was accepted?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; I am not aware that it would.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: May I ask whether it is true, as reported in *The Times* this morning, that a Committee of Experts has been appointed to arrange the details of the agreement; and, if that is the case, can the noble Lord say to whom the interests of Great Britain are to be entrusted?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I cannot undertake from day to day to give information of the proceedings of the Conference, and for this reason—that a pledge of secrecy has been given by all the Powers in regard to those proceedings; and if I were to depart from the rule of this House in one particular I should be obliged to depart from it from day to day, until I had departed from it altogether.

METROPOLITAN RAILWAYS — DISTRICT AND METROPOLITAN RAILWAYS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware the District and Metropolitan Railways do not now work on the block system, and that the trains are exceedingly unpunctual; if so, whether he will use his influence to remedy the above complaint?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have communicated with both the Metropolitan and the District Railway Companies, and am informed that the lines of both Companies are worked on the "absolute block system," no change in this respect having been made since the opening of the Inner Circle completion line. On the question of unpunctuality, the Companies inform me that the opening of the Circle rendered the service of trains very complicated, that at first there was a good deal of delay; but that there had already been a great improvement, and that the train services were now fast resuming their normal punctuality.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS — FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—PRECAUTIONS AGAINST OUTBREAKS.

MR. HENEAGE asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether the Privy Council will consider the whole question of the internal regulations with regard to cattle diseases, with a view to establish uniformity of action in the event of a recurrence of foot-and-mouth disease, and to prevent vexatious and conflicting orders in adjoining counties or in different petty sessional divisions of the same county entailing unnecessary expenditure as well as great inconvenience to the public?

MR. TREVELYAN: The Privy Council is always anxious to hear the views of those who have taken a practical part in working the machinery for checking and extinguishing cattle disease, and to act, as far as possible, in conformity with those views. For instance, there was, not long ago, an important conference of representatives of the Local Authorities in the North of England, at which a

Resolution pointing to uniform action was passed, and suggestions of a practical nature indicated. Those suggestions, which are in accordance with the experience which we have gained during the recent outbreak, are, I think, completely carried out in an Order of the Privy Council, dated the 13th of this month, which makes obligatory on all Local Authorities measures dealing with infected places which had hitherto been left to their initiative. To go further, and lay down general regulations with regard to the movement of animals into the districts of Local Authorities, would be much more difficult, because it would involve considerable interference with their discretion. We hope this Order may be sufficient; but, if not, I can assure my hon. Friend that we shall be very glad to consider any further suggestions that may be made for carrying out the excellent objects which he has in view.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS—DONEGAL WORKHOUSE.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that there has been no Divine Service on Sundays or holidays in the Donegal Workhouse for the Catholic paupers for nearly two years; whether, during this time, the Catholic inmates have been deprived of the ministrations of their religion at Easter as at other times of the year; whether, practically, the exercise of their religion is altogether denied to the Catholic inmates, and will the Local Government Board allow this to continue; is he aware of the conduct of the majority of the Guardians in refusing the appointment of even one Catholic official to the House, although nine-tenths of the inmates are Catholics; is he aware of their refusal several times to appoint a Catholic assistant teacher, as suggested by the late Chief Secretary, and has it come to his notice that, although nearly all the pauper children are Catholics, the Local Government Board tolerates the continuance of a Protestant teacher in the Workhouse, who has failed at the examination for qualification two years successively; and, will the Local Government Board, independently of the Guardians, appoint by sealed order a Catholic teacher for the Workhouse, or insist on due respect being shown for the religious convictions of Catholics?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I understand that this matter has already been frequently referred to in this House, and has been the subject of much correspondence. The Local Government Board have endeavoured by every means in their power to have it arranged, but without success. It is true that for about a year and a half there has been no Roman Catholic chaplain for Donegal Workhouse, the chaplain having refused to continue in office unless he was given the assistance of a catechist. But the Roman Catholic inmates who are able to do so attend Mass at the parish chapel, and the sick have been visited by the parish priest. It is true that the majority of the Guardians have refused to appoint a Roman Catholic assistant teacher, although pressed to do so. With regard to the action on the part of the Local Government Board suggested by the hon. Member, it does not appear practicable. They cannot remove a teacher because she is not of the same religion as the majority of her pupils. The present teacher is not, so far as they can ascertain, unfit for the task of teaching the children in the workhouse, although she is not a classified teacher under the Board of National Education. The Local Government Board recently offered to increase the Roman Catholic chaplain's salary if he would resume duty; but he declined to do so. They regret the existing state of things, and would be glad if an assistant Roman Catholic teacher were appointed; but they have no legal authority to make the appointment themselves.

FISHERIES PROTECTION (IRELAND)—THE CONSTABULARY.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If policemen are authorised to use rowing boats in pursuit of fishermen whom they may suspect of poaching; and, by whose authority Constable O'Leary boarded the Cork Harbour Commissioners' Dredge Boat some weeks ago in search of poachers?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: The police are not authorized to use boats in pursuit of poachers, nor am I aware that they do so. When protecting water bailiffs, they first proceed in the Conservators' steam launch where it is available; but if poachers, in endeavouring to escape, take to shallow water, the water bailiffs, accompanied by the police, follow them in small boats. In the particular case mentioned in the Question, Sergeant O'Leary merely accompanied the Secretary to the Conservators for his protection.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND) — ASSAULT ON REV. PATRICK FARRELLY AND CONGREGATION DURING DIVINE SERVICE.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What redress has been given to the Rev. Patrick Farrelly, Roman Catholic Administrator, Ballymacarrett, Belfast, in reference to outrages against the Catholics of that district, and as detailed in his communication dated 7th May 1884, the receipt of which was duly acknowledged by the then Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary; is it a fact that, on Monday night the 10th of November instant, pistol shots were fired into the windows of the church of which the said Rev. Patrick Farrelly is pastor, and into the presbytery, whilst the congregation were assembled at the solemn ceremonies of Benediction; and, what provision has been made for the prevention of such occurrences?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I understand that the redress given to the Rev. Mr. Farrelly was full compensation for the damage done to the chapel windows, and the infliction of a fine of 20*s.* and costs on the boy who was convicted of the offence. It is not a fact that pistol shots were fired into the windows of the chapel on the night of the 10th of November; but it is the case that a few small panes of glass were broken or cracked by swan-shot, supposed to have been fired from a catapult. The Rev. Mr. Farrelly has claimed compensation for this injury, and his claim will be dealt with by the Town Council. Arrangements have since been made for placing extra men on duty in the neighbourhood of the chapel.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ACCELERATION OF THE MAIL SERVICE TO THE WEST.

MR. SEXTON asked the Postmaster General, What objection, if any, is entertained by the Postal Department to the offer of the Midland Great Western Railway Company of Ireland—namely, that they provide a Mail Service of forty miles an hour between Dublin and the West, and that the price of the Service be fixed by arbitration?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The difficulty lies in the fact that the Railway Company have informed the Post Office that the proposed acceleration of the Mail Service would entail a cost on them which is found to be altogether out of proportion to the revenue which the correspondence produces. The subject of the acceleration of these Mails is one of great importance, and I will give it my earliest attention.

PAROCHIAL CHARITIES OF THE CITY OF LONDON—THE VESTRY OF ST. MARY-AT-HILL.

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the Charity Commissioners declined to allow certain payments of considerable amount, partly made and partly contemplated to be made, by the Vestry of Saint Mary-at-Hill, in the City of London, out of the Parochial Charity Funds of that parish (having a population of less than 300), and at the instance of a majority of the parishioners, including several of the Trustees of the Charity, certified a case to the Attorney General pursuant to the 20th section of "The Charitable Trusts Act, 1853;" whether he thereupon instituted an action in the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice with the object of making the defendants liable for the payments made, and of restraining them from making others not already made, such sums amounting in the aggregate to about £2,000; whether the report is correct that he has, upon the defendants undertaking not to make any similar payments in the future, now decided to withdraw the questions at issue from the consideration of the Court, and intends to allow the major part of the payments made and to sanction those not yet made, and to direct the payment of all the costs of the action out of the Charity Funds; in exercise of what statutory or other powers he is enabled to allow the payments in question, or to direct the payment of the costs of the action out of the Charity Funds; and, upon what grounds he is prepared to sanction payments which the Charity

Commissioners have concurred with him in thinking ought not to be borne by the Charities, and with regard to which he considered it was his duty to obtain the judgment of the Court?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, the main circumstances were pretty much as stated. He found that the Trustees had been actuated by a perfectly *bonâ fide* motive, and they were willing to undertake never to make such a payment again without the consent of the Charity Commissioners. He had then to consider whether he should take any steps. He heard fully the statement of the gentleman who had suggested the Question on the Paper, and he had come to the decision stated in the Question.

FRANCE AND CHINA—THE HOSTILITIES—MEDIATION OF ENGLAND.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any steps are being taken by Her Majesty's Ministers to bring about a suspension of the War between the French Republic and China in the interests of British Commerce, which is seriously affected?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have been in confidential communication with the Governments of both France and China, but as yet without any practical result. I am not able at present to make any further statement on the subject.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL—REDISTRIBUTION SCHEME—SURREPTITIOUS PUBLICATION.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, consistently with the interests of justice, he is now in a position to state to the House what steps have been taken with regard to the abstracted scheme of redistribution published in *The Standard;* and, whether, should it be found impossible to prosecute any person or persons on account of the abstraction, he contemplates presenting to the House a statement containing all the information which Her Majesty's Government has upon the subject?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): If the hon. Member will permit me I will answer this Question. The result of the inquiries which have been made is that no criminal prosecution can be successfully instituted. But there has been a breach of contract on the part of the printer. In regard to this breach, action is now being taken; and, under these circumstances, my hon. Friend will see that it is inexpedient for me to say more.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—THE RIOT AT ASTON HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to ask a Question of the Attorney General with respect to a statement made by him the other day about two parties who are wanted by the police in Birmingham. He stated that these two parties had been already served with processes. I wish to know on what authority he made that statement; and whether he is aware that it is altogether unfounded?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I received the statement on a written paper, which was handed to me by my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade. I do not say that my right hon. Friend wished me to make the statement. The facts were that my right hon. Friend received a telegram from a firm of solicitors, whose names I will furnish to the noble Lord; and it seems that in that telegram the word "executed" was inserted by some mistake for the word "issued." My right hon. Friend was informed by letter this morning of the mistake, and I should certainly have corrected it as soon as I got the opportunity.

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—THE 43-TON GUN.

MR. CARBUTT asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, If the 43-ton gun, when being tested, did perforate a 21-inch wrought-iron armour plate; would he state when and where this trial took place, and also state the length, character, weight, and material of shot; also weight and quality of powder; can he place in the Library a drawing or photograph of the armour plate after being fired at by the 43-ton gun, showing the damage done to it; and, how many 43-ton guns are finished, how many are placed in position ready for action, and how many have steel jackets, that is to say, made wholly of steel?

MR. BRAND: If the hon. Member will be so good as to refer to *The Times* report of the answer I gave on this subject the other day, he will find that I did not state that the 43-ton gun had perforated a 21-inch wrought-iron plate, but that the gun could perforate an armour plate of this thickness, and this statement is based upon the usual calculations. Ten of these guns have been issued. None of them have steel jackets.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE—THE REDISTRIBUTION SCHEME.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the House will be put in possession of the scheme of Redistribution as settled by Her Majesty's Government, and the alterations in the said scheme agreed to, in order to meet the views of the Conservative Leader in the House of Lords; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will regard as a vital question the passing of the Redistribution Bill in the House of Lords, as well as in this House?

MR. GLADSTONE: It must be obvious to those who look at it that this Question is really two Questions. The first of them I understand to be, whether the House would be put in possession substantially of any confidential communications that may be carried on between the Members of the Government and any other Gentlemen representing a large Party in this House. Well, there are great objections, I think, to such a proceeding. The first of them is that undoubtedly it would involve a complete breach of engagement, because I do not see how such communications can be carried out except in the strictest confidence, and I hold myself bound in the most absolute manner to that confidence. Therefore, I could not promise that any production of such proceedings should take place. But I may assure my hon. Friend that any proceedings of that kind, whatever they may be, cannot in the slightest degree diminish the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government in this matter. Their responsibility is the same as it would be in any other case. With regard to the second part of the Question, I am much obliged to my hon. Friend for giving me an opportunity of stating more accurately and more carefully what I stated rather too hurriedly and without sufficient precision on Monday evening. The declaration I then made contemplated as possible two modes of action—one of them being what may be called, more or less, previous concert upon the main provisions of the Seats or Redistribution Bill. Well, in that case previous concert itself, if it arrived at a result, would constitute the "adequate assurance" which I said it would be our duty to look for; and if it arrived at no result, all parties would stand as they would have stood if it had not taken place. So much for previous concert. If there were no previous concert, then, of course, we should have to look for adequate assurances by other means, or go without, and take our own course. Then, with regard to the question of how far the Seats Bill which we may have to introduce would be considered a vital question. I think I can answer that in the most precise terms; and I believe I can say that an understanding prevails as to what is just and equitable, and as to what can be fairly required from us in that matter, and what cannot. In the House of Commons we are, at the present time, honoured by the confidence of the majority of the House. In an Assembly so constituted we are in a condition to say absolutely, and in conformity with all Parliamentary usage, that we should regard the passing of our measure as a vital question. About that I think there can be no doubt; and so much was clearly understood from the declaration I made on Monday. In the House of Lords our case is different in one point—namely, that it is impossible for us to answer absolutely, and with the same degree of confidence as we might do here, for the action of the majority of that House. But what I think is justly to be expected of us in the House of Lords is this—that we should use every effort that depends upon us to pass the Redistribution Bill in the year 1885. But we could not be answerable for what the majority of the House of Lords might do independently of us. Everything that depends on us ought to be done in the House of Lords just as much as in the House of Commons. Unless I were prepared to give that pledge to Parliament and to hon. Gentlemen opposite, it is obvious that any engagement we might come under to the House of Commons would leave them totally unprotected, and would not be of the least value in their eyes. I hope, Sir, that answer will be considered satisfactory. I may say, in regard to the declaration stated to have been made "elsewhere" by the Marquess of Salisbury, it appears to me that that declaration is evidently intended to express the same thing that I have expressed, although, in speaking of the House of Lords, it does not contain the exact words that I have used—namely, that we are to be bound to use our own efforts; but, of course, that we could not be bound by anything beyond our own efforts. I hope there is no want of clearness in what I have now stated; but if there is, I should be happy to make any further explanation that might be desired.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: In order that there may be no ambiguity, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would not only regard it as vital that the Bill should pass this House, but also vital, that, on those points as to which any agreement has been come to, it should be passed in this House in the form agreed to, provided that either of the concurring parties desired to insist upon it?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think it will be wise for me—I do not say to decline to answer the Question—but to postpone answering it, in order that I might answer it with more distinct and substantive reference to the respective transactions.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will give Notice of the Question.

Mr. CAUSTON: I wish to ask whether it is true, as stated in one of the public journals, that a Joint Committee of 12 Members of the two Houses of Parliament is to be appointed to consider the question of redistribution; and, if so, whether the deliberations of that Committee, and the information which will be laid before it, will be confidential?

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: I wish to ask, in regard to the friendly communications on the subject of the Redistribution Bill, which the Prime Minister has stated it is the intention of the Government to prepare with certain leading politicians, whether he proposes to consult the Representatives of all sections of the House; and, if so, whether he will consider the desirability of the ight hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) being taken into consultation in the matter?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: May I ask, also, whether the right hon. Gentleman will nominate a Gentleman representing the views of the Irish Party?

Mr. GLADSTONE: In reference to the Question of my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Causton), the report to which he refers is, as far as I am aware, without foundation. I will answer the Question of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) in conjunction with that of my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). It is not possible for us, from the nature of the case, to hold such communications, of the nature indicated in my declaration of Monday, with the several sections of the House combined. I should say to the hon. Member for Galway that if he, or anyone in concurrence with him, is pleased to favour me or the Government with an intimation of his views, they will have my best attention; but it is absolutely necessary, from the nature of the case, that any communication of that kind should be in a separate form. Having said that with respect to Gentlemen who do not usually act in concurrence with Her Majesty's Government, I may refer to those Gentlemen sitting on this side of the House, who are generally pleased to honour us with their confidence in the matter of principles, and, certainly, not the least among those my right hon. and valued Friend the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright). With regard to the whole of these Gentlemen, we are in possession at all times of perfectly unrestrained and easy means of taking the measures which may appear to us desirable and available to ascertain what are their views. Of course, we do that on our own responsibility. It can hardly be supposed that the Government would have proceeded to this time of day without ever holding any communication with Gentlemen like my right hon. Friend the senior Member for Birmingham. With regard to what I may term our political Friends, it is obvious, I think, that the communications which we may hold are not of the kind to be attended with any special formalities; but are, in fact, of the nature of that every-day intercourse which, in a country like this, and in an Assembly like this, must go on between the Government and those who may be disposed to support it. That is the state of the case, and the answer which I would give to my hon. Friend. Every such communication brings with it a very heavy responsibility to the Government. We are sensible of the nature and extent of that responsibility, and of the gravity of the interests of which we take charge. We have to bear that carefully in mind in every step we take.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.) — LORD NORTHBROOK'S REPORT.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am under an engagement to give some day this week an intimation to the House with respect to the financial condition of Egypt, and to the Report and recommendations of the Earl of Northbrook, and I may as well do it now. The House must be aware that we have had to meet for the last week or 10 days rather unusual demands of domestic affairs. But we have not failed to give our best attention to the statements and recommendations of our Colleague the Earl of Northbrook. We are now engaged in framing a proposal which we intend to bring under the consideration of the Powers. That is a matter of necessity in almost any such proposals. When this communication has been brought to an issue the results will be made public, as they have been before; and I may add that the engagements we have given to Parliament with respect to reserving its jurisdiction and control in respect to finance still hold good in all their force. In these circumstances, Sir, of course, there can be no publication at present of any Papers in connection with the Mission of the Earl of Northbrook.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: With reference to the important statement which the Prime Minister has just made with regard to the Earl of Northbrook's proposals, I wish to understand what position we are in with regard to communication with the Powers? There was in the summer a communication made to the Powers, and a Conference invited. But before that Conference could be held some separate negotiations had to take place with France in respect to several important points. These fell through, in consequence of the Conference not succeeding. But, now that this question is raised again, will the communications that were so made between this Government and the Government of France in the summer be held to be in force; or will there be any necessity for a special correspondence with France on the subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. The House remembers in what manner and degree what I think we agreed to call the "Anglo-French Agreement" was associated with the proceedings of the Conference in the summer. There will be no such association in the case of the present contemplated correspondence.

MR. BOURKE: The House will recollect that at the end of last Session the right hon. Gentleman said that this country had regained its liberty of action, owing to the disagreement of the Powers. Now, I want to know whether Her Majesty's Government are going to abandon their liberty of action again?

MR. GLADSTONE: Certainly, Sir; the right hon. Gentleman is endowed with greater gifts than we are if he can perceive a method of action in regard to Egyptian finance which shall be totally independent of the consent of the Powers, as Egypt is a country whose finances are mainly governed by International engagements. But I may say that we are in full possession of our liberty of action; and we shall be very cautious, indeed, with regard to any restraint which we may think expedient for the public interest to place upon it.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether it was not the fact that the communication with the Powers of the result of the Anglo-French Agreement was made simultaneously with their announcement to this House; and I want to know why the present proposals cannot be announced in this House simultaneously with their communication to the Powers?

MR. GLADSTONE: The communication made to this House with regard to the Anglo-French Agreement was made on very special grounds, and apart from its separate nature. But to communicate to the House what we are going to lay before the Powers would be doing in International affairs precisely that which everybody feels would be impossible in private business, and would be contrary to all precedent in such matters, and, as we think, to all hope of arriving at a practical issue.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say when he expects to be in a position to make any statement, and whether that will be before we adjourn?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Well, Sir, the time and period are too early for me to venture upon a statement of that kind. I am not at all in a position to say at this moment how long these Autumn Sittings are likely to endure; consequently, I have not the elements before me necessary to enable me to give an answer to the Question.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: The Prime Minister accentuated the word "financial" arrangements between the Powers, which, he said, would be communicated to the House. Are we to understand that no other arrangements will be communicated to the House?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Oh, dear, no, Sir. I used the word "financial" merely because that is the centre of the whole question, and not in the least degree to draw a distinction between that and any other part of the question which may be termed otherwise than financial.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Mr. GLADSTONE: In connection with the Business of the House, I am obliged to state, on the part of the Government, that it would be extremely difficult for them to fulfil, as to time, the engagement under which I am aware we lie to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and the House, to make a statement on naval affairs on Monday next. It has really not been possible for us, with what we have had on hand, to give the requisite attention to the subject. We might be ready on a later day in the same week; but I am advised that, on the whole, it will be more agreeable to the convenience of Members if the question did not come on next Monday, but were put off for a week rather than two or three days. I, therefore, hope the House will allow us, under the circumstances in which we stand—it has not really been owing to any indifference or neglect of ours—to postpone that statement for a week.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I cannot, of course, object to the postponement which the right hon. Gentleman proposes with regard to the discussion of the naval affairs of the country. But I think it would be convenient if some indicatio could be made as to whether any additional Vote will be required before the Ways and Means Bill passes through this House, or a further stage is taken. It would also be convenient if the House could be informed what the course of Business will be during the present week.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): In answer to the first Question of the right hon. Gentleman, we shall not propose during the present Sittings—that is, before Christmas—to take any further Votes in Supply; while, with regard to the second Question, we shall propose to take the second reading of the Income Tax Bill, and also the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, assuming that leave is given to-day to introduce that Bill, after the Report of the Committee of Supply. We propose on Saturday to take the Committee stage of the Appropriation Bill, and we propose to ask the House to meet on that day for that purpose only, and on Monday we propose to take the third reading.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE: What will be taken on Tuesday with special reference to the Bill brought in by the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall)?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am reluctant to give a positive answer to that Question at the present time, because circumstances may arise in the course of a day or two which may have an important bearing on the Business of the House. I would, therefore, rather postpone my answer; but I will say that we do not entirely abandon the idea that the House might be disposed to adjourn for a time on Monday, if the state of Business will allow.

EGYPT—THE EXPEDITION UP THE NILE—THE RETURN.

Sir EDMUND LACON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, If he can give any information to the House, with reference to the statement which has appeared in the London papers to-day, that the military authorities have under consideration the eventuality of deferring the return of the Nile Expedition until the next rising of the river?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I can give no explanation whatever of this statement. I have heard nothing about it; and I do not know to what it refers.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—DELIVERY TO MEMBERS.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If the Government will take steps to expedite the printing and delivery of Parliamentary Papers to Members?

MR. COURTNEY: Delays in the circulation of Parliamentary Papers after they have been presented are, to a certain extent, inevitable, especially at certain times, such as the beginning of the Session, when all the Estimates and Appropriation Accounts are being printed at once, and by the same printer. But no doubt the right hon. Gentleman refers to delays which are, apparently, not inevitable, and are often undesirable and inconvenient. With regard to these, I may say that the Government are anxious to reduce such delays to a minimum. We have been for some time attacking the problem from several sides; firstly, by discouraging Motions in this House for unnecessary or unimportant Returns, and by trying to avoid the printing of Returns which, though proper to be given to the House, are not of sufficient general interest to justify printing; secondly, by trying to reduce the bulk of the matter contained in the numerous periodical Papers and Returns presented under Act or otherwise, and to prevent repetition of the same matter in two places; thirdly, by trying to arrange for a sort of order in the distribution, whereby the less urgent work may be postponed to the more urgent. As regards the South African Papers which recently led to some severe remarks upon the printers, I have received a remonstrance from those gentlemen, and special inquiry is being made. I may add, with reference to a paragraph sent to *The Pall Mall Gazette*, that there has been no change which could lead to any delay since the present Controller has been appointed.

ARMY—SERVICE IN BECHUANALAND.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Notice inviting candidates for service in Bechuanaland to call at 8, New Coventry Street, Leicester Square, was authentic; for what period, and on what terms, young gentlemen were being enlisted for this service; and, whether any expectation of land grants was held out to them?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The state of the case is this:—Sir Charles Warren has been commissioned by Her Majesty's Government to raise an irregular force in South Africa for service in Bechuanaland, should circumstances compel a resort to force. Finding that many young men in England wish to join this force, he, I understand, appointed an agent in this country to give information to intending recruits, and to facilitate their going to the Cape, where, if approved and they still desired to enlist, they would be enrolled in the force. The period for which men of this force are to be engaged is left open for the present till Sir Charles Warren tests the feeling of the class from which he hopes to recruit; but it will not exceed six months. The pay for a private is 2*s.* a-day, with 1*s.* a-day deferred pay and free rations. No expectation of land grants has, so far as I am aware, been held out to them.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Has any pecuniary assistance been promised to these young men?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: An arrangement has been made by which a passage will be furnished to them, and which will be restored if they do not enlist.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, in view of the statement which had been made on this subject by the Prime Minister, asked the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Great Powers of Europe had withdrawn their solemn protest against the act of repudiation by the Khedive's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE suggested that if the hon. Member wished to ask a Question in regard to Egyptian affairs he should take the usual course of giving Notice.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT gave Notice accordingly.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, it would be convenient to the House if the Prime Minister would state that no other Business would be taken on Monday except the formal Business which he had intimated.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that in speaking of no other Business he supposed that the hon. and gallant Member spoke of no other Business on the Books of the House. Now, he did not wish to override the privileges of private Members; but certainly it was not the desire of the Government to encourage the proceeding unnecessarily with other Business. But the hon. and gallant Gentleman would see that they had before them the introduction of a Bill of the greatest importance; and it might not be well to say that, under no circumstances, should they take such a step on Monday should they happily be in a position to do so.

Mr. J. LOWTHER asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to move the adjournment of the House after the Government Business had been disposed of?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he should wish to consult the general feeling of the House.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—CASTLEBAR GAOL.

Mr. BIGGAR (for Mr. Gray) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he, with reference to the statement made by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland last Session, in reply to a Question by the honourable Member for Galway City, as to the reasons for the removal of Captain Dunne, late Governor of the Castlebar Gaol, to the Nenagh Gaol,

> "That the immediate cause of Captain Dunne's removal from Castlebar was the opening by him of a long disused well, without the knowledge of the medical officer, which led to an outbreak of fever,"

the letter of the Prisons Board, dated 19th May 1883, to Captain Dunne, in which they state, after having received a Report on the subject, that,

> "The Board are glad, in the present instance, to be able to assure themselves, from the combined testimony of Dr. Burke and the prison surgeon, that, with the first three cases of the disease that occurred, the water in question could have had no connection, as the use of it had not then been resorted to,"

can state which of these statements is in accordance with the exact facts; whether Captain Dunne had made frequent representations as to the imminence of a scarcity of water, and the probable necessity of his having to have recourse to the water of the well in question; whether Captain Dunne had requested of the Board to have the water of the well in use, and that of the disused well, analysed, so that he might be guided in such an emergency; whether his request was attended to; and whether, if so, he was informed of the result; whether, during his tenure of office, the health of the prison was generally satisfactory; whether he had been obliged, on his own responsibility, to close five old cesspools in the immediate proximity of the prison, and whether he had made frequent representations as to the existence of a manure heap of long standing placed immediately against the wall of the male prison; whether Captain Dunne had more than once reported to the Board the conduct of the police; and, whether any reports with regard to Captain Dunne were made to which he has not been afforded an opportunity of replying?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The letter of the Prisons Board of the 19th May, 1883, contains the paragraph referred to in the Question; but it also refers to cases of fever which occurred subsequently to the opening of the well, and while assuming that such cases might had occurred if the well had not been opened, censures Captain Dunne for having directed the opening of this well without the knowledge or authority of the medical officer; also pointing out that the use of the water, as appeared from analysis, was sufficient to cause fever. The occasional scarcity of water had on several occasions been the subject of correspondence; but Captain Dunne did not apprise the Board of any intention to resort to the water of the well in question. It was some weeks after the outbreak of fever that Captain Dunne forwarded two samples for analysis. The water was analyzed with the result already mentioned. The health of the prison was satisfactory, with the exception of the fever cases.

Captain Dunne reported to the Board in 1882 the closing of two cesspools. No trace can be found of representations as to a heap of manure. It cannot be ascertained that Captain Dunne made complaints to the Board of the conduct of the police. After the outbreak of fever an inquiry was held at Castlebar by a Military Inspector of the Board; and the Board, on consideration of the Report, decided and informed Captain Dunne that in the interests of the Public Service it was desirable he should be removed to Nenagh Prison. The Board state that no Reports were addressed to them; but in the exercise of their discretion the Board considered that it would be for the interest of the Public Service to remove Captain Dunne from Castlebar to Nenagh.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [13th November] *reported.*

AFRICA (SOUTH)—BECHUANALAND.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. GORST said, he wished, before the Report was agreed to, to put a Question to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies in regard to the instructions to Sir Charles Warren, which had been recently delivered to the House. He was sorry to appear persistent in that matter; but the truth was that in all those Colonial questions they heard two voices from the Government—namely, the voice of the President of the Board of Trade in that House, who spoke with great firmness, energy, and decision, and the voice of the Earl of Derby, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, which was characterized by considerable hesitation and a very different spirit. When that subject was under the discussion of the House, and when they were much re-assured by the statement of the President of the Board of Trade, there was in the minds of hon. Members considerable anxiety on two points. The first was as to what was to be the nature of the intervention of the Cape Government. The Papers which had been delivered to them showed most distinctly a difference of opinion between the High Commissioner and the Cape Government in regard to that intervention. The Cape Government apparently only desired to make their way into Goshen Land for the purpose of coming to some arrangement with the freebooters. The other point was that the military operation, which Her Majesty's Government undertook not a day too soon for the vindication of the national honour, might be delayed, and delayed indefinitely, by reason of that intervention of the Cape Government. Now, on both of the points which were the justification for any intervention the replies in that House of the President of the Board of Trade were so satisfactory and so clear that he (Mr. Gorst) immediately removed from the Paper the Amendment of which he had given Notice. The President of the Board of Trade said that Her Majesty's Government had only given their approval to the proposals made by the Cape Government on the distinct understanding that the arrangement made by the Cape Government should be such as would practically restore Montsioa to the position which he occupied when the British Protectorate was announced. The right hon. Gentleman further said he did not think much of Cape intervention, and he shared the fears of the right hon. Baronet that not much would come of that peaceful intervention. He added that the Government had accepted the proposal of the Cape Government, subject to the condition that the military operations should not be delayed by the action of the Cape Government. These statements were made on the 4th of November; but on the 10th of November the official instructions to Sir Charles Warren were issued, and in those instructions there was a paragraph which spoke in a very different voice. That paragraph ran as follows:—

> "You will, of course, clearly understand that Her Majesty's Government have agreed that the Cape Ministers shall, in the first instance, endeavour to effect a peaceful settlement of the difficulties about Montsioa's territory."

This was scarcely an agreement on the part of the Government; it was a proposal made by the Cape Government to which Her Majesty's Government had reluctantly assented. It was added that—

> "Active military operations shall not be commenced until a reasonable time has elapsed."

He (Mr. Gorst) would like to ask what was the interpretation placed by the Government upon these phrases; because it seemed to him that this was tantamount to saying that the intervention of the Cape Government was to delay the military operations. The House would be very glad to have an assurance from the President of the Board of Trade that no jot of the statement which he had made the other night had been abated because of the instructions which had been given to Sir Charles Warren. He was quite certain that nothing but the firmest declaration on the part of the right hon. Gentleman that these freebooters must be removed, at whatever cost, would prevent that bloodshed which they were all desirous to avoid. In the absence of such a declaration, if he were a freebooter he would be inclined to hold on; and he, therefore, appealed to the Government to make their determination clear.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot have the slightest difficulty in giving the hon. and learned Gentleman the assurance he requires. Undoubtedly, the declarations I made the other night on behalf of the Government will not be abated one jot, either by myself or by my Colleagues; and I do not see anything in the slightest degree inconsistent in those declarations and in the instructions to which the hon. and learned Gentleman has called attention. Those instructions contained a statement that active military operations will not be commenced till a reasonable time has elapsed. That is little more than a statement of fact, for it is almost impossible that Sir Charles Warren should get to Kimberley till nearly the end of next month; and the time that must of necessity be occupied by him in journeying and preparation may be very well, and I hope usefully, occupied by the Ministry at the Cape in the negotiations to which we had agreed at their instance. These are to be conducted under the strictest limitations; and under no circumstances will the Cape Ministers have our authority to make arrangements that will not practically restore Montsioa to the territory from which he has been so unjustly ousted. If the hon. and learned Gentleman were a freebooter, and were to act as he says he should act, he would, I think, be a very imprudent freebooter indeed. Nothing is more clear than our declarations that the freebooters must go from the land they have unjustly taken. We hope that object may be accomplished without force; but, if necessary, force has been provided, and force will be used.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he could not understand the statement as to the time at which Sir Charles Warren would arrive at Kimberley. He did not know why he should not be there within a week of his arrival at the Cape. The answer of the President of the Board of Trade was very satisfactory. He hoped the Government would show firmness in this matter, and would make the freebooters understand that Her Majesty's Government were determined that justice should be done to this unfortunate Chief.

SIR DONALD CURRIE said, that, allowing Sir Charles Warren two or three days for consultation, and reckoning the time it would take him to go up the country, it would be the end of the month before he could reach his destination.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that Sir Charles Warren's original calculation, when he proposed to leave on the 7th of November, was that he would arrive at Cape Town on the 27th of November, and at Kimberley on the 15th of December, and leave that place on the 20th of December. He did not, however, leave England till the 13th of November, or about a week later than he at first intended.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he did not object to the handing over of this territory to the Cape Colony, though he greatly doubted whether it would be an advantage to the Native Chiefs; but what he was greatly opposed to was the undertaking of responsibility by Her Majesty's Government for that territory in the heart of South Africa, which could not be got at except through the Cape Colony. He hoped the Cape Ministers would be able to adjust matters. Otherwise, we might be involved in a great expenditure for the benefit of others.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he was glad the question had been asked by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), and he thought that the reply that had been given by the President of the Board of Trade was quite satisfactory. Sir Charles Warren went out mainly in consequence of what had happened in Goshen; but there were other parts of Bechuanaland that were in great disorder, and in which serious outrages were being committed. There was a possibility that the whole of the district, under proper security for the protection of the Native Chiefs, might be added to and taken under the guidance of the Cape Colony. They had no reason to suppose that the Chiefs themselves objected to that course; but before that time had arrived the Imperial Government were bound to take care that order was preserved in the district, and that incursions were not made over the Border. All he wanted to say was, even if the Cape Government did succeed in their peaceful efforts with regard to Goshen and the attack upon Montsioa, yet the obligations upon the Home Government to secure order in Bechuanaland did not thereby cease. By the terms of the Convention of last year it was stated that Her Majesty's Government would, if necessary, appoint Commissioners to maintain order; and he had not the slightest doubt that if the Government were merely satisfied with the arrangement that the freebooters, through the persuasion of the Cape Government or the fear of Sir Charles Warren's action, should go over the Border—if they were contented, in short, to leave the territory to take care of itself, without any police force to keep order, they would have precisely the same things occurring again as they had now. He trusted that Her Majesty's Government would see that Sir Charles Warren or someone else would proceed up to this district under any circumstances in order to secure order and freedom from attack.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he joined in the hope that Her Majesty's Government and Sir Charles Warren would have due regard to the fact that there had been quite as serious evils in Stellaland as in the territory of Montsioa; and, unfortunately, the position of the freebooters had become more secured. The instructions of Sir Charles Warren, coupled with the statements of the President of the Board of Trade, were, he thought, quite satisfactory; but he should have been glad if Sir Charles Warren's special attention had been called to the crimes committed in Goshen, and to the necessity of exacting the due punishment of the persons who had committed them. It might be that the criminals had taken refuge in the Transvaal; and if so Sir Hercules Robinson could enter into direct communication with the Transvaal Government. He hoped Sir Charles Warren would be instructed to adopt means for the purpose of bringing the criminals to justice.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that, as he had already stated, there were great legal difficulties, and the Colonial Office were consulting the Law Officers as to the course they should pursue. It was rather difficult to enter into the matter piecemeal. There was no Extradition Treaty with the Transvaal; but there were means by which the Government would do their best to bring the criminals to justice. At present the better plan was to defer the matter for a short time, as the subject was still under the consideration of the Colonial Office in connection with the Law Officers of the Crown.

Resolutions *agreed to.*

House adjourned at Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 21*st November*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act Amendment * (8).

Select Committee—Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) * (6), *nominated.*

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICE —SIR JOHN DRUMMOND HAY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD ZOUCHE asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether any official denial had been published by the French Government to an article which appeared in *Le Gaulois* newspaper in the spring of this year, wherein the editor accused several of the Foreign Representatives at Tangier of corrupt practices, and amongst them the British Minister, Sir John Drummond Hay, stating that he (the editor) had obtained this information from the French Minister at Tangier, M. Ordega, who was at that time in Paris on leave of absence; and, as it would appear that, owing to the fact of no denial having been given to those grave charges, other accusations were made by French journals, which were referred to in English journals, to the effect that Sir John D. Hay had obstructed

British enterprize and commerce, and had encouraged the Sultan of Morocco in his policy of resistance to all reform and improvement, whether there were any grounds for such grave charges having been put forward? The noble Lord said that Sir John D. Hay had been 30 years in his present post, and had been repeatedly passed over by his juniors, having been requested to remain there because he was so useful. He, together with other Representatives at Tangier, had had charges brought against him by the French Representative there, who had lately been busying himself considerably in the affairs of Morocco. Sir John Drummond Hay had found it necessary to check certain claims which had been made by Europeans, amongst them Englishmen, and which he thought were improper, and he had consequently incurred some obloquy. He (Lord Zouche) had visited Morocco several times, and knew with what zeal Sir John Drummond Hay carried out the duties which had been imposed upon him, and he had urged the Moorish Government over and over again to reform abuses. He understood that there had been communications tween Sir John Drummond Hay and the Government, and that the whole matter had been set forth with great clearness, and that Her Majesty's Government had signified their approval of Sir John Drummond Hay's policy. He hoped that the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary would not allow Sir John Drummond Hay to remain under any slur upon his character at the close of his career. He and his Friends thought it incumbent upon them to have some sort of public contradiction of these most unfounded charges, particularly as Sir John Drummond Hay was not in a position to be able to answer them, and some sort of public vindication of his character.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I think the noble Lord has correctly stated the facts of the case. The editor of *Le Gaulois*, it appears, accused Sir John D. Hay and his colleagues of dishonourable practices, and gave M. Ordega as his authority. Now, I am not sure that if I read such an article as this concerning myself I should not treat it with contempt and trust to whatever character I had. But it is a different thing when men serving their country in distant countries are thus unjustly attacked, for, as in this case, the extract from the French paper is copied not only into other foreign papers, but into English newspapers. However that may be, after what had occurred, I thought it necessary, at the request of Sir John D. Hay, to make an application to M. Ferry, in courteous terms, that M. Ordega should be called upon either to substantiate, or retract, or to say that he had not communicated the article to *Le Gaulois.* M. Ferry, in the first instance, said *Le Gaulois* was perfectly wrong, that no such report had been circulated by Ordega himself, and that he thought that it was hardly worth while to contradict a statement made in a newspaper which was well known to be so strongly opposed to the existing French Government. M. Ordega was, however, applied to, and he telegraphed to Paris entirely denying that he had communicated or inspired any such article in *Le Gaulois.* M. Ferry took the view that a great deal of time had now elapsed, and that it was really better not to call attention to the matter now. I have been in correspondence with Sir John D. Hay; and the last letter I received from him, only a day or two ago, was to the effect that he was perfectly satisfied, and that he should trouble his head no more in the matter. I am glad to be able to add, in the presence of three former Secretaries, that I believe there is no man in the Diplomatic Service more honourable or more energetic in the discharge of his duties than Sir John D. Hay. The noble Lord says that Sir John D. Hay has been passed over for promotion; but I remember instances where persons employed in the Diplomatic Service have been, to use a homely phrase, kicked upstairs to get them out of a place where they were doing mischief instead of good. I believe it to be exactly the contrary in the case of Sir John D. Hay. He is most fit for the post he has held, and for that reason he has lost some chances of personal advancement. I really can only repeat in the strongest way that Sir John D. Hay was quite justified in dismissing from his mind any imputation made against him; and I have great pleasure in adding that a short time ago the Queen, in recognition of his distinguished services, conferred upon him the Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: As the youngest and the recent of the Foreign Secretaries the noble Earl has referred to, I have very great pleasure in joining with him in expressing the high estimation which was always entertained for Sir Drummond Hay by his superiors. Not only was the charge against him ridiculous, as it would have been against any Representative of the Crown, but he is a man of singular integrity and patriotism; and a more able, progressive, and intelligent adviser does not exist in the Diplomatic Service. I always thought it a weak point in our diplomatic arrangements that a class of men like Sir Drummond Hay, of whom there are several in the Service, who have special qualities for the particular post they occupy, cannot be rewarded as they should be rewarded without detriment to the Public Service, because by the rules of the Service their rank cannot be increased where they are, and because they cannot be removed from the post they occupy without doing harm to the Public Service. I think Sir Drummond Hay has been more than repaid by the universal confidence with which he is looked up to, and the very high esteem in which he has always been held. I think it is unnecessary to vindicate any English statesman against foreign newspapers, because their ignorance is, as a rule, absolutely phenomenal. I remember one statement in a foreign newspaper which informed us that the noble Duke for whose eloquence we are waiting to-night was about to go abroad to spend the winter in the South of France with his well-known greyhounds; and I remember another such statement which informed us that a well-known statesman, an English Lord Chancellor, was about to receive some high honour from the Crown for his services as President of the Berlin Congress.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said, he had been glad to hear what the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had said with respect to Sir John D. Hay. So far from British enterprize having been discouraged, there had been one instance of a British enterprize, of selling arms near the Southern Frontier of Morocco, which ought to have been discouraged. These complaints proceeded from some discontented schemers, who had set up an English newspaper; but the only practical suggestion he had seen in it was that there should be a covered warehouse near the landing-place at Tangier. But he had just been reading a complaint that there was no shelter for passengers at a station between Calcutta and Agra, and it was not to be expected that Morocco should be more advanced than British India. These schemers appeared to have joined with the French Consul, who had shown much mischievous activity, and seemed to be ambitious of imitating M. Roustan, the French Consul at Tunis; his proceedings had already given umbrage to the Spanish Government. Under these circumstances, he was very glad to hear that Sir John Drummond Hay possessed the undiminished confidence of the Foreign Office.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, that he did not know any person in any branch of the Public Service more utterly incapable of such conduct as that imputed to him than Sir Drummond Hay. He had always known him as an active and able public servant.

CROFTERS AND COTTARS (SCOTLAND) —REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.—OBSERVATIONS.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, in rising to call the attention of the House to the Report of the Royal Commission on Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, said: My Lords, special circumstances have occurred which render it absolutely incumbent upon me to call attention to this subject at the earliest possible moment. A discussion was raised in the other House of Parliament upon this question; and my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, in speaking of the difficulties the Government had in dealing with the subject, made a personal appeal to those Highland proprietors interested in those parts of the country where crofters exist, that they should come forward and publicly explain what they were willing to do to assist the Government; because a great many things can be done by voluntary effort, which it would be clearly impossible for Parliament to provide for otherwise. I felt that that was an appeal which the Home Secretary had a good right to make, and to which we, as Highland proprietors, are bound to respond. I desire this evening to bring under the attention of the House of Lords a state of facts, out of which this Report has arisen; and before I go into the detailed recommendations of that Report I wish to say a few preliminary words on the circumstances which have appeared to render the issue of a Commission necessary in that part of the country. In the first place, I wish to say that it does not arise from any general bad distribution of the occupancy of land over the Highland as compared with the Lowland counties. I am not going to detain your Lordships with any long illustration of this point. It is a point with which I have dealt in an article in a monthly review, and those noble Lords who are interested in the subject can refer to that paper. I have proved in that paper that, as regards the occupancy of land—that is, in the distribution of farms and the variety of sizes of the farms—the Highlands, on the whole, are more equally distributed than the best of the Lowland counties of Scotland, or than the richest counties in England. I think my noble Friend (Lord Napier and Ettrick) has in his Report given a somewhat erroneous view of the Highlands as a whole. I am sure it was unintentional on his part; but my noble Friend has made it appear as if the Highlands were divided into very large farms and very small farms, the truth being, as I have pointed out, that they are very equally distributed—much more so, indeed, than other parts of the country. It is a point of considerable interest and importance how we are to classify the smaller farms. I maintain that they belong to the labouring class, and that the holdings cannot be considered as farms at all. My noble Friend fully admits, as regards the small crofters, that they belong to the labouring class; and he points out that there are very few places in the Highlands where the labouring class are wholly dissociated from the cultivation of the land. Another matter which I wish to point out to your Lordships, as regards the circumstances of the country as a whole, is this—that the appointment of that Commission was not called for by the fact of any evictions being extensively complained of in the Highlands. This is a very important point, because a great many of the public do not understand it. But my noble Friend himself said in his Report, in a very significant passage, that the era of evictions has passed away, and that the desire of the proprietors in the Highlands is not in the direction of eviction, but, on the contrary, their desire was to make the crofter more comfortable. That is an important and valuable admission of my noble Friend, which he makes in a passage in which he goes on to say that the real danger of the future is not the danger of eviction, but the tendency of the people to sub-divide their crofts. Then, as regards those districts where the crofting system prevails, there is no exceptional poverty as compared with other parts of the United Kingdom. There is nothing, I believe, in the condition of the crofting population to be compared with the distress in many industrial centres in England. The crofter population in the Highlands, however discontented they may be locally with their condition, from causes to which I shall presently proceed to advert, are certainly not in distress in that sense. On the contrary, my Lords, there is very good evidence to show that the crofter population, as a whole, has advanced of late years rapidly in their material prosperity. I believe that their standard of living is higher a great deal than it was 25 years ago; and I am not at all sure that one of the causes of the agitation has not been this very rise in the standard of living. Formerly the people had to depend almost entirely on the produce of their holdings—on oatmeal and potatoes—supplemented by fishing; but now, I understand, there are through all the Islands and through all the croftering districts large consignments of groceries—tea, sugar, tobacco, and so on—sent from Glasgow. There is a very remarkable fact given by my noble Friend in one of the appendices of his Report, which I think, is conclusive in that matter, and it is the Return of the Poor Roll. The proportion of paupers of the whole population 20 years ago—in 1861-2—was 1 in every 21·2. The proportion in 1881-2 was 1 in 25·1; and I rejoice to say that the great county with which I am connected shows, taken by itself, a most wonderful decrease in pauperism. In 1861-2 the proportion was 1 in 16·6, in 1881-2 it was 1 in 31. That is a decrease of very nearly 50 per cent in the pauperism of Argyllshire. Your Lordships will see in the evidence before the Commission a great variety of opinion expressed on the point, whether the crofter population was better or worse off now than it was 25 years ago. I imagine the Return I have quoted is decisive on the point. The amount of pauperism was always greatest among the crofters; and this decrease could not have taken place unless there had been a great and substantial increase in the raising of the level of that population. I have said these few words to deprecate the supposition that the issue of this Commission was rendered necessary by any one of these causes—an unusually bad distribution of land, evictions by the proprietors, increase in pauperism, or distress in the country. None of these causes have led to it. The agitation has been to a large extent a political one, founded, however, on local circumstances, to which I shall advert presently. I come now to the recommendations of my noble Friend. The first is this—that the old townships, so called, should be recognized by law; and he rather implies that it has been a fault in the history of the law in Scotland that the law did not recognize these townships. My noble Friend says that the law recognizes townships only as dividing farms. Now, my Lords, that is perfectly true, and the law recognized townships as dividing farms for the best of all reasons—that that is exactly what they are. The township in Scotland has never been in recent times in the nature of a large farm. It was not a community having communal management over all its affairs. It was simply a farm divided into separate parts. It was pure individualism. Every tenant had his own division of the arable land. It might be changed from year to year by lot; but still the bit of arable land—or the bits, because they were immensely divided—belonged to each as his own, and they were not managed by the community. In the second place—and this is still more important—the cattle, which were the main produce of the farms, were individual, and not communal property. Each man had his own cow, and, as a rule, his own sheep. It is true that in certain cases the sheep were managed by the community as a common stock, but not the cattle. I know that some people have called this sort of possession a club farm. But that is not my understanding of a club farm. My understanding of a club farm is where there is one common management all through the farm—arable, cattle, and sheep—and where the proceeds are divided among the different tenants according to their different shares. That is a most interesting condition of agriculture, which has been tried, and is likely to be further tried, and in the success of which I shall feel the greatest interest. But that is certainly not the case with regard to the farming in the Highland townships, which were simply farms divided and exceedingly badly managed. Let me point out what would be the objection to the recognition of these townships by statute. The stock is always inferior on account of the individual discretion and individual skill which subsist in the selection of the rams and bulls. If one man buys a good bull, another buys a bad one, and it is only when stock is managed by one common management that improvement is possible. As the cattle are driven down from the hills into the low country during the summer months, the grain crop cannot be cultivated to any extent. Although, therefore, I know many townships where the people are comfortable—because they sit at very easy rents—no man can deny for a moment that it is an inferior condition of agriculture, and does not tend to the improvement of the country. While I am altogether against interfering unduly with these townships where they exist, I think it would be madness for any Act of Parliament to provide that that state of things should continue for future ages. I suppose most of your Lordships know that this condition of townships existed, not in the Highlands only, but all over Scotland and all over England. A great part of England 200 years ago was divided into townships; and it is a very curious fact that, so late as 1811, the first Duke of Sutherland, who was much blamed for his improvements in the country, had at the same moment to deal with the abolition of townships in Shropshire, which was one of the great improvements he made in that part of England. In short, we may say, with perfect truth, that the abolition of these townships has been coincident with the progress of agriculture and the civilization of the country. They survived in some parts of the Highlands simply because the progress of agriculbound to respond. I desire this evening to bring under the attention of the House of Lords a state of facts, out of which this Report has arisen; and before I go into the detailed recommendations of that Report I wish to say a few preliminary words on the circumstances which have appeared to render the issue of a Commission necessary in that part of the country. In the first place, I wish to say that it does not arise from any general bad distribution of the occupancy of land over the Highland as compared with the Lowland counties. I am not going to detain your Lordships with any long illustration of this point. 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But my noble Friend himself said in his Report, in a very significant passage, that the era of evictions has passed away, and that the desire of the proprietors in the Highlands is not in the direction of eviction, but, on the contrary, their desire was to make the crofter more comfortable. That is an important and valuable admission of my noble Friend, which he makes in a passage in which he goes on to say that the real danger of the future is not the danger of eviction, but the tendency of the people to sub-divide their crofts. Then, as regards those districts where the crofting system prevails, there is no exceptional poverty as compared with other parts of the United Kingdom. There is nothing, I believe, in the condition of the crofting population to be compared with the distress in many industrial centres in England. The crofter population in the Highlands, however discontented they may be locally with their condition, from causes to which I shall presently proceed to advert, are certainly not in distress in that sense. On the contrary, my Lords, there is very good evidence to show that the crofter population, as a whole, has advanced of late years rapidly in their material prosperity. I believe that their standard of living is higher a great deal than it was 25 years ago; and I am not at all sure that one of the causes of the agitation has not been this very rise in the standard of living. Formerly the people had to depend almost entirely on the produce of their holdings—on oatmeal and potatoes—supplemented by fishing; but now, I understand, there are through all the Islands and through all the croftering districts large consignments of groceries—tea, sugar, tobacco, and so on—sent from Glasgow. 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Now, my Lords, that is perfectly true, and the law recognized townships as dividing farms for the best of all reasons—that that is exactly what they are. The township in Scotland has never been in recent times in the nature of a large farm. It was not a community having communal management over all its affairs. It was simply a farm divided into separate parts. It was pure individualism. Every tenant had his own division of the arable land. It might be changed from year to year by lot; but still the bit of arable land—or the bits, because they were immensely divided—belonged to each as his own, and they were not managed by the community. In the second place—and this is still more important—the cattle, which were the main produce of the farms, were individual, and not communal property. Each man had his own cow, and, as a rule, his own sheep. It is true that in certain cases the sheep were managed by the community as a common stock, but not the cattle. I know that some people have called this sort of possession a club farm. But that is not my understanding of a club farm. My understanding of a club farm is where there is one common management all through the farm—arable, cattle, and sheep—and where the proceeds are divided among the different tenants according to their different shares. That is a most interesting condition of agriculture, which has been tried, and is likely to be further tried, and in the success of which I shall feel the greatest interest. But that is certainly not the case with regard to the farming in the Highland townships, which were simply farms divided and exceedingly badly managed. Let me point out what would be the objection to the recognition of these townships by statute. The stock is always inferior on account of the individual discretion and individual skill which subsist in the selection of the rams and bulls. If one man buys a good bull, another buys a bad one, and it is only when stock is managed by one common management that improvement is possible. As the cattle are driven down from the hills into the low country during the summer months, the grain crop cannot be cultivated to any extent. Although, therefore, I know many townships where the people are comfortable—because they sit at very easy rents—no man can deny for a moment that it is an inferior condition of agriculture, and does not tend to the improvement of the country. While I am altogether against interfering unduly with these townships where they exist, I think it would be madness for any Act of Parliament to provide that that state of things should continue for future ages. I suppose most of your Lordships know that this condition of townships existed, not in the Highlands only, but all over Scotland and all over England. A great part of England 200 years ago was divided into townships; and it is a very curious fact that, so late as 1811, the first Duke of Sutherland, who was much blamed for his improvements in the country, had at the same moment to deal with the abolition of townships in Shropshire, which was one of the great improvements he made in that part of England. In short, we may say, with perfect truth, that the abolition of these townships has been coincident with the progress of agriculture and the civilization of the country. They survived in some parts of the Highlands simply because the progress of agriculture there had not been so rapid as elsewhere. Therefore, my Lords, although I am entirely against interfering with these townships where they exist now, I should very much object to any Act of Parliament which would recognize them as a permanent state of the country and stereotype their existence. The greatest part of the land of Scotland for many hundred years had been let under lease, or what is called tacks, and those who are now crofters were the sub-tenants of the tacksmen. In my own case, in the Island of Tiree, where, I am sorry to say, the agitators have got possession of the minds of the people to a certain extent, I can give you the date when these farms were cut up into townships. They were cut up by my grandfather, John, Duke of Argyll, in 1803. He wished to provide for his own soldiers, and also to provide for the sub-tenant population, who were then in a very miserable condition; and he took four or five of the best farms in the Island and cut them up into crofts, his desire then being that no croft should hold less than about 11 head of cattle. I need not say that that is a very comfortable small possession, and very different indeed from crofts which are to be seen in Skye and Lewis. However, in the 43 years which elapsed between 1803 and the potato famine of 1846, all these townships became so subdivided into miserable and wretched holdings, in consequence of the impossibility of enforcing the estate regulation against sub-division, that when the potato famine came these people were in danger of positive starvation. They addressed a petition to me at that time to be assisted to emigrate to Canada, and a considerable sum of money was laid out in sending about 1,000 of them to Canada entirely at their own request. These townships, instead of being very ancient holdings, were at the time of the potato famine only 40 years old; and that I believe to be the case in many other parts of the Highlands. I am happy to say that, out of 26 farms in the Island of Tiree, 25 still remained as they had been sub-divided. I therefore say, in response to the appeal of my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary, that, so far as I am concerned, instead of being hostile to the tender feeling of these people for their townships, and to the preservation of them if they can live in comfort in them, I have pursued that system from the time I succeeded to the property. I desire to nurse them as far as they can be nursed, until the people themselves see that a more economical division would be in the interests of all the parties. Before passing from this matter, I wish to point out to my noble Friend the Chairman of the Commission (Lord Napier and Ettrick) the injury which has been caused to us proprietors by the method in which the investigations were conducted. I am not blaming him, because I do not know all the difficulties with which he had to contend; but I want to point out this—that the Commission did not go in detail into any one of the estates on which alleged grievances existed. They went in a steam vessel; they landed at certain points of the coast; they retired to the nearest church or school-house; they sat with open doors; everybody could make what complaints they pleased; but they never visited the localities. They had not the machinery for testing the statements of the crofters. There was no adequate cross-examination of the witnesses, and all this is admitted by my noble Friend in his Report. Therefore, we have no authorized and authentic verdict on the accusations made against us by the agitators in the other House of Parliament, and outside we have no judicial body before which we can defend ourselves, and from which we could get a verdict whether we have been guilty or not guilty of the alleged cruelties. This is a very great injury to us. I will mention a case affecting myself, and I mention it all the more because false accusations have been made against me by a Colleague of my noble Friend on the Commission, who sat on that Commission, and who published in a speech the other day in Scotland, which was repeated in another speech in "another place" by a confederate, Mr. Macfarlane, the other day, that I had removed so many of the people and converted so much of the Island into large farms that the whole land was virtually possessed by four or five large farmers, and as many thousands of people were living on the margins of soil which were left on these large farms. My Lords, this is an absolute mis-statement of facts. As I have already told your Lordships, out of 26 farms which were divided into townships by my grandfather, 25 remain exactly as they were, except that they are in a better and much healthier condition. I have examined by the survey the number of acres relatively held by the large farmers and by the crofting farmers, and I find that 10,000 acres of the best of the land are held in townships, and only 5,000 acres among the larger farmers. I should have desiderated that we could have come before by noble Friend, or some judicial body, and that we could have proved these facts in the faces of our foes. As it is, we are left to make our contradictions in the public Press. But that is not the manner in which these grave matters should be dealt with. So much with regard to the recognition of townships. I am entirely against interfering with them, and my efforts have been to make them more comfortable, and to increase the size of them wherever I could. I now come to a number of other recommendations of my noble Friend which are of extreme interest, because they go into the history of the people. The first may be called a minor recommendation. It is that all services shall be abolished. In that I entirely agree with my noble Friend. But where did my noble Friend ever hear that these services now survive? We have long ago abandoned these services. I suppose your Lordships know that in the Middle Ages, and up to a comparatively recent time in Scotland, sub-tenants paid no rent, because they had no money. They paid a few cows or beasts, but their main rent was in service; and I dare say your Lordships have very little idea of the amount and extent of service which these poor people were compelled to render to their tacksmen and proprietors. A most interesting paper on this subject was published by the late Sir John Sinclair, from which it appears that when the system was in full force the sub-tenants were really in menial servitude. They had hardly any time for the cultivation of their own lands. In fact, this was in former times one of the greatest grievances of the Highlands. It has been supposed—and there is no supposition more commonly spread about the country than this—that in the old times the relation of Highland tenants to their proprietors was that of clansmen to their Chief, and not of tenants to their landlords. That is quite true; but the supposition that their condition was better is a very absurd supposition. Their condition was infinitely worse. They had, in lieu of rent, to give labour service, which was arbitrary alike in its character and in its extent. The power of life and death over them was enjoyed by the Chief. In short, instead of the relation of landlord and tenant being a deterioration of the latter's condition it has been an enormous improvement. All the efforts of the great landlords for the last 150 years—since the Rebellion—have been to put an end to those services to which my noble Friend refers. On this subject I contributed to the Commissioners a most interesting letter from a most distinguished man, Lord President Forbes, of Culloden, than whom there was none better acquainted with the condition of the Highlands in his own day. Forbes, of Culloden, was employed by one of my own ancestors to look over his estate, and he gave a most deplorable account of the services that were required by the tacksmen, and urged on the Duke of Argyll of that time the desirability of giving direct leases, of abolishing these services, and turning the rents into fixed money payments. The advice of my noble Friend implies this—that we have not done this long ago. Now, as a matter of fact, I know of no estate in the Highlands in which services of the kind are exacted except for very trivial purposes, or in the service of the township itself. My noble Friend's advice is that they should be abolished except in connection with townships. I agree with him; and on my own estate, and over the greater part of the Highlands, they have been entirely abolished, and they have been abolished by the persistent efforts of the landowners. As regards the idea that the sub-tenants of the Highlands have any special claim to their possessions, I do not know a more instructive document than the first lease that is known to have been granted in Scotland. The date of that lease is 1312, two years before the Battle of Bannockburn. It was given by the Abbot of Scone to two tenants for land surrounding the Abbey of Perth, and you could not have now a better model of an improving lease—providing for definite payments, increasing with a number of years—increasing, that is to say, with the opportunity of improvements, and with the returns which those improvements were calculated to give; definite covenants that the tenants were to erect houses for their sub-tenants, for their husbandmen, and a covenant which is remarkable as showing that 500 years ago the tenants had no proprietary rights—namely, that the lease should terminate in the event of the Crown recalling the grant of the land from the Abbot of Scone. Another recommendation in the Report of the Royal Commission is that we should abolish all special rents, such as those that are paid for seaweed, heather, peat-cutting, and the like. I agree with those who think these dues ought not to be exacted, and ought to be abolished; but I know of no estate in my own country where they are exacted. On my own property there is little or no peat-cutting, and no charge is made for seaweed. If such dues exist elsewhere, I think they ought to be abolished. Now, I come to a recommendation for which I desire to thank my noble Friend, and to which I should like to call the attention of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. My noble Friend, whatever faults there may be in his Report, cannot be accused of having any tenderness towards the Irish land system. He denounces it on every possible occasion. In standing sponsor for his Report he denounces that devil and all his works. My noble Friend says he would not allow—he would go further, and cause Parliament to prohibit—either an outgoing tenant or a proprietor to receive payment of arrears from an incoming tenant. This is the very essence of tenant right as it exists in Ireland; but so sensible is my noble Friend of the mischief likely to result from the incoming tenant being thus encumbered, that he would positively prohibit it by Act of Parliament. In this respect, also, however, we in Scotland have long anticipated the recommendations of my noble Friend. I have never heard of a Highland landlord which allowed payments for goodwill, or accepted payment of arrears from an incoming tenant; and we think that a most mischievous practice. When we are obliged to get rid of a tenant, as sometimes happens, with very large arrears, I think it would be doing, not only my estate, but the public, a great injury if I accepted these arrears from the incoming tenant, for I know it would hamper him in the future management of his farm. The next recommendation is, that we should not allow sub-division. Yes; but has my noble Friend recommended that our hands should be strengthened to prevent sub-division? We have always prohibited sub-division. So far as I know, it has been a fundamental condition of all estate regulation that sub-division should not take place. But the successful prevention of sub-division is another thing. It requires a condition of settled law and order. It requires that the authority of property be enforced by the strong arm of the law, and it requires conscientious vigilance on the part of those who manage property to prevent this; and at the present moment, in the Long Island and other places, where the greatest distress prevails, sub-division cannot be prevented by the landlord, because the law does not enable him to enforce this prohibition. Sub-division has been one great cause of the evils that exist in the Highlands, and I am glad to see that there are several passages in the Report in which my noble Friend calls attention to it and denounces it. So far as I am personally concerned, it was not until the other day that I had any real difficulty in enforcing the condition against sub-division. Of course, this was not done without a constant struggle, for in districts where the people have no sense of domestic comfort, and almost no sense of decency, and where two or three families are in consequence crowded together, it is most painful to have to say—"You must not do it; you must get rid of these relatives of yours." It was almost impossible, under such circumstances, to prevent overcrowding. What you can do, however, is to prevent other new cottages being built, and that I have endeavoured to enforce. In Tiree, during 37 years, I have resisted the building of new cottages, and the consequence is that the condition of crofters in that Island is infinitely more comfortable than when I succeeded. The next recommendation of my noble Friend is that vacant crofts should not be re-let, but should be consolidated. I agree with him. That is what I have invariably done with very satisfactory results. I am not quite sure whether my noble Friend wishes the law to intervene, and to say that proprietors shall never re-let a croft by itself, but shall always add it to the next. If the Legislature should say it is so sensible of the immense evils of sub-division, and so desirous to see the consolidation of small holdings, violent as I should consider such a measure was as an interference with property, I should not resist it. The Report then recommends that crofts below £6 should be resolutely but gently withdrawn. There I have ceased to follow my noble Friend. That is not the line that I would take for the purpose of reducing small crofts; and I do not see the possibility of Parliament adopting it, and my reason for saying so is that crofts vary so much in character that you cannot be guided by a rent line. The £6 line is quite a different thing in different places. I have made no difference, and I intend to make no difference, between the larger and the smaller crofters. I wish them all to remain where they are, so long as they can live comfortably according to their own notions of comfort. When a £6 croft becomes vacant I should deal with it according to the particular circumstances of the case; but in all cases, while anxious to enlarge the crofts, I would guard against any violent withdrawal of small holdings; and I cannot conceive the possibility of Parliament imposing on landlords the duty of abolishing them under all circumstances. Then, in regard to crofters below £6, I understand that my noble Friend proposes that they should not have the same privileges as larger crofters in the townships. That would be extremely difficult, because there are many good men of £6 who are regular members of the township.

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK: I do not propose to make any distinction by law at all.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: The noble Lord proposes that crofts below £3 are not to be continued at all. That, again, is a recommendation that may be very good to give to landed proprietors for the management of their property; but I do not see what place it could have in an Act of Parliament. The next recommendation is, that cottars should hold from the landlord. There are cottars who hold from the tenant; but I do not think it is a good system. Where you have sub-division upon sub-division, which landlords have not been practically able to prevent, you have a large number of cottars who hold from nobody. There are 200 families on the Island of Tiree who do not pay 1*s*. of rent, either to me or to the tenant. They are mere squatters, paying rent to nobody; but I am unwilling to turn them out. I entirely agree that cottars should be wholly under the landlord. The last recommendation of this class which I shall notice is this—that no arrears should be exigible from the tenant beyond two years. That is a most excellent rule, if you remember that the landlord must have summary power to eject the tenant within the two years. Otherwise, the tenant might go on from two to 20 years, and no rent be exigible at all. If the landlord has summary powers, then I quite agree that the long accumulation of arrears is a mischievous practice, and ought to be discouraged, if not actually prohibited, by Parliament. I pass from these, which many of your Lordships may consider minor points, to the great question of rents, and the tenure of land. My noble Friend has distinctly said that, taken as a whole, he does not believe the crofter population to be over-rented. He has, therefore, not recommended any State valuation of rents as under the Irish Land Act. I entirely agree with my noble Friend that the State valuation of rents is wholly wrong in principle, and mischievous in its results. This is a point upon which the Home Secretary, having made an appeal to the great proprietors of Scotland, they ought to make some response. Let us be frank about this matter. I object altogether to an eleemosynary scale of rent. I believe it has a corrupting influence on the population, and a moderate and fair rent ought to be arrived at; and I believe many of us would be perfectly willing to submit our rent-roll to some neutral man, and we could come to an agreement as to the amount to be paid. The rents of crofters are almost always determined by the amount of stock, and there are certain matters perfectly well known in certain districts which regulate more or less the rent of the croft. It is so much a cow, and so much a sheep. I have ascertained this fact—that in the Eastern counties of Scotland—Aberdeenshire and other places—where there are many crofters but no townships, and where the rents of crofters are determined in the usual way, the average rent is about one-fifth of the capital value of the stock. In the Western Highlands, and on my own property, the rents are not above one-eleventh part of the capital value of the stock. They run from one-eighth to one-eleventh. Of course, these are matters which vary to some extent with the value of the grazing and the quality of the land; but, provided the valuation of rents is upon some understood principle, and bears some intelligible relation to the rents paid by the tenants, who are able to make their own bargain, I should have no objection whatever to such a valuation being made in regard to these small tenants; and, what is more, I should rejoice if, by such a process, we could come to a peaceful settlement with those whose minds are now agitated and disturbed. I pass from the question of rents to the question of tenure. I see in a great many papers in the Appendices of my noble Friend's Report complaints, especially by clergymen of the Free and Established Churches, of want of security of tenure. Now, I am quite willing to meet the appeal of my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary by saying that I am willing to give to my crofters any duration of lease which they are willing to accept. I really do not care what it is. If they choose to take a 30 years' lease, they are welcome, and I shall give it to them upon far less onerous conditions as regards improvements than those suggested by my noble Friend. But to tell you the truth, I have found that the crofters at the present moment—I think under the effects of agitation—are not willing to accept these leases. They do not want them. They have a vague notion that Parliament is to interfere and do something on their behalf; and as they do not know what they may get, they do not wish to be bound by the terms of a lease. Since I have entered this House to-night, I have received a telegram from a very large proprietor in the North of Scotland, who says he believes the crofters themselves would willingly accept leases; but they had been got at by the emissaries of agitators from London and elsewhere, who have persuaded them to refuse leases. An instance of this kind came under my own notice. Last August I happened to be talking to a crofter whom I greatly respect, a most intelligent man, who had done a very unusual thing—he had built a very good slated house on his croft without having a lease beyond the well-known custom which prevails in such cases. But the crofter complained that the house let in water, so I said to him—"My good man, as you built this house yourself, why don't you mend it? If you want security for your outlay, you are welcome to a lease. I will give you any duration of lease you ask for." He was very civil, and thanked me; but I have never heard from him since. During 37 years I have only received one petition in favour of a lease. To anyone who applies, I say distinctly I shall rejoice to give it; I shall make no exception between £6 and £10. Anybody who wishes security of tenure has only to apply, and I will give him a lease. When you come up to rentals of £30, I should be disposed, in giving a 30 years' lease, to require some of the conditions which my noble Friend has laid down; but as regards security of tenure I am ready to grant it to any extent that is wished. In saying this I am, of course, only speaking for myself; but I have a firm conviction that all the proprietors in the North of Scotland, and along the West of Scotland, would act as I am now proposing. They have no wish to get rid of their people; they only desire to see their condition improved; and they think many of the crofts much too small. A lease, after all, did not prevent a crofter emigrating to Canada or to Manitoba; and my hope is that with the progress of the country, and the gradual rise in the standard of living which is going on by slow degrees in the Highlands, some of these people will give up their holdings, whether under lease or not, and let them be added to the holdings of those who remain in the country. Now I come to the most formidable proposal of my noble Friend—a proposal which has startled everybody who has read his Report. It is, indeed, a most extraordinary proposal. My noble Friend proposes that every existing township in the Highlands, however poor, should have the right to call in the Sheriff to say that it was overcrowded, and to get the authority of the Sheriff to annex a large slice of the next croft or farm.

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK: No.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: That may not be what my noble Friend means; but there is no limit whatever in the recommendation.

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK: Yes; £100 rental.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: Oh, yes; £100 rental. So far as I understand the proposition, no discretion is given to the Sheriff to say whether this overcrowded township has been due to the fault of the people or not. They may have overcrowded by sub-division against the rules of the estate; and when the potato crop failed they fell into a condition of distress and danger. There never was such a proposal. Look at the other side of the question—the farm to be annexed. I am not now speaking of what I think my noble Friend intends, but the proposition in the Report. I will give a case which I have in my mind's eye—a township which has been carefully reserved by the proprietor, because he did not wish to interfere with the people. But there is a dairy farm on the one side and a cattle farm on the other, with a good deal of arable land. The proprietor has made great outlay upon the dairy farm, and the amount of accommodation depends strictly upon the acreage, and the number of cows upon the quality and acreage of the land. The particular township adjoining, with its wretched cultivation, says it wants one-half of the acreage of these two farms. Why, if that were done the whole farm would be ruined, and the buildings would cease to be applicable to the farms; and so in the case of the mixed farm, the outlay of the proprietor and the unfortunate tenant had both been made with reference to the confidence in the extent of the holding. I think this is a proposition which Parliament will never submit to, and which I, for one, would resist to the death. It is unjust to everybody; it is ruinous to the agriculture of the country. Not only would there be no outlay on the township farms, but every proprietor would grudge every shilling paid down on every farm in the vicinity of a township farm. Now, I come to what I really believe was the condition thought of by my noble Friend, and I am sure by the Home Secretary. My noble Friend was contemplating this—that in many townships it is said—I am not saying it is true—by agitators that within the past 30, 40, or 50 years since sheep farms have been created these townships have been deprived of their hill pasture. What my noble Friend has in contemplation is, that a slice of the hill pasture might be restored to the township. I at once say, in a case of that kind, where it is possible, that that is a most reasonable proposition, and which I should be most willing to agree to. My noble Friend proposes that in such a case the township shall show ability to stock the farm. Under these conditions, I think it quite possible that in some parts of the Highlands which have been monopolized by very large sheep farms, slices could be cut off without material damage, especially under existing conditions of sheep-farming, and restored to the people if they ever possessed it. I shall be quite willing to entertain a proposal of that kind where I have land of this character to dispose of. I must explain, however, that I am making a proposal which has very little reference to my own property, and which may be a very serious one for others. In Tiree there are no sheep farms—no deer forests, no grouse-shooting, and no hills, except mole-hills, and there has been practically for 30 years no alteration in the condition of the holdings. When I was in Skye a few days ago, during a visit to Lord Macdonald at Dunvegan, I found that steps were already being taken in that district by his Lordship and some other proprietors to divide great sheep farms into much smaller divisions, and one of the proprietors has succeeded in getting the township to take one of those farms, giving some security for the stock. It is not improbable, therefore, that under the existing conditions of the sheep farms in the Highlands it might be possible to constitute or reconstitute club farms. This is the case evidently contemplated by my noble Friend; and by what fell from the Home Secretary I think the proprietors in the Highlands would be most willing to respond to the appeal which the noble Lord has made. I know that on the land of the Duke of Sutherland active efforts are now being made to increase the pastures of townships wherever the people can afford to stock them. But the great difficulty is this—that many of those townships are utterly unable to stock these places. They have not capital enough to stock them. A sheep grazing of 2,000 or 3,000 sheep is quite out of the question with these people, and that is confessed in the evidence given before the Commissioners. Having said so much in regard to rent and tenure, I wish to say a few words more in regard to another very anomalous recommendation of my noble Friend, which is the right of purchase. He does not give an absolute right of purchase; but he proposes that the State should assist tenants to buy their crofts with the consent of the landlords. As regards myself—I speak for myself only—I should be very glad indeed to see many of my crofters buying their own crofts, especially in the Island of Tiree, which is naturally rich and suitable land, where crofters might be able to get a good living. But I very much question whether the State will come forward with the security which my noble Friend recommends to enable that plan to be adopted by Parliament. At all events, if it is adopted by Parliament, I should work heartily with it on my own property. I wish to say a few words on the recommendations which my noble Friend has made to the Government, but not to the Crown. I wish, in the first place, to thank my noble Friend for the generous calculations which he has made to the Treasury on our behalf. I am not sure whether my noble Friend is likely to get them; but I should be very glad if he could get some of them at least. I must say, however, they constitute rather a novel request. The Treasury is to be called upon to provide piers and harbours. I am not sure but that, in some cases, this outlay will well repay the Government. As regards fisheries on the West Coast, a Committee of the House of Commons sat on the matter last year, and I had the honour of being examined before the Committee. I am not quite sure what the recommendations were; but I am afraid they were not much in favour of the Government launching out in this matter. There are some places, however, in the West Highlands where I think harbours must be erected, and to provide which it was quite beyond the possible reach of any proprietor to do so with advantage to the people. Of course, I cannot help remembering that the amount of population which will be served is comparatively small, although it will not be strictly local population, because on the banks of the Island of Tiree, East country fishermen have been accustomed to come for many years. My noble Friend next recommends that the Government should enter into loans with individual fishermen for boats and gear. I confess, however, that I am a little incredulous of my right hon. Friend Mr. Gladstone or the Chancellor of the Exchequer being very generous in this matter of loans. My noble Friend recommends—and here I entirely agree with him—that the Government should give a much more liberal outlay for the improvement of the services of the Telegraph and the Post Office. In the Western Highlands we are shamefully supplied in this respect. The Orkney and Shetland Islands have for a long time been much better supplied than the Western Highlands, where we suffer severely from the bad accommodation given to us by the Post Office. I think, in regard to those comparatively poor counties, that the Government should consider the outlay without the same reference to terms as they do in the Orkney and Shetland Islands. My noble Friend recommends that help should be given to railways and canals. I doubt whether my noble Friend will get the Government to agree with him. With regard to another proposal of my noble Friend I have great doubts. He proposes that any excess of school rate over 2*s.* in the pound should be paid by the Treasury. It is true that the education rate in some parts of the Highlands is a fearfully high rate, and is far beyond anything that the Education Department ever expected, or the Government anticipated. It is stated that in the Long Island the education rate and the other rates amount to upwards of 11*s.* in the pound. This has been partly due, I believe, to the gross extravagance in the building of schools. There is no part of this Report which impresses more on my mind the importance of having a local Education Department for Scotland itself. I am quite sure if the education grant for Scotland had been administered by the Board in Edinburgh, or by any Local Board knowing the requirements of the country, they would not have allowed these extravagant buildings to be erected. I have seen some of the most intelligent children I ever knew returning some of the most intelligent answers I ever heard in schools held in "black houses," as they are called—thatched cottages, with a mud floor, and plenty of ventilation. I think it absurd in these poor out-of-the-way districts to put up great buildings, built with expensive stone, and costing thousands of pounds, imposing a serious burden on the people. I do not deny that in some parts of the Highlands this burden of the school rate has become an intolerable burden on the people; and, therefore, a great deal is to be said for the proposal of my noble Friend. Now I come to the question of emigration. I am not sure whether I agree with all that fell from the Home Secretary on the question of emigration; but I understood him to have spoken only as regards Government emigration, and we all know the insuperable difficulties which have prevented the Government taking up State-aided emigration. These difficulties were stated by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies in this House during the last Session of Parliament. I listened carefully to the reason he gave as regards Ireland, and I think they are as strong as any objections that could be stated. I am in favour of emigration, and I hope the day will come when the overcrowded districts will be relieved of their surplus population. I do not say that the Highlands are over-populated as a whole; far from it. But in the Long Island and other places they are undoubtedly over-populated. I have a Return showing that the population of the Island of Lewis, which is a wretchedly poor Island, has increased in the course of the last century from 6,386 to 25,487, while the increase during the last 20 years has been 5,793. The Island of Lewis is incapable of supporting that population. My noble Friend has analyzed the Returns, and shown the number of acres that go to each man, and has shown that the Island is wholly incompetent for the support of such a population. Of course, they do not all live by the land; some are fishermen; but they are all in a state of great poverty. Before I sit down I wish to say a few words in regard to the lawlessness which has prevailed in some districts of the Western Highlands. I believe, and I know, that this lawlessness has not been born among the people of the country. It is the work and the active propaganda of Socialistic agitation. In the Island of Skye, when I was there last year, I heard details which left no doubt whatever that the minds of the people have been poisoned by active emissaries altogether outside the people. Naturally, they are the most tractable, the most loyal, and the most law-abiding people in the world. I have had the pleasure—and it has been a great pleasure—of dealing with them during the last 37 years; and, as far as regards lawlessness or the shadow of lawlessness, I have never had one moment's grief or anxiety. The whole thing has been got up by one of the societies in London. The lawlessness which has compelled the Government to send an armed force to Skye has been very serious indeed; and as this is very much glossed over, I wish to explain to the House the extent to which that lawlessness has gone. So far as I know the fact, it is not a question of resisting rents—it is not a question of resisting evictions or removals. It has nothing to do with that. It is a question of seizing other people's land. A great many of the crofting townships there have issued and executed a threat of entering on the ground of the larger tenants and seizing it by main force. If such a state of things is allowed to go on all capital will be driven from the country. There will be no improvement and no possibility of entering into any of those arrangements which imply a confidence in the law and confidence in the enforcement of the law. In conclusion, I will only say that if the Government see their way to make any reasonable proposals on the lines which have been indicated—at least on some of the lines which have been indicated by noble Friend, I am sure they can count on the loyal and hearty co-operation of the proprietors of the land in that part of the country.

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK: My Lords, the noble Duke is regarded in Scotland, and particularly in the part of the country with which his family has so long been connected, as an exemplary proprietor; and, my Lords, he is usually ranked among those who, in theory at least, would rather apply a strict economical principle to the management of land than those practices of benevolence and mutual accommodation which are advocated by others. I say in theory, because I have no doubt the practice of the noble Duke in the management of his property, as he himself has explained, has been very different from any strict economical theory. With reference to this particular case—that of the crofters—the noble Duke has in various forms, by pamphlets, by letters in the newspapers, by articles in the Reviews, plied us with matter argumentative, admonitory, and controversial, and with much instructive and interesting information; and I am bound to say that, when the noble Duke announced his intention of making a speech on the subject, I was not without some apprehension that he might say something more likely to widen the breach between different interests and different classes than he has done. Because, my Lords, we know that, whatever are the theories of the noble Duke, he is in the habit of advocating them with a conscious ascendancy and eloquent impetuousness, and sometimes arbitrary logic, which is extremely inspiriting to his supporters, and very often both provoking and inconvenient to his adversaries. But, my Lords, I am happy to think that the language of the noble Duke generally in discussing the subject has been so wise, so conciliatory, and so benevolent towards the class of persons with whom he deals, that I cannot but believe that the tone which he has adopted and the measures he has recommended cannot fail to exercise a very happy influence both upon the proprietary and upon the tenant classes of his country. Now, my Lords, in discussing this question, I must ask your Lordships' indulgence. Your Lordships are aware that I seldom address your Lordships' House, and I am altogether unversed in the practice of extemporaneous debate, of which the noble Duke is a veteran and accomplished master. But I am about to address your Lordships on a subject with which you are extremely familiar, and in which your hearty sympathies are engaged. I shall, therefore, proceed to notice in some detail, and, as far as I can, in regular order, the points which the noble Duke has submitted to your Lordships. At first, my Lords, the noble Duke referred to an article which he recently wrote in *The Nineteenth Century*, a portion of which was devoted to the discussion of a particular point to which reference is made in the Report of the Crofters' Commission; and that is that the Commission, having at heart to illustrate the evils attached to an extreme sub-division of land among the small tenantry, and the extreme consolidation of land among the larger holders, cited the condition of four parishes in the Western Highlands. The noble Duke complains that this conveys an erroneous impression as to the state of the Highlands of Scotland generally; and he implies, if he does not directly say, that the Commissioners meant to imply that the state of affairs found to exist in these four parishes and the surrounding district was really characteristic of the whole Highlands. Now, my Lords, this is so far from being the case that it is particularly specified in the Report that the four parishes in question are characteristic—not of the whole of Scotland or of the whole of the Highlands, but merely of a distinct area, which is strictly and accurately defined. It is pointed out that the evils attached to excessive sub-division and excessive consolidation are less in certain parts of Argyllshire and on the Western seaboard generally. It is, therefore, distinctly stated that the condition of affairs revealed in the four parishes referred to are not to be taken as applicable to the whole of the North of Scotland or the Highlands in general, but that they are simply characteristic of a particular restricted area of the country in which the crofter question has attained the most pressing position. It may be asked why the Commission have dealt particularly with these four parishes, and why they have not extended their comparison to a larger area? The reason simply is that the district to which I refer is, in reality, the district in which the crofter question has become of serious importance; and if that district were struck out of the map of Scotland, the crofter question would probably never have been heard of. The noble Duke has referred at considerable length to the question of the Highland townships; and that point I desire to treat in connection with the principal grievance or hardship of the people in the crofter districts of the North of Scotland. My Lords, the capital grievance which was brought before the notice of the Commission, in the course of their tour, was the question of the restriction of crofts. That objection was urged and admitted by all classes of witnesses—by clergymen, by professional men, by farmers, by every independent person, and I need hardly say that it was strongly enforced by the crofters. It is, therefore, to the capital objection—the restriction of the area of crofts — that the Commissioners had to direct their attention. The evil is the excessive restriction of the small tenancies. How are these tenancies to be enlarged? The most obvious method by which it can be done is, naturally, that of the emigration of some tenants, and the division of their land among others. I agree with the noble Duke in regretting that the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on a recent occasion, seemed to discountenance the remedy of emigration. I think that the remedy of emigration is not only necessary, but indispensable, subject to limits—first, that emigration should be entirely voluntary on the part of the people; and, secondly, that the land vacated by the emigrants should be divided among tenants of the same class. The second means of promoting the consolidation or enlargement of these small holdings is to be sought in migration—that is, the transfer of the small crofters from their present places to other places; and this transfer will probably be best accomplished, first, by the extension of emigration, which would show the people how they could benefit their position by removing elsewhere; and, secondly, by the encouragement of fishing stations and harbours by the proprietors and the Government, by which the people, who now are engaged in the mixed occupation of cultivation and fishing, might spontaneously give up their small holdings and form into fishing communities, leaving the holdings to be consolidated with those of their neighbours. But both emigration and migration will, under the present circumstances, operate slowly, and will not achieve, at least with sufficient rapidity, the objects aimed at. It was felt that the evil of the restriction of area must be combated by local remedies applied to the area itself. How is that to be effected? If the area is too small, the first result is to secure that the area shall not be restricted any further, and that result may be obtained by giving the present holders fixity of tenure, by giving them absolute security that their present holdings should not be taken from them. But if that condition was secured to the small tenants, we should, on the other hand, by giving them fixity, render the object we have at heart—that is, the extension of holdings—more difficult still. We cannot give the people security and consolidate the holdings by giving the individual occupier fixity of tenure. We have, therefore, conceived this idea—that the area occupied generally by this class of small holders might be secured without securing the individual tenant, so that the proprietor within the general crofting area should have a sort of flexible administrative power of availing himself of all legitimate opportunities of uniting or consolidating it. The general area occupied by the crofting population is not to be interfered with; but individual holdings may, under due restrictions, be interfered with, with the view of consolidation; and in order to constitute this reserve for the class of small tenants, we have conceived and adopted the expedient of recognizing the Highland township plan, that there are certain specific areas which shall be reserved for small tenancies, within which the administrative and improving power of the proprietor is not to be withdrawn, but that the general area is not to be interfered with. I now come to a point on which the noble Duke commented with peculiar solemnity, and that is the power we propose to give as to the expansion of holdings. We have satisfied ourselves that an expansion of the holdings is absolutely indispensable to the welfare of the population; and we believe that the process of expansion will, under ordinary circumstances, proceed so slowly that a very great length of time will probably elapse before any practical good will be effected, and that, therefore, it is absolutely necessary to give to the crofting area, to the Highland townships, the power of expansion of its area from the neighbouring lands. This power of claiming additional land for expansion beyond the present area is a claim on the part of the tenant that the proprietor shall give a portion of his property for the benefit of a particular class of tenants; and if that power is to be given it ought to be very strictly limited, both with reference to the extent of the land to be taken and with reference to the extent of the expanded holding. The noble Duke has argued that this power of expansion, if generally exercised in an unrestricted manner, might be exercised to the very serious prejudice of the larger farms which have been improved by the expenditure of a great deal of capital on the part of the proprietor and tenant. But if these stipulations, by which the adjacent property is protected in the Report of the

Commission, are not sufficient, the Commissioners would be the first to admit that those conditions should be improved. We have laid down that when a township claims and receives an expansion, that expansion is not to be exercised as against farms below a certain size. Our object has always been to leave the large farm as a competent area, so that the farm buildings and the other improvements which have been made upon it shall not be wasted or cast away; and we have also guarded this right proposed to be granted to the townships by this condition—that the right of expansion shall not be exercised in such a manner as to create holdings in the townships of more than an average value of £15 a-year. The adjacent property is, therefore, already protected in the terms of this Report by restrictions and limitations of a very stringent character. But all I can say is, that if additional limitations and provisions are necessary, they should certainly not be resisted by Her Majesty's Commissioners. Our object has never been utterly to break down and destroy the large farms, which we consider a most valuable element in the agricultural economy of the country. It is obvious that if the expansion is to be effected, it can only be done by recognizing the corporate characteristic of the crofting community; but that constitution or recognition of the township is not only justified for the capital purpose of expanding the holdings; it is equally justified by the necessity of improving the condition of the crofting population. I would ask your Lordships to consider how is it possible for the individual crofter in large areas in the Highlands, where these conveniences do not exist, to obtain township fences, township roads, roads to the shore, roads to the peats, and all those elementary works which are absolutely necessary to the welfare and comfort of this class. He cannot, by any individual exertion, obtain all those things. It is absolutely necessary that there should be corporate action on the part of the crofters, and it is absolutely necessary that they should be able to call in the co-operation of the proprietor. Township works can never be effected by the individual or the whole corporation of the crofters. They must be effected by co-operation between the corporation of the crofters and the proprietors, and that is what our recommendation urges. But it has been urged that the improvements which we authorize the crofting community to demand from the proprietors are of a preposterous character; that the landlord is called upon to make an outlay from which he would receive no direct return; and that this is a tyrannical exercise of authority on the part of the small tenants. To that I most absolutely demur. There is no unreasonable claim made in this Report. All we ask is that the proprietor should do for the crofting community a great deal less than he is obliged to do every day for the large farmers. He is obliged to make all those improvements which we see on a well-managed farm. We do not ask for anything comparable to that. All that we stipulate is, that the crofter should have the right of exacting from the proprietor, not the erection of a house, not the erection of offices, fences, and drains—nothing but boundary fences for the croft roads to the nearest high road, to the shore, and to the village. We do so for the purpose of knitting together the proprietor and the crofter in the execution of useful works for the common good. The most distressing feature in the condition of these people is the inertia, the lethargy, the want of activity, the want of progress, which is everywhere apparent. What we want to do is, to stir the people up; to stir up the proprietor to an interest in the tenantry, and the tenantry to an interest in their own welfare. Without the recognition of the township, it is impossible to obtain either the necessary expansion or the necessary increase of the crofts. The second question which was so much urged on our consideration was the question of security. There is a widespread misapprehension as to the eviction of crofters. Eviction has certainly not been a frequent occurrence, except for the non-payment of rents. It is perfectly obvious that the want of security has not really prevented improvement in those regions; because whatever improvements have been executed have been executed by the tenantry themselves, without security, and these improvements are very considerable. If anything at all exists—if the crofting class exists at all, if crofting accommodation exists, if houses exist, it is owing to the exertions of the tenant. The whole country, such as it is, has been created and improved by the people without security; and, indeed, I have seen most considerable amounts of money expended by persons in the most dependent condition in the world, and even on estates which were not remarkable for the humanity or indulgence with which they are administered, and where the tenant had no security whatever. There is no doubt that a small tenant in the Highlands trusts a good deal to the indulgence and kindness of his landlord. But, at the same time, security gives a great impulse to improvement; and therefore it became our duty to inquire as to what form of security would be the most advisable. Absolute fixity of tenure granted to the whole of these people in every class appeared to us to be a measure which would be far more likely to intensify the evils under which the country labours than to diminish them. It became, therefore, our duty to recommend security as a conditional measure. For that purpose we have endeavoured to devise what we call "improving leases." We selected that first, because it is congenial to the habits of the people in the Highlands. Not on the West Coast, but certainly in the centre, and on the East Coast, the country has been, in a great measure, relieved from sterility under the stipulations of improving leases. We do not doubt that, eventually, the people on the Western Coast may be led to adopt these improving leases. We considered it was indispensable that the people, in receiving a boon on the part of the proprietor, should show themselves worthy of it, and labour for their own benefit. We have always stipulated that the proprietor and the tenant will have every opportunity of coming to a spontaneous arrangement; but we have recommended that where the tenant cannot come to a friendly and just arrangement with his landlord, he should have the right of framing an official lease. The majority of the Commissioners did not think that it would be desirable to grant the right of claiming an improving lease to the smallest class of tenants, keeping in view the great object, which is the consolidation of holdings. It was thought that to give to the smallest class of tenants an improving lease might tend to strengthen that particular class, and to prevent the expansion of holdings; and, therefore, the majority of the Commissioners decided that the right of claiming an improving lease should not be granted to those who possessed holdings of less than £6 annual rent. The noble Duke says he does not think that those who have holdings of less than £6 should be excluded from the benefits which are conferred upon the higher class. In that I agree, and I disagree with the majority of those with whom I was associated on the Commission. I think that the right of claiming an improving lease of land might be safely conceded to the larger class, and that it might even be granted to the tenants of land below the £6 line—perhaps even to tenants holding possessions of £4, or even £3, annual rent. With reference to what is ordinarily called free sale or disposal of improvements, we contend that this is a right which could not be conceded to the small tenants, either with justice to the landlord or with safety to the tenant himself, keeping still in view the great object of increasing the area of holdings. We thought that to enable the small tenant, the holder of an improving lease, to sell the improvements on his holding to all and sundry, would also tend to stereotype the existence of small holdings, and to prevent that consolidation which is the capital object of our policy. We, therefore, have stipulated that where the tenant throws up his lease, and leaves the tenancy, he can only have the power of disposing of his improvements and of his tenancy to the landlord. In fact, subject to the one condition that the proprietor shall be obliged, with certain limitations, to increase the area of the small tenancies, our object has been to maintain the rights of property undiminished and unassailed. Our object has been to maintain all the responsibilities, all the duties, and all the enjoyments which constitute the duty and delight of the proprietors, and which we believe in the Highlands can be rendered instrumental for the good of the community. It may be thought that in other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions, owing to peculiar circumstances, the power of the proprietor cannot be in future usefully exercised for the benefit of his tenantry and his domains. If that is the case elsewhere —which I need not affirm or deny—I am satisfied that it is not the case in the Highlands. I am satisfied that anything which would seriously diminish the rights and the attractions of property in the Highlands would be detrimental to the welfare of the community. There is no doubt that there still is a very great desire, on the part of many, to acquire property in the Highlands. There is no doubt that there is a very great reluctance on the part of proprietors to be dispossessed of their existing rights; and, with the expansion of the area of the small tenancies, we have have endeavoured to save the integrity of the proprietary rights. With reference to what the noble Duke has said in regard to rents, I have very little to say. The noble Duke has gone a step beyond what we have ventured to propose. The Commissioners, in their Report, have not thought it fit, generally speaking, in the crofting districts of the Highlands, to say that the rents are so excessive as to offer the least justification for a general revaluation of the land. We have, therefore, not recommended any judicial rent, except in two particular cases. But we have recommended that when an additional area is granted to a township, that, in that case, the value of the portion granted should be officially ascertained, and the tenant should receive it at the rate fixed by an impartial valuator. We have also stated that, in our opinion, when an improving lease is granted, that previous to the settlement of the tenant, in order that he should have a fair start, and against his making a bad bargain, and expending his substance and labour improving another man's property, an official value should be ascertained. With the exception of these two cases, we have not thought ourselves justified in recommending an official inquiry. I think what the noble Duke has himself suggested is a wise and benevolent suggestion—that the proprietor should undertake, for the pacification of the country, a revaluation of the land, not by way of arbitration, but as far as possible conducted by an impartial person in whom landlords and tenants have confidence; and such parties can be discovered. I do not hesitate to say that the advice of the noble Duke in this particular, if accepted—and if the proprietors in those portions of the country where some complaints were made of excessive rents should agree upon a revaluation of the small holdings—would afford very great satisfaction, and spread contentment amongst the people. As to compulsory service, the noble Duke has said he is not aware that such service exists—that it has been abolished; and in the case of his own estate for upwards of 100 years. That is perfectly true. But the noble Duke will not find in the Commissioners' Report that the existence of such compulsory service is a matter of general complaint. It is mentioned, because it appeared as a matter of complaint in some rare cases in the evidence which was submitted to us. There is, or there has been, such service, but to a very small extent, upon some estates—such as the exaction of a certain amount of labour, or the payment of a portion of the rent in the form of labour. These cases are very rare, and they are altogether insignificant; but as they were mentioned we thought it right to notice them. Therefore, we have, in a general way, recommended that in all cases such payment should be in money. The same might be said in the case of the collection of sea-ware, and other small matters. There were some exceptional cases, where small payments were made, either to the adjacent farmer, or to the proprietor, for commodities or privileges of that nature. Therefore, we thought it better to advise that the whole of these payments should be abrogated, or that they should be consolidated and charged in the form of rent. The noble Duke seemed to think we recommended that holdings of less than £6 annual value should be prohibited. That is not so. What we recommend is, that where, within the limits of a township, a holding of less than £3 annual value falls to the landlord through death, or some other cause, it should be used for consolidating with the other holding. I do not know if that is a provision which can be given effect to in law; but, in substance, it is one which the noble Duke has recommended. I am sorry to hear the noble Duke thinks some of the recommendations are not likely to be accepted by Parliament. The noble Duke also touched upon the question of emigration. It was the opinion of the majority of the Commissioners, and especially of a Member of the Commission who has given his attention particularly to this matter, that no efforts, either by the proprietors, or by the Government, would be effectual, unless accompanied by emigration. We failed to see how it was possible that emigration, on an adequate scale, could be conducted without the co-operation of Parliament. The people themselves do not possess the capital which is necessary, nor do I think we can expect much assistance from the assessment of the areas of the country involved, because the local assessments are already so heavy that there is no margin left to hope for any considerable help from that source. Therefore, if emigration is to be conducted on a beneficial scale, it must be by the co-operation of Parliament. I am bound to say, although the question may be a complicated and difficult one, there does not seem to be any reason why a measure might not be provided between the Authorities in our Dominions and our own Authorities, under which a large number of the population might be conveyed to the vacant Colonial areas, and settled in the country, without an appreciable cost to the country whatever. I believe if the people were transported to the Colonies, and set a-going on a good footing, that they would gradually repay any moderate outlay which was undertaken by the Government. I know that has been proposed in the case of Ireland. Our duty has been to consider the case of Scotland only; and we think, with reference to Scotland, that some such measure might be adopted with perfect security. With reference to the co-operation of the Government in the creation of harbours, the noble Duke is at one with the Commission. Generally speaking, I may say we consider that the Government would be justified in affording means for the creation of harbours, and for the construction of one railway to a certain point on the West Coast, not only in the interests of the local population, but in the interests of the great national industry of fishing. It is not for the benefit of the crofter population alone that we have recommended this. It is for the benefit of the whole country—for the fishing communities on the coast, as well as for the whole of the consumers throughout our land. As to the school rate in some parishes, it amounts to 3*s*. and 4*s*. in the pound; and, if I am not mistaken, in some cases that figure is exceeded. Such a rate is crushing to the proprietors, and to the poor people. It is altogether uncongenial to the people, and disproportionate to their wants. It has been forced upon them, not by their own opinion of what is required, but is due to the extravagant and exaggerated expectation of the Educational Authorities in England. It is the extravagance of the Central Authority—it is the extravagant and exaggerated expectations of the Educational Authorities in England, which has imposed this sacrifice and this exaction on the people. I am grateful to the noble Duke for the measure of general support which he has given to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. I observe with satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government have behaved with wisdom and energy in this matter. I do not doubt that the action of the Government will be extremely salutary and useful; but I trust the restoration of peace and order in the country, which I have no doubt will now generally ensue, will not justify Her Majesty's Government in delaying the application of remedial measures which will be absolutely necessary for the restoration of permanent contentment and prosperity in that part of the country.

EARL GRANVILLE: I rise for the purpose of making a few observations, because I think it is most undesirable that any silence on the part of the Government should convey the notion that they do not attach the greatest possible interest to this question, so full of difficulty, dealing with principles of the greatest importance, and which require very delicate handling to bring them to a successful issue. But if I say very little, it is partly owing to the fact that the Government form the chief part of your Lordships' House at this moment. Besides that, I doubt whether it would be desirable or useful, and I believe it would be premature, for me to enter into any discussion as to the recommendations of the Report of the noble Lord and his Colleagues, which have formed so legitimate and instructive a subject of discussion between the noble Duke and the noble Earl. I entirely concur in the compliment paid by the noble Lord to the conciliatory tone of the noble Duke's speech. I wish merely to state what is known to your Lordships' already about the attitude of the Government. I need not now refer to the state of things which made it obligatory upon them to appoint a Royal Commission to consider the question. Since that time your Lordships are aware—whether exaggerated or not exaggerated I do not say—that there has been a very deplorable state of things in the Western Highlands, particularly in Skye, and in which it has been necessary that Her Majesty's Government should act with energy, not with the view of repressing one class or of favouring another, but for establishing and maintaining the majesty of the law, and preserving the peace of the country. The use of any measure of a repressive character at any time must depend on the attitude of all concerned. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department was quoted by the noble Duke as expressing a wish that he should be seconded by the landlords of the crofters; and I think the right hon. Gentleman pointed out that it was an easier task in consequence of the number of landlords not being very large; and I may say it is with great satisfaction that I have just heard from the noble Duke how these landlords have met, how they seemed to have combined, and, as far as I understand, how they are prepared to act on the principles—I do not now enter into details—on the general principles of fairness and conciliation which the noble Duke himself has exercised for a long time, and which I believe have also been exercised by the majority of the landlords, but which are neglected by others. I cannot help thinking also that the immediate emergency—that is, the necessity of preserving the law—will be all the more easily dealt with, because of the powerful help of such Bodies as the Free Church Commission, which has issued one of the strongest possible recommendations to the people to avoid breaking the law. Such an attitude on the part of a Body like that not only facilitates the preservation of peace by the Government at this moment, but is extremely useful, inasmuch as it immensely facilitates, and, indeed, probably narrows, the limits of whatever legislation it may be necessary to carry out in consequence of the Report of the noble Lord and his Colleagues.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): I wish to say a word with reference to a single point in the case which has been brought before the House by the noble Duke, and the noble Lord who followed him. It relates to a matter of fact, as to which it appears to me both the noble Duke and the noble Earl had forgotten the state of the case—that is in regard to the schools in the Highlands and Islands. Whether they are unsuitable, or whether or not there was any extravagance in connection with them, I am not now saying. I very much doubt whether there was; but, however that may be, the fact is that these buildings, so far from being the work of the central Education Department in London, which has been assumed by the noble Lord—so far from being the outcome of an English authority, supposed to be ignorant of the state of the country and of its requirements, were from first to last in all respects the work and the outcome of a purely Scottish Board sitting in Edinburgh. The Scottish Education Act created for a certain time—I think it lasted for six years—a purely Scottish Board sitting in Edinburgh, for the purpose of supplying the school buildings that were wanted in the Highlands and elsewhere in Scotland; and all these school buildings complained of were the work of this Scottish Board, were built according to the standard laid down by them, and were solely the creation of that purely Scottish Board.

LORD WAVENEY said, he had learned all that he knew from the speeches of the noble Lord (Lord Napier and Ettrick) and the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll). The system described differed materially from that of Irish cottierhood by the existence of corporations of cultivators, and the interposition between them and the landlord of farming tenants necessarily in sharp competition. Still, he thought that the instinct of a community of interests, by the cooperation of landlord and tenant, which formed the basis of the tenant right of Ulster, lingered amongst the crofters from remote times. Great labour had been expended by the Commission to form a scale of compensation and equivalent; but, amongst a people of such primitive habits and ideas, he would prefer a less rigid and arithmetical mode of satisfying the crofters' needs.

POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) BILL.

Select Committee on: The Lords following were named of the Committee:

L. President.	L. Silchester.
V. Powerscourt.	L. Shute.
V. Hutchinson.	L. FitzGerald.
L. Tyrone.	L. Monk Bretton.
L. Saltersford.	L. de Vesci.
L. Ker.	

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 21*st* *November*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—WAYS AND MEANS—*Considered in Committee*—£2,049,000, Consolidated Fund.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Second Reading*—Income Tax [38]; Pollution of Rivers [34] [House counted out].

QUESTIONS.

BOARD OF TRADE—SHIP INSURANCE, RETURN (No. 258)—MR. MAC IVER, M.P., AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD.

MR. MAC IVER: I wish to ask the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), Whether his attention has been called to the following entry on page 6 of Parliamentary Return, "Ship Insurance," No. 258: — "Mr. Mac Iver, M.P. | C. Mac Iver, 8, Water Street, Liverpool | *Stromboli* | 13,582 | 1856;" whether, having regard to the circumstance that Mr. Mac Iver, M.P., was entirely unconnected with the lost steamer *Stromboli*, he will cause the said Return to be recalled and cancelled; and if, having regard to the circumstance that the steamer *Thessaly* (which did belong to Mr. Mac Iver, M.P.) was not lost, he will take care that her name does not appear in the list of lost ships to be furnished in the Return which has been ordered upon the Motion of the honourable Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone)?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have already answered the first part of the Question of the hon. Member very fully on two separate occasions, and I am really unable to say anything in addition to what I have previously said on the subject. In my opinion, the Return referred to correctly states the facts of the case; and, whether this is so or not, I cannot alter the Return. The Return was ordered by the House, and it correctly shows how I arrived at the figures which I used in my speech upon the Merchant Shipping Bill. It is not open for me to alter the Return, except by order of the House. As to the second part of the Question, I do not think there is any dispute between us as to the facts of the matter. The only question is one of description—namely, whether a vessel which was stranded, and which was taken off the Register by the instructions of the hon. Member himself, can be properly described as lost, seeing that it was afterwards got off and repaired. The description of the vessel was in accordance with precedent in all similar Returns. I shall have no objection to insert an explanatory footnote to the Return, giving the subsequent history of the vessel.

MR. MAC IVER: I wish to say that I am not satisfied with the answer of the right hon. Gentleman; and as I entirely deny the accuracy of his statement, I shall take an early opportunity of calling attention to the matter.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish, Sir, to ask you a question on a point of Privilege. In a Return to this House, presented by the Board of Trade, under a heading showing the names of certain vessels belonging to the 47 Delegates and Members of Parliament who attended the Cannon Street meeting of shipowners, who were accused of having lost 65 vessels and 378 lives—it is represented that the ship *Stromboli*, belonging to Mr. C. Mac Iver, of 8, Water Street, Liverpool, was also the property of Mr. Mac Iver, M.P., thus fixing the ownership upon the head of my hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver). My hon. Friend has distinctly stated that he was not the owner of that ship, and that he had ceased to be a member of the firm which owned it for some years. [*Cries of* "Order!"] I am asking a Question of you, Sir; and it is for you to say whether I am out of Order or not—I believe that I am quite in order in the course I am taking. In this Parliamentary Return it is stated that Mr. Mac Iver, M.P., is the owner of the ship *Stromboli*; whereas my hon. Friend is neither the owner, nor has he been a partner in the firm which owns it for some years. My hon. Friend has made a statement to the House, and to the President of the Board of Trade. The President of the Board of Trade refuses to withdraw a statement which is false. [*Cries of* "Order!"] I therefore wish to ask—

MR. SPEAKER: If I caught correctly the remark of the hon. Member (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), he said that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has stated that which is false.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: No.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Gentleman says he did not state that, there is an end of the matter.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I did not say that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had made a statement which is false, but that he had refused to withdraw a Return in which there is a false statement. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether, when a statement of this kind, affecting the character of a Member of this House, is made in a Return presented to Parliament by a Minister of the Crown, such Minister is not bound to withdraw the Return, or to make suitable reparation?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Before you reply, Sir, I should like to offer one work of explanation. The hon. Member opposite (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) has not correctly stated the nature of the Return to which he refers. The first column, heading the Return, and in which the name of the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) appears, gives the names of certain shipowners who were reported by *The Merchant Shipping Gazette* to have been present at the Cannon Street meeting on the 18th of March. *The Merchant Shipping Gazette* gave a report, to which I referred in my speech, and among the names of the shipowners reported to be present was that of the hon. Member. It is only as a shipowner present at the meeting that the name of the hon. Member appears in the first column of this Return. The second column gives the names of the shipowners in whose names certain vessels are registered, and in that column appears the name of C. Mac Iver. A little confusion has, no doubt, arisen from the fact that the vessel belonged to Messrs. David and Charles Mac Iver; and the only David Mac Iver is the hon. Member for Birkenhead. At the time I made my statement nobody in the Office of the Board of Trade could be aware that the hon. Member had no connection with the firm in which his name still continues to appear.

MR. MAC IVER: I wish to make an observation upon a question of fact. Within a few days of the publication of the Return I had been in communication with the Board of Trade—with the Assistant Secretary—and it is absolutely certain, as I am able to show, that it was perfectly well known at the Board of Trade when the right hon. Gentleman made his statement that I had not for many years been a partner in the firm of D. & C. Mac Iver. The Mr. Mac Iver who has also been gibbeted in this Return must have been intended for my father, as he at that time happened to be one of the partners in the Cunard Company to whom the *Stromboli* belonged. I would venture to ask if it was right and fair to the Cunard Company to select this ship, which, as a matter of fact, was absolutely and completely uninsured, and include it in a Return of this kind?

MR. NORWOOD: I must ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to do me a personal favour. He has, unfortunately, published my name in the Return as having been present at the meeting of shipowners, either as a Delegate or a Member of Parliament. To make a short matter of it, I was not at the meeting at all; and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will do me the personal kindness of expunging my name from the Return.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I accept at once the statement of the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) that he was not present at the meeting. As I have already stated, I took the names from *The Mercantile and Shipping Gazette.* I had no other information besides that of *The Mercantile and Shipping Gazette*, and that paper stated the hon. Member to have been present. I must again point out to my hon. Friend—and I think nobody knows it better—that when I alluded to the fact that a certain number of gentlemen who attended the meeting had lost among them a certain number of ships, I expressly stated that they were picked representatives of the shipping trade, and I only referred to them to shew the aggregate losses even among the best men in the trade. I did not intend, by the remarks I made, to cast any reflection upon these gentlemen; but I alluded to them in order to show that the average losses even among the picked representatives of the shipping trade were so great as to justify a Parliamentary inquiry. I cannot understand that any imputation has been passed upon the hon. Member, or that any imputation was implied in the statement I made.

MR. NORWOOD: Will the right hon. Gentleman grant my modest request?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; I cannot do that, as the Return was ordered by the House. The direction of the House was that I should give the names of the persons to whom I referred, and the names of the ships I supposed them to have lost, when I stated that 47 or some other number of shipowners had lost among them a considerable number of ships. The name of the hon. Member (Mr. Norwood) was among those which I obtained from *The Mercantile and Shipping Gazette*.

MR. NORWOOD: But I was not present.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member now tells me that he was not present.

MR. NORWOOD: I told the Board of Trade so by letter.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: That really does not make the slightest difference. The statement I made was made under the belief that my hon. Friend was one of the shipowners present. My hon. Friend now says that he was not present. Very well, to that extent it affects my statement; but it does not in the least affect the argument I used. As a matter of fact, my hon. Friend is one of the picked representatives of the shipping trade; and he has lost—under circumstances which involve him in no accusation or blame whatever—certain ships. That, so far, strengthens the argument as to the character of the enterprizes in which my hon. Friend is engaged.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: ["Order, order!"] I hope, Mr. Speaker, you will protect me from the interruptions of the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds). I only wish to say that the right hon. Gentleman is wrong in his statement. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: It would be out of Order to allow this question to be debated. The hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) appealed to me on a question of Privilege; but I am bound to say that it is not at all clear that this is a question of Privilege. It appears that what was stated by the right hon. Gentleman was not stated in his capacity as a Member of this House. Therefore, it is not for me to interfere on the ground of Privilege. If a mistake has been made, and the name of the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) has been incorrectly placed on the list as the owner of this vessel, I think I am not going too far in saying that I am sure, if he will bring the matter before the Board of Trade, it will be rectified. It is not, however, a matter in which I can interfere.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: After what has fallen from you, Sir, I will ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, as the error has been pointed out to him, he will accept the suggestion of the Speaker, and withdraw the injurious statement in the Return, so far as it affects my hon. Friend the Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver)?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I should have no objection to lay on the Table any additional information explaining the facts with absolute accuracy; but I cannot issue it in place of this Return; because the Return already issued has been presented in strict conformity with the Order of the House, and shows how I obtained the information which was laid before the House. I have no objection to issue a further Paper in any convenient form, stating that subsequent information received from the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) has convinced me that he was not the owner of the *Stromboli*, which was the property of his brother. I must, however, go on to say that the hon. Member for Birkenhead was the owner of the *Thessaly*, which was reported to be lost under the circumstances I have set before the House. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "No!"] Hon. Members do not understand the matter.

MR. MAC IVER: May I be allowed to offer an explanation?

MR. SPEAKER, interposing: I must call the attention of the House to the inconvenience of debating this matter further. I do not think it is the wish of the House that the discussion should be continued.

Mr. MAC IVER: I should like to ask one Question. [*Cries of* "Order!"] I would ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether, inasmuch as the Board of Trade cannot truthfully connect my name with the loss either of the *Stromboli* or of any other steamer, he will not cancel the Return I complain of, and rectify the mistake, as you, Sir, have suggested?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Then my answer is "No," Sir. I do not accept the statement of the hon. Member. I say that he himself was the owner of the vessel which, according to ordinary precedent, was properly described as having been lost.

Mr. J. LOWTHER: Did I understand that, with regard to the *Stromboli*, the right hon. Gentleman will undertake to correct the Return?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: If it is the desire of the hon. Member and the House, I will consider and inquire into the suggestion of Mr. Speaker, to see in what form a Paper can be laid upon the Table setting out the facts.

Subsequently,

Mr. MAC IVER: Shall I have an opportunity of seeing the explanatory Paper which the President of the Board of Trade promises to lay before the House, because, at present, I have no guarantee that the libel of which I complain may not be repeated?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I must object to the terms of the hon. Gentleman's Question; but I may say that I shall be very happy to communicate with him personally on the subject.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EX-INSPECTORS.

Mr. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is customary for ex-county Inspectors of Constabulary in Ireland to act as magistrates in the counties in which they held office at the time of their retirement?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; as a matter of course, they cannot so act unless they are appointed by the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. DEASY: May I ask, whether the right hon. Gentleman approves of ex-county Inspectors acting as justices of the peace within counties where they have held office?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: They cannot act as Justices of the Peace unless, as I say, they are specially appointed by the Lord Chancellor. I cannot say whether or not I approve of such appointments. I cannot say, unless I am asked as to any specific case.

Mr. DEASY: I will take the opportunity of asking a further Question, and bring a particular case under notice.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—REFUSAL OF PUBLICANS TO SERVE EMERGENCY MEN—OPPOSAL OF RENEWAL OF LICENCES.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the fact that Sergeant Norris, Royal Irish Constabulary, on the 3rd November, called upon several licensed publicans in Drangan, county Tipperary, and stated that he had been instructed by Captain Slacke, Divisional Magistrate, to inform them that if they should refuse to supply the Emergency men and caretakers belonging to the Irish Land Corporation with every kind of goods in their houses, whether licensed goods or otherwise, their licence would be opposed at the next licensing sessions; and, whether he can state the Statute under which this order has been issued?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Such a warning was given to the persons referred to, on the ground that they, by refusing to supply goods to the caretakers, were aiding and abetting "Boycotting." The objection to the renewal would be made under the Lincensing Acts, 37 & 38 *Vict.*, c. 69, s. 14, and 17 & 18 *Vict.*, c. 89, s. 11. The latter section directs that the renewal licence shall not be granted without the production of a certificate of the good character of the applicant. Such a certificate would not be granted to a person engaged in "Boycotting."

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—INSPECTORS OF NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. DEASY asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If he could state to the House what is the maximum as well as the minimum pay of the Inspectors of English and Scotch National Schools; in how many years is the maximum attained; what nightly allowance is made in case of absence from home; what is the maximum as well as the minimum pay of Inspectors' Assistants in England and Scotland; in how many years is this maximum attained; do those Assistants receive the same nightly allowance as the Inspectors; and, in either case, are there any limitations as to the distance, or restrictions as to time, the violation of which may forfeit the allowance?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The salaries of Inspectors of Schools in England and Scotland rise from £400 to £800 a-year, with an additional £50 a-year if the Inspector is in charge of a district. The maximum salary may be attained in 24 years; the night allowance in case of absence from home is £1 1*s.* An Inspector's Assistant has a salary of £150, rising up to £300; and this maximum may be attained in 13 years; and his night allowance is 10*s.* There are limitations as to distance and to time. I ought to add that we have considerably reduced, and are reducing, the number of Inspectors, and have introduced a new class called Sub-Inspectors, whose salaries range from £300 to £500. If the hon. Member has asked for this information with the view of instituting a comparison between the expenditure in England and Scotland and Ireland, I beg leave to say that the cost of administration in England and Scotland is 6·9 per cent of the total expenditure on education, while in Ireland the cost of administration is 8·9.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—INSTRUCTION IN IRISH HISTORY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to a statement by Mr. W. H. Newell, Secretary to the Board of Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, in a letter of the 25th September last, that the Commissioners "have not deemed it advisable" to include the teaching of Irish history in the programme of instruction for pupils of Irish National Schools, What is the nature of the objection entertained by the Board of Commissioners of National Education to have the national history taught to Irish children educated in their schools; whether the Commissioners are able to show that in any other Country the teaching of the national history is shut out from the schools maintained by the State; and, if the objection, whatever it may be, extends as far back as the earliest records of the history of Ireland, or if it is limited to any specific period; and, in the latter case, whether the Commissioners will define the period by stating when it began and ended, whether before or after the year 1800, or the year 1172?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This Question opens up an old standing subject of concern and difficulty which the Commissioners of National Education have had to encounter. Having to deal with schools designed for the united education of children of different religious denominations, they have, since the institution of the system of national education, felt constrained to regard it as impracticable to include the teaching of history in the curriculum of the schools.

Mr. SEXTON said, he would further ask if the right hon. Gentleman would inquire, from the Commissioners of National Education, whether there was any period of Irish history since the landing of Henry II. that might be taught; or, whether they thought there was any period previous to that event regarding which the children might be instructed?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am afraid they will abide by their rule to exclude all history whatsoever.

Mr. O'KELLY: Will they teach English history?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir.

NAVY—H.M.S. "AJAX" AND "AGAMEMNON."

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the *Agamemnon* and *Ajax*, now under orders for China, are of sufficiently light draught to pass the Suez Canal, and whether the guns are muzzle or breech-loading?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY, in reply, said, the facts were as stated in the Question. The vessels were armed with muzzle-loading guns.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE MARINES.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, considering that there are two Battalions of Marines engaged in the present operations in Egypt, Her Majesty's Government will appoint a Royal Marine General to the command of the Forces belonging to that corps?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Although 933 Marines have been landed in Egypt, they are distributed between Suakin, Suez, and the Nile; and I am not aware of any necessity for appointing a General Officer of Marines in connection with them.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CASE OF JAMES HANLON, LORD CLONCURRY'S ESTATE.

MR. LEAHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to a letter in *The Leinster Leader* of the 1st instant, from the Rev. P. Turner, P.P. Clane, county Kildare, stating that James Hanlon, of Kilmurry, held two farms from Lord Cloncurry, on one of which himself and his ancestors lived for three generations, and from which he was evicted on the falling out of the lease because he exercised his right to go into the Land Court to have a fair rent fixed for the second farm of forty acres; and, is it true, as stated in the letter, that he having built a hut on this forty acre farm for the shelter of himself and family after being evicted from the other, his landlord compelled him to remove it by the process of Law, and himself and his labourers are now obliged to travel three miles from the village of Clane to till that farm; and, if so, can he take any steps to remedy the state of the Law which permits the appeal made by the tenant to the protection of the Law in one case being used against him in another?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, that he was informed that James Hanlon held two farms from Lord Cloncurry; that he was evicted from one by reason of a breach of agreement; and that he got a fair rent fixed in respect of the other. He believed the statements of fact in the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, as to James Hanlon having been compelled to again remove, were substantially correct; but he had no information to show that the motive for the landlord's action was that suggested. He was advised that Lord Cloncurry appeared to have acted within his legal rights.

IRELAND—THE REGISTRY OF DEEDS OFFICE, DUBLIN.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is willing to lay upon the Table of the House the Report of the Treasury Remembrancer with regard to the Department of the Registry of Deeds, Dublin?

MR. COURTNEY: It is contemplated to appoint a Committee to inquire into this Department. If that be done, it may be matter for consideration whether their Report can be laid on the Table. But it would be out of place to make public any Report received from the Treasury Remembrancer, because it is a confidential document.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — DEFICIENCY OF MILITIA OFFICERS.

MR. BROGDEN asked the Secretary of State for War, If the Militia Forces are short of their full strength of officers by 980; whether officers of the Militia Brigades and Battalions who have volunteered for active service in the Expedition to South Africa, having previously served in the Army with credit and ability and been recommended for promotion, have not been declared by the Military Secretary to the Commander in Chief and the Acting Adjutant General to be ineligible for such service, notwithstanding that, both by the Regulations and in the public statement of General Lord Wolseley, the Militia Forces "are now completely amalgamated with the Service Brigades and Battalions;" and, whether, to encourage retired officers of the Army to join the Militia, the Government will consider the desirability of giving them the opportunities of employment which would be afforded if this disability was removed?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Militia Forces are short of their full strength of officers by 857, including 70 vacancies caused by appointments to the Line during the last few days. The word "ineligible," as applied to Militia officers who had volunteered for service in the Expedition to South Africa, was not happily chosen. They were ineligible only in the sense that it had been previously determined to limit employment in South Africa to officers serving on full-pay with regiments. From that it will be seen that the disability referred to in the last paragraph of the Question would not exist if an emergency arose in which it might be convenient to accept the service of Militia officers, without unduly withdrawing them from the Militia battalions. I may add that the vacancies in the Infantry battalions caused by the selection of officers for service in South Africa have been offered to officers of the Militia battalions of the same territorial regiment who may desire temporary military duty.

MOROCCO—FRAUDULENT CLAIMS OF ENGLISH SUBJECTS AGAINST NATIVES.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will lay the Papers relating to the investigations recently held into the fraudulent claims made by British subjects against natives of Morocco upon the Table of the House?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: As the transactions referred to in the hon. Member's Question are not yet completed, I cannot at present undertake to lay the Papers; but as soon as they are complete the Papers will be considered, in order, if possible, to lay them before Parliament.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PROMOTION.

DR. KINNEAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If under the new rules the Mounted Force of the Royal Irish Constabulary are practically prevented from promotion until after about twenty years of service, and if the old system cannot be reintroduced of dismounting at forty-five years of age, thereby giving the senior and superior constables an opportunity of advancement?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The new rule does not affect constables in the Mounted Force as detrimentally as the Question infers. Constables in that branch of the Constabulary are entitled to present themselves for the qualifying examination for promotion in the Infantry; but, if they prefer to remain in the Mounted Force, they must await their turn for vacancies, which are naturally fewer in the smaller Force. The heads of the Force would not recommend a return to the old rule of dismounting at 45 years of age. That rule was complained of by men examined before the recent Commission of Inquiry; and it appears to have been abrogated both for the sake of the men and on public grounds, the feeling being that a change of duty at that age was in most cases a hardship to the individual, and injurious to the Public Service.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TRIAL OF THE TUBBERCURRY PRISONERS —THE DEFENCE EXPENSES.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is the fact that, after the solicitor for the defence in the Tubbercurry prosecutions, lately abandoned by the Crown, had certified the attendance of witnesses to the Crown Solicitor, and after the Crown Solicitor had fixed the sums to be paid them, the Attorney General refused to grant the expenses, unless he was allowed to see a statement of the evidence which would have been given by these witnesses, in case the trials had gone on? He wished to know, further, whether the expenses would be paid on the Solicitor certifying that they were witnesses necessary for the defence?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER), in reply, said, that it was the duty of the Attorney General, under the statute, according to his recollection, to see, before he sanctioned costs for the attendance of witnesses, that these witnesses were required for the purpose of the defence. In the present case £128 was advanced towards the costs of the defence. After the inquiry had fallen through, a further bill was furnished for 29 witnesses. The Attorney General asked for some evidence that these witnesses were required. The Crown Solicitor asked that he should be allowed to see the brief, now that the case was over. The solicitor answered that no brief had been prepared. The solicitor for the prisoners was then asked to give his certificate, as all the witnesses were material and necessary; but he declined. If the solicitor for the prisoners would only furnish some reasonable evidence that these witnesses had been required the Attorney General would have no objection to the costs being paid.

MR. SEXTON: Will the Attorney General consider it reasonable evidence if the solicitor for the defence certifies that in his opinion the witnesses were requisite and necessary; or, will it be essential that the Crown, having abandoned the prosecution, must now pry into the evidence of the witnesses for the defence?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): It is not the intention to pry into the brief; but it is material that some reasonable evidence should be forthcoming.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS—MILTON ABBAS SCHOOL—THE NEW SCHEME.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, seeing that Her Majesty's Government have consented to refer the powers held by the Charity Commissioners, under the Endowed Schools Act, to the consideration of a Committee of this House, this decision, in regard to the Milton Abbas Grammar School, may be postponed until that Committee has had an opportunity of receiving evidence, and giving consideration to their action in regard to his scheme?

MR. MUNDELLA: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that I have twice before stated that the scheme for the Milton Abbas Grammar School, near Blandford, is still under the consideration of the Charity Commissioners, and that I have no power or right to intervene until it is submitted to the Education Department.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST said, he applied to the right hon. Gentleman, not as Vice President of the Council, but as Charity Commissioner; and he put the Question because he could obtain no information from the Commissioners, except that they had received his letter.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that the Vice President of the Council was an honorary Member, and did not take any part in the deliberations of the Charity Commission. He, therefore, knew nothing about its working.

THE CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE)—SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON.

MR. HICKS asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can state when he first received any intimation that Sir W. Brampton Gurdon had been announced as a candidate for West Norfolk at the next Election?

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR, in reply, said, he could not find that he had any written communication on the subject; any information that he had received on the subject was verbal; and as he received verbal communications of a similar nature almost every day he could not fix a time. The first time his attention was publicly called to the matter was when a Question was put by the hon. Member for Preston.

MR. HICKS asked, whether it was not a fact that the announcement was made in the Lynn paper on the 24th of May last, and in the London papers of about the same date, that Sir William Gurdon was to be the Whig-Radical candidate for West Norfolk; and, whether it was not also the fact that on the 12th of June Sir William Gurdon addressed the electors at Swaffham accepting that candidature?

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: I am sorry to say that I have not the pleasure of reading the Lynn papers, and my attention was not called to it in any other way.

THE WEST AFRICAN CONFERENCE—THE CONGO FREE STATE.

MR. HOULDSWORTH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it be true that Germany and France, as well as the United States, have formally recognized the Congo Free State; and, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take a similar step on behalf of England?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The recognition of the flag of the Association by the United States has been publicly notified; but the Questions asked by the hon. Member are so closely connected with the proceedings of the West African Conference, as to which, as I have already stated, a pledge of secrecy exists, that I hope the hon. Member wlll not expect me to reply at present. If, however, the hon. Member will refer to the Papers just laid on the Table, he will find at page 17 the views of the Imperial Government of Germany on this subject.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT — BRIGADE SURGEONS.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary of State for War, Is it the case that the Circular regarding the examination of Surgeons Major for the rank of Brigade Surgeons was issued three and a-half months ago, viz. 1st August 1884, and that during that time no vacancies have been filled up; is it the case that several senior officers are now, in consequence, losing two shillings and sixpence a day, and the right to retire on five shillings a-day higher pension; what arrangements, if any, have been made to carry out these examinations; and, when may the officers who signified their intention of presenting themselves for the examination expect to be examined?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Vacancies in the rank of brigade surgeon have not been filled up since the issue of the Circular on the 1st of August as to the examinations. The officers among the senior surgeons major who have to be examined are serving in all parts of the world; and the promotions cannot take place until all their examinations have been held and have been considered. But as the promotions will be antedated to the time when the vacanies severally occurred, the officers promoted will not be injured by the delay. The Home examinations are fixed for the 27th and 28th instant, those for the Colonies on the 1st of December, and in India as soon as arrangements can be made.

NAVY—H.M.S. "AGAMEMNON"—ALLEGED DISCONTENT OF CREW.

MR. ANDERSON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If it is the fact that great discontent has manifested itself on board H.M.S. *Agamemnon;* if there has been an abnormal amount of punishment through numbers of the men having attempted to desert, alleging extreme severity of discipline imposed by the Commander; and, if there has been, or is to be, any inquiry?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: No information of discontent, of severe discipline, or of desertion on board the *Agamemnon* has reached the Admiralty.

MR. ANDERSON: Is it not the case that eight or ten of the men were imprisoned at one time?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: It will be seen from the answer I have given that no complaint has reached the Admiralty.

MR. ANDERSON: Will the hon. Member, now that the matter has been brought to his notice, make any inquiry as to the discipline on board the *Agamemnon?*

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I will be very happy to do so.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—SUSPENSION OF THE SINKING FUND.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the four Great Powers have withdrawn the protest which they made against the act, which they declared to be an act of financial repudiation made by the Khedive, on the advice of the British Cabinet, in suspending the Sinking Fund contrary to the terms of the Law of Liquidation?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The protest has not been withdrawn. It was identic as regards France, Austria, Germany, and Russia; but in the case of Italy it was couched in different terms, the Italian Government having informed Her Majesty's Government that it was mainly against the form of the proceeding that they thought it necessary to enter a protest.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the noble Lord state whether any reply has been sent by Her Majesty's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It is not desirable that I should enter into that matter.

ARMY—THE EXPEDITION UP THE NILE.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary of State for War, To be good enough to inform the House how many portable armed river steamers are now with or "en route" for the Nile Expedition, and whether more are to be despatched; if all the rowing boats are whale, or a portion light rowing gigs; whether any accurate reports have been received, stating the number of miles rowed each day from sunrise to sunset, and when it was anticipated that the relieving force will reach Berber; and if the rank and file of the Army, and men engaged in rowing, have been fully provided with food and comforts necessary for the prevention of sickness over and above the regulation allowances?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There are two portable river steamers now on the Nile. No others are at present under orders. Of the 800 boats sent to the Nile 789 are whale-boats, 10 are fast rowing or sailing gigs, and one is a life-raft. No Returns have been received showing the distances rowed each day; and, as I stated last week, I am not prepared at present to give any reliable estimate of the time which the Expedition would take to reach any particular place. Bearing in mind General Gordon's warning, it would be very undesirable to make public any such estimate. A special ration of the kind considered best by the military and medical authorities has been provided for the men engaged in working the boats.

ARMY—THE EXPEDITION TO BECHUANALAND—THE SOUTH AFRICAN IRREGULAR FORCE.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked, Whether, with reference to the statement last night that the pay of the privates in the South African Irregular Force would be 2*s*. a-day and 1*s*. deferred pay, the troopers would receive similar pay?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: No, Sir; the men engaged as troopers would receive 4*s*. a-day pay and 1*s*. deferred pay.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked if the noble Marquess had seen a card stating that the pay was 5*s*. a-day and 1*s*. reserved pay; and, whether those terms had been sanctioned by the War Office?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he had seen the card issued with regard to the matter; but he did not know what authority was to be attached to it. He presumed, however, that the full terms were shown to the persons who applied before they acted upon them. The card did not appear to be accurate in all respects. It had not been issued under the authority of the War Office.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I should like to ask the Prime Minister, what the Business will be on Monday? The right hon. Gentleman intimated yesterday that he thought it would be convenient for the House to adjourn for several days after Monday. Will the Motion for Adjournment be made at half-past 4, or at the close of the Sitting?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not yet in a position to say positively that we shall be able to ask the House to adjourn on Monday. It is proposed that the House shall meet to-morrow at half-past 2 o'clock, if convenient, for the purpose of taking a stage of the financial measures. If I am in a position to say anything further then as to the state of Business, I shall be happy and careful to do so. At all events, no other legislative Business will be taken by the Government to-morrow. I trust that by Monday, at any rate, I may be able to make a positive announcement to the House. I believe it is the general desire that there should be an adjournment for some days; and, of course, the Government will carefully bear that in mind.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: What Business will be taken on Monday?

Mr. GLADSTONE: There will be the Financial Bills to go forward; but I am not aware that there will be any other Business.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, he supposed the Motion for the Adjournment would not be made to-morrow, but on Monday; because, if made to-morrow, he should lose the opportunity, which he had obtained under the ballot, of moving an important Motion in which a great many hon. Members were interested; and when the Motion for Adjournment was made he would make an appeal to the Prime Minister on the subject of his Notice.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Motion for Adjournment will not be made to-morrow, but on Monday.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: When the adjournment is moved, how long will it be for?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Probably till Monday week.

Mr. WARTON: To-morrow, after the Government Business has been disposed of, will the Government move that the House adjourn?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes; that is the general understanding on Saturdays.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE — THE LATE AND PRESENT GOVERNMENT—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE: I rise, Sir, with your permission, to ask the leave of the House to make a brief personal statement. I have the second place on the Notice Paper this evening for a Notice to call attention to the comparative Expenditure of the late and the present Government, with special reference to statements recently made in an address to his constituents in Scotland by the First Lord of the Treasury. Since I have been in the House I have been honoured with a letter from the First Lord of the Treasury, and it will be better to read it than state the substance of it. He says—

> "10, Downing Street, Whitehall,
> Nov. 21, 1884.
>
> "My dear Sir,—Seeing you in the House on the evening when my figures used at Edinburgh were attacked and defended, I observed that you did not enter into the debate; but I, having done so once, am not inclined to do it again, in case you should raise the question this evening. The question of comparative expenditure is one for Mr. Childers to deal with. But, as to my own statements, they have in the main been dealt with already, and I now enclose to you a paper which deals with other points, and, so far as I am concerned, contains all I think it needful to say. You are, of course, at liberty to make such use of it as you may think fit.
>
> "Believe me, faithfully yours,
> "W. E. GLADSTONE.
>
> "E. CLARKE, Esq., M.P."

That being the state of the case, Sir, I think it will be consulting the convenience of the House if I do not trouble them by making a speech to which no answer will be given. I will, as soon as possible, put the substance of my statement into print; and, taking advantage of the permission of the right hon. Gentleman, I will append to it the long statement with which he has favoured me in manuscript, and I shall take care every Member of the House has a copy.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS.

RESOLUTION.

MR. LABOUCHERE, in rising to move—

> "That, in view of the fact that the Conservative Party is able, and has for many years been able, through its permanent majority in the House of Lords, to alter, defeat, or delay legislation, although that legislation has been recommended by the responsible advisers of the Crown, and approved of by the Nation through its elected representatives, it is desirable to make such alterations in the relations of the two Houses of Parliament as will effect a remedy to this state of things,"

said, that he was one of those who thought that speeches in that House could not be too brief. He, however, was in this difficulty. About two years ago the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had brought forward a Resolution in favour of the abolition of the House of Lords which he himself had seconded, and neither of them occupied more than five minutes in making their speeches. But when the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War rose he gave as one of his reasons—not, perhaps, the only one—for opposing the Resolution that their speeches had been exceedingly brief. Therefore, any time that he might now occupy beyond five minutes the noble Marquess, and not himself, would be responsible for. It was somewhat fortunate that he had obtained that place for his Motion that evening, for at that moment the Leaders of the House of Commons were engaged with the Leaders of the House of Lords in discussing privately the reform of the constitution of the Lower House; and it seemed to him meet and proper that they should reciprocate the compliment, and discuss not privately, but in an open manner, the constitution of the House of Lords, and the more so because recent events had shown that the House of Lords possessed far more power and influence, not only in Conservative circles, but also in Liberal circles, than he and many other Members of the House had anticipated. He thought that many Liberals would admit the Preamble of the Resolution he had proposed, and if they admitted the Preamble they ought to admit its conclusion. He was himself a Single Chamber man, and he was in favour of the abolition of the House of Lords. He was, however, perfectly aware that matters progressed slowly in that House, and that if he had proposed a Resolution in favour of the abolition of the House of Lords, although that Resolution might meet the approval of millions outside of the House, it would have found but few to support it within the House. He had, therefore, made his Resolution an exceedingly mild and temperate one, in order that it might obtain the vote of those hon. Members who would not go as far as he should wish them to do, because he believed that if they once took the first step in this matter the others would soon follow. The strongest advocate of an Upper Chamber would admit that such a Chamber should contain men of superior wisdom as compared with the other inhabitants of the country; that they should be experienced, well versed in politics, and independent; and that there should be nothing of haphazard in the mode in which they became legislators. But could that be said of the House of Lords? He could understand hon. Members being in favour of two Chambers if the Upper House was constituted in the way he had indicated. He was not about to enter into the vexed question of the hereditary principle; but everybody knew that the element of haphazard entered very largely into that principle. The fact that a man was very clever or very foolish did not depend upon the accident of his birth, but on other circumstances. They did not have hereditary Royal Academicians. It was true that recently a Poet Laureate had been made a Member of the Upper Chamber; but no one had ever thought of making hereditary Poets Laureate. It was said that the intellectual *élite* of the nation was sent up into the House of Lords, which was a proposition that he could not assent to. No doubt there were a great many exceedingly able men in the House of Lords; but that was a matter of haphazard. He was sorry to be personal in the matter; but he would ask hon. Members to recollect the character of the Gentlemen who had been sent up to the House of Lords during the last 20 or 30 years, and to say whether, in their opinion, those Gentlemen represented the intellect of the nation. Some of them had been sent up there because they had been Ministers—some able Ministers, no doubt—and some had been sent up there because they were not able Ministers. The rule was that a man selected to be made a Peer should be a man of large acres, faithful to his Party, who had not spoken very much in that House, but who had cheered the Leaders of his Party, and who had been ready, before the Corrupt Practices Act was passed, to spend a deal of money upon his election. It was those qualifications which were regarded as giving their possessor a claim to be made an hereditary legislator for this country. He believed that, as a matter of fact, those who had studied the subject of heredity had come to the conclusion that a man inherited his intellectual qualities from his mother, and not from his father. He had known the cleverest men having the stupidest sons; and he believed the intelligence of the father had nothing to do with the intelligence of the children. He did not want to be personal; but he would take a case. He would take the sons of Lord Chancellors. Lord Chancellors were probably the most intellectual and able among the men who were sent up to the House of Lords. But did their sons, as a rule, distinguish themselves in any way? Were they remarkable for their intelligence? Speaking generally, he did not think they could take as the cream of the intelligence of the country the sons of Lord Chancellors. Another objection he had was, that instead of all classes—and he was not talking of the artizans particularly—instead of all classes being represented, they had only one particular class in the House of Lords—that was the landed class—no doubt a very important section of the community; but there were other classes, even taking the question of wealth, who were as important as the landed aristocracy. He found, on looking at the Returns, that the House of Lords, as a Body, possessed 14,000,000 acres of land, from which they derived a revenue of £9,000,000 sterling annually. That proved that the House of Lords was based upon the territorial aristocracy of England. Then, were they independent men! They were rich, it was true; but they were the reverse of independent. He found that in salaries and annuities they received among them no less a sum than £639,900 annually; 83 of them were Privy Councillors, and 60 had orders and decorations of some kind, so that one in every four had to be rewarded for his services. Of course, those were honorary distinctions, and they did not amount to much; but when they had to be so profusely distributed to keep the Peers up to their duties, the latter could hardly be regarded as independent. He found it stated in *The Financial Reform Almanack*, a very excellent publication, one of whose specialities was its absolute correctness, that, since 1850, the families of the Dukes, Marquesses, and Earls in the House of Lords had received from the Public Exchequer rather more than £60,000,000. If they extended the inquiry to the other Members of that House, it would probably be found that they and their families had, in the whole, received upwards of £200,000,000 since that period; and he was not surprised at that. The House of Lords was the home of entail; and when the land descended in this way to the eldest son, the other sons had to come upon the Exchequer, particularly where a great many gentlemen thought trade was a contemptible thing, and that it was better to bring up their children in idleness, and turn them loose on the Public Exchequer, than to bring them up to business. The right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) had said, on one occasion, that the aristocracy of England was a gigantic system of outdoor relief, and he entirely agreed with him. Surely in an Upper Chamber they would desire that its Members should be arbitrators between Parties, and not be partizans. Was that the case in the House of Lords? They knew it was not, because the Leaders of that House were active politicians. They knew that the permanent majority of the House of Lords was Conservative, and they knew that the Leader of the Opposition had that majority entirely in his hands. During the last Session of Parliament, when the Franchise Bill came on, a great Whip was made; and the rural Thanes, who were unknown out of their own districts, and had never taken any active part in public life, came up to London, and by their means the Conservative Leader was able to throw out the Bill. It might, however, be said that there were a large number of Liberal Peers in the House of Lords. He, however, did not think much of those Liberal Peers. Some of them, no doubt, were excellent Liberals; but when class interests were touched they entirely forgot their Liberalism. How many of them voted for the Compensation for Disturbance Bill?—51 only; and that was the consequence of having the Members of a House derived from a particular class. He could not conceive a House more absurdly composed as a Legislative Assembly than the House of Peers. It was often said that some institutions might be absurd theoretically, but that they worked well in practice; but that could not be said of the House of Lords. It had been said that the object of the Upper House was to restrain hasty and impulsive legislation, and to give time for reflection. He would have thought, considering the length of debates in that House, that further time for reflection was not required. But, in any case, there was not a single instance in which the country had agreed to their decision. If they were to take the *vox populi* as the *vox Dei*, the House of Lords had always been proved to be in the wrong. He would not go through the history of what the Lords had done. They all knew perfectly well that it had opposed the removal of the civil disabilities of the Dissenters, Catholics, and Jews; that it had opposed education, land reform, municipal reform, and Parliamentary reform. In fact, if the legislation of the past 50 years had been sound, they must hold that the views of the House of Lords had been thoroughly and absolutely unsound. But the Lords were too wise ordinarily to throw out Bills. They proceeded more insidiously by means of Amendments. They emasculated a Bill, and then sent it back to this House, where it was passed; and in a subsequent Session another Bill had to be brought in to again amend the law. When the Conservatives were in power the House of Lords was absolutely useless, for it was a mere echo of the views entertained by Members of Conservative persuasion in this House. When the Liberals were in power the House of Lords was pernicious. The Ministers were responsible for the government of this country; but they were unable to pass their measures as they would wish to do owing to the action of the Lords. Power resided in one place and responsibility in "another place." A Liberal Ministry had to consider not only whether a Bill would probably find favour in the House of Commons, but also whether it was likely to pass the House of Lords, and it was toned down for that purpose. While it was in that House hon. Gentlemen were frequently told that they must not bring forward a particular Amendment, because it would imperil the measure in the House of Lords. Amendments were introduced in the Lords, and then negotiations took place. Consequently, in the framing and carrying of every Liberal measure, no matter how large the majority of the Prime Minister might be in the House of Commons, the Conservatives, though they were not responsible, had a hand in it, owing to the permanent power they possessed in the other House. What would hon. Gentlemen opposite say if the position were reversed, and if there were a Radical Second Chamber with 500 Members, to whom all measures must be submitted? [An hon. MEMBER: You could not find so many.] If there were a House of 500 shoemakers of Northampton and the Conservatives when in power had to submit everything to these excellent Radicals, hon. Gentlemen would say the system was monstrous. The present system, in his view as a Liberal, was, *mutatis mutandis*, equally monstrous. When the present Ministers came into Office, one of the most difficult questions was the state of Ireland. That country was on the verge of revolution; evictions were taking place everywhere; and it had been stated from the Treasury Bench that an eviction was equivalent to a sentence of death. Accordingly the Ministry, who were responsible for the government of Ireland, introduced the Compensation for Disturbance Bill; but it was thrown out by the House of Lords. What followed? Assassinations and outrages followed. He did not wonder at it after the House of Commons had said that a stop should be put to evictions as almost tantamount to sentence of death, and Ministers were prevented from putting a stop to them by the House of Lords. Again, a Bill to amend the system of registration in Ireland was brought in last year; but hon. Gentlemen opposite and the House of Lords thought the measure would work badly for the Conservative Party, and it was thrown out in the other House. When the Burials Bill was before the House, the Liberals were told that they must not press this and that Amendment, because it would endanger the Bill in the Lords; and even when that Bill was sent up Amendments essentially Conservative in their nature were inserted by the Lords. They could have no better exemplification of the power of the House of Lords than the position in which they found themselves at the present time. At the last General Election a very large Liberal majority were returned. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was placed in power, and he did not think that for many a year a more powerful Minister had held Office in England, or one who enjoyed more the confidence of those who placed him in power, or was more respected and honoured by them. The Franchise Bill was introduced last year in accordance with the spirit of the elections, and was passed through that House by a large majority. The Prime Minister said he did not bring in the Franchise Bill and the Seats Bill at the same time, because to do so would be mistaken tactics, which might endanger the Franchise Bill. The right hon. Gentleman proposed, therefore, to first pass the Franchise Bill, and when that was perfectly safe to pass a Redistribution Bill. The Franchise Bill was passed through that House by a large majority. When the explanation was given why the Redistribution Bill was not brought in, a meeting of the Tory Leaders was held, and the result was soon seen. The Lords determined not to pass the Franchise Bill. They would not pass it, because they said they insisted on knowing what the Redistribution Bill was to be. The difference was a question of procedure rather than one of principle. It was a question whether the Prime Minister himself, as the Leader of the House of Commons, was to decide how he was to proceed in passing, not one Bill, but the two Bills; or whether the Conservative minority in this House were to force their view upon the majority and upon the Prime Minister. The country was appealed to through meetings. If he remembered rightly, the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords himself accepted that appeal, and said he would meet meeting with meeting. At all the meetings of Liberals and Radicals the action of the Prime Minister was confirmed; and resolutions were passed calling on the Prime Minister not to give way to the arrogant and intolerable claims of the House of Lords. On Parliament meeting again what had happened? The Prime Minister had to make terms with the House of Lords. It might be called a guarantee, a surrender, or what they liked. The right hon. Gentleman had to retreat. It was a strategical retreat if they liked. He had to retreat from the position he occupied, and assume another position at the dictation of the Lords. The terms, so far as he understood them, were these. The Prime Minister had to meet, or had met, the Leader of the Tory Opposition in the House of Lords. The Leader of the Tory Opposition was to be told what the Redistribution Bill was to be. If he generally approved of this he was then to say that he would promise that the Franchise Bill should be passed. He was then to be shown the Redistribution Bill, and in consideration of the pledge that he had given he was to be allowed to make a considerable number of alterations in this Redistribution Bill; and then this Bill, as amended by the Leader of the Conservatives in the House of Lords, was to be brought into this House with a pledge from the Government that, whether a considerable number of their followers objected to any particular concession made to the Leader of the Opposition or not, Ministers were to insist upon their followers swallowing those alterations. They had here two patent facts. One was that the procedure had been altered in deference to the power exercised by the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Lords. In the second place, a new system of Government had been introduced. As far as he understood it, that House might consider itself utterly extinguished. He did not think any former case could be shown in which a Prime Minister, leading a majority in that House, had come to a private arrangement with regard to concessions with the Leader of the House of Lords, and his followers had been told they must accept them. What would be the use of discussion in the House of Commons? It was assumed that people were influenced by speeches; but they might talk like angels, and prove their case; but the Prime Minister would have to get up and say—"I think you are right; I have always thought so; but I have pledged myself and all the Members of the Government to vote against you, and I and the Conservatives opposite are going to crush out your votes." He gave that as an exemplification of a very remarkable state of things. The House of Commons had given up a great deal, and the House of Lords had shown the enormous powers it wielded. It was perfectly true that they got the Franchise Bill by this arrangement; but at what a price? They had to pass a Redistribution Bill which was first to receive the assent of the Marquess of Salisbury, and their votes had no chance of counting in that House. The present Prime Minister was exceedingly powerful; but they might have Ministers less powerful and more yielding, and then they should have to yield on every occasion that the Lords objected to the course the Commons was pursuing. There was a pleasing and comfortable theory that the Lords were dummies, and had powers but did not act on them; and that was adduced as an excellent reason for maintaining the present system. He denied that the Lords were dummies. Not only had they power by the Constitution, but they used it far too frequently, and they were using it at the present time in a manner most humiliating to the country and to the House of Commons. If the House was ready to submit to it, he doubted whether the country would be. The system of these Houses worked exceedingly well so long as the Government was an aristocratic Government, because the landed interest was represented by a majority in that House as well as in the House of Lords. He was thankful to say, however, that at each successive Election the House of Commons had been becoming more and more Democratic. The Members represented more and more the feelings of the masses; and he took it that the masses hated all these shams, and wished to know why, if the House of Commons represented the opinion of the country, there should be 400 or 500 hereditary Gentlemen who set at nought that opinion? As time went on, they would find that the House would become more and more Democratic, because the country was becoming more Democratic. When he had a Resolution for abolishing the House of Lords a Member told him he should vote against him. That same Member had told him since that if he brought the Resolution on again he should vote in favour of it. He asked the hon. Member if he was now convinced, and the reply was—"My constituents are convinced." He (Mr. Labouchere) suspected there were many others on the Liberal side of the House who would either be convinced by their constituents on this question, or would cease to retain the support of the electors they represented. The subject was a wide one, of which he had only touched the fringe, and he now hoped he had not elaborated it too much; but he was convinced that a Resolution such as he now submitted to the House would one day be carried. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON, in seconding the Resolution, said, he remembered a few years ago his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton giving Notice of a Motion somewhat similar to this; and he asked his hon. Friend whether he thought a House would be made for it; and the answer was—"No; I do not think there will be, for all the Radicals want to be made Peers." On that occasion his hon. Friend was a true prophet, for he could not get 40 Members to come down. He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was glad that they had now a clear issue, and that no one would prevent them from taking a Division and seeing who was who on this matter. It might be said that his hon. Friend did not point out any definite course to be taken with the House of Lords. He thought that was so; but it was not exactly the business of private Members to point out how things were to be done. Their business was simply to point out what they wanted done. In fact, he adopted the words of the President of the Local Government Board, who said that it was the duty of Radicals to permeate the Government. The Government, after all, was nothing more than the servant of the House; and when the House said they wanted a thing done it was for the Government to devise the means and to do it. The general principle of the Amendment was that a hereditary Legislative Chamber was absurd, un-Constitutional, and injurious to the public interests. They were told that they must have a House of Lords to check hasty legislation. Surely it was difficult enough to legislate at all. He did not know why they should want any checks at all. It was almost impossible for any private Member to carry a measure through that House. Checks on legislation! Why, his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) was a living and moving check on legislation. They rather wanted something to accelerate legislation. If a check were wanted the House of Lords did not supply it, for it was a grotesque Body, wholly unsuited to the purpose. What was the use of a hereditary Body? He did not suppose that the descendants of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport would be able to check legislation in that House in the same way in which the hon. and learned Member did. A General Election was the only means of getting at the opinion of the majority of the people; and what a deal of talk there was before they could get a House of Commons returned. It cost about £1,000,000. [An hon. Member: £2,000,000.] Well, £2,000,000; he always understated his case. Then, when elected, it took them three or four months to pass the measure they wanted; and after all that labour a few hundred gentlemen—to use the elegant phrase of his right hon. Friend the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther)—"chucked" it out. It was like the recipe for making salad which he had once heard—so much vinegar, so much cream, so many lettuces, and then chuck it out of the window. It was said that the House of Lords always gave way when public opinion was clearly defined. That meant, then, that the Lords were to be the judges of what was public opinion. He objected decidedly to that, and said that the people's Representatives were the only persons to judge of what was public opinion, and that the most wholesome check was the fear of their constituents. But no such fear was present to the minds of noble Lords. The bulk of the House of Lords were hereditary. He did not want to take away their titles, or their crosses, or their ribbons, which were so dear to them. He did not wish to diminish the worship that was entertained for the Peers in this country. Everyone knew that the Peerage was the Englishman's Bible. He remembered a speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester in which his hon. Friend said that every Englishman either thought that he belonged to the aristocracy, or wished to belong to them, or pretended to belong to them. He did not want to disturb any old notions. In the North of England it used to be the case that whenever they saw it stated in the obituary of the newspapers that a person had died greatly respected they knew that such a person had died of drink. He did not want to interfere with the respect paid to the aristocracy. All he objected to was that men who were born and brought up in that way should be allowed to legislate for a free people. The right hon. Member for Birmingham had described these Peers as persons who entered through the sepulchres of their dead ancestors; and that was true of many of them. Somebody had sent him an interesting Paper the other day, which showed that since 1830 there had been 249 new Peerages made. How many of them did the House think the Conservatives had made? Why, 68; while the Liberals had made 181. He said that every Peer the Liberals made was an outrage upon Liberalism, and they went to the other House to maintain the fabric of privilege and injustice. It might be said they were Liberals when they went up there; but they did not remain Liberals very long; and just as certainly as a Radical Member going up from that Bench below the Gangway to the Bench above it became more useless than he was before, so certain was it that when they sent up a sound, stalwart, healthy Liberal to the House of Lords, he soon became, through the influence of the atmosphere of pride, privilege, and prejudice, as emaciated and enervated as the other Members of that Assembly. Why were men sent up there? Were they sent up for superior virtue or superior wisdom? No; the bulk of them were sent up either because they were millionaires, or good electioneerers, or big brewers, or successful soldiers. They had either made much money, or bribed many voters, or brewed a great deal of beer, or killed large numbers of people. That was their House of Lords; but those were not the only reasons. There was another reason why they were sent up, and that was because they were of no use anywhere else. Was there any Member of the House of Commons who would trust his private affairs to such heterogeneous men as these?—not one. He challenged anyone to say that he had unfairly described the House of Lords. But what he objected to was that those persons should have a veto over the legislation brought forward by the people's Representatives. He did not want to be hard upon them, or to injure them; but he wished to stop their veto upon the procedure of the Representative Chamber. He would let them bring in as many Bills as they liked, and the Representatives of the people would deal with them. Let them pass any number of Resolutions. They were always carrying Motions condemning the policy of the Government and in favour of war. Last Session they came down in great force to discuss a matter of the greatest importance—namely, whether the Wellington Statue should remain at Hyde Park Corner or not—and they decided by a good majority that it should remain there. What followed? The First Commissioner of Works cut the Duke's head off and sent it away. Nobody cared two straws for their fancies or follies in such things. But let them not veto the legislation of that House. If the House of Lords would let them alone, that House would let them alone. He said that it was not only absurd, but also un-Constitutional. No doubt that assertion would be controverted, because few seemed exactly to know what the word Constitutional meant; but he meant by it that which was an abuse—that which was kept up without even the sanction of ancient precedent. Their Constitution was representative, and Parliamentary institutions, if they meant anything, meant representative institutions. In old times that House used to send up to the Crown Petitions, which were now called Bills; The Sovereign made them Acts of Parliament, and they became laws of the land. The Lords in those days were not a Legislative Body at all; but they assembled merely to advise the Crown, and the Crown took their advice or it did not. They filled to some extent the part which the Privy Council now filled. Gradually the Lords encroached on the Constitution, and interfered with the Bills themselves. That was an un-Constitutional state of things, because the government of this country ought to be, and was supposed to be, by a majority of the House of Commons and the Ministers of the Crown; and any interference with that power was revolutionary, un-Constitutional, and ought to be put down. The current of political life in this country for the last 50 years had flowed in favour of civil and religious liberty. That current had been steadily opposed by the House of Lords. The Irish Members knew that the great curse of their country had been the conduct of the House of Lords towards it during the last half-century. Last year that House had passed a certain Bill by a majority of 130; but the other House "chucked" it out. It had been passed again by a majority of 140, and yet it was not out of the wood. The House of Lords had compelled the Prime Minister, supported by the vast majority of the House and the people out-of-doors, to make a compromise. He did not give his opinion on that compromise, because when he talked to his friends he received so many different opinions. The first Radical he met had a black look on his face and called it "a surrender;" the second declared that the Prime Minister had given up nothing; and the third affirmed that they might depend upon it the Prime Minister had done the Lords. He would not say which of those opinions was his own; he was not sure that he had got an opinion. He did not say whether the Prime Minister had taken the right course or the wrong. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman intended to take the right course; but it was a humiliating thing that any communication should have to be made with the bitterest foes to progress, and with the views of an Assembly who ought to have nothing whatever to do with deciding who should represent the Members of the country in that House. That was humiliating; but though he was humiliated, he was not disheartened. His hon. Friend said the House of Lords was strengthened by that. They might look a little stronger; but it was only momentary. He himself went about the country a good deal, addressing meetings of all sorts; and he could say that nothing was so popular in any great popular assembly as any assertion that the House of Lords ought to be done away with. An hon. Member representing one of the Divisions of Yorkshire told him the other day he had a letter from a leading constituency asking him to come down and make an "end them" speech about the House of Lords, and he need not trouble himself to say a word about vaccination and similar subjects. Why was the hon. Member for Hackney elected on Wednesday? He told the people he was for the abolition of an hereditary House of Lords, and he was returned by a majority of 6,000. There was only one man who stood at that moment between the House of Lords and its destruction, and that man was the Prime Minister. He wished he could say any word that would persuade the right hon. Gentleman to stand out of the way. Never mind; he had saved them this once; but it was only a reprieve. The right hon. Gentleman had the country at his back; he had a righteous cause; and if he had gone boldly at those hereditary legislators, and had done away with them, he might have made himself an everlasting name. Perhaps he would do it yet. But even if the Prime Minister did not do it there were some of them sitting in that part of the House who would take the job in hand. That night they had fired their first shot at the citadel of obstruction. They would see when they went into the Lobby who was for a faction and who was for the people. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had once defined Radicals as only Liberals in earnest. The Prime Minister had got some Radicals in his Cabinet, and he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) was going to make an appeal to them. The first he would appeal to was the "Permeator"—the President of the Local Government Board. He claimed his vote, for he had voted with his right hon. Friend in the days when they called him "Citizen Dilke." He saw another valued Friend of his, the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan), with whose name he trusted this great Reform would ever be associated, and he would ask him to be with them that night. Again, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) to indorse in Parliament the words he had used on the platform. He would tell him that it was no use going about the country making epigrams against the House of Lords unless he voted with his hon. Friend the Member for Northampton that evening. He asked all those right hon. Gentlemen to join them in their attack on that great obstacle which stood in the way of political progress, and the most ghastly object which defaced and deformed their political system.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in view of the fact that the Conservative party is able, and has for many years been able, through its permanent majority in the House of Lords, to alter, defeat, or delay legislation, although that legislation has been recommended by the responsible advisers of the Crown, and approved of by the Nation through its elected representatives, it is desirable to make such alterations in the relations of the two Houses of Parliament as will effect a remedy to this state of things,"—(*Mr. Labouchere,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think it will be generally felt, whatever may be the opinion entertained by individuals or portions of the House as to the nature of this Motion, that it has been moved and seconded with great ability; and I may congratulate my hon. Friends that although they have drawn a most doleful picture of the woe, misery, and dishonour which the country and its institutions suffer under the stigma and opprobrium of having a House of Lords, yet their impressions about the character of that institution have not in the slightest degree lessened either their sarcasm, or humour, or the fun which they have been able to introduce into this debate, and by which they have contributed so much to the entertainment of the House. I am very glad that this is the case. But they are sensible that, apart from exaggeration, a very serious and great question is raised—great in its beginnings, but greater still if you contemplate it in the many stages through which it will have to pass before even the most sanguine man can hope to arrive at a practical issue of the controversy. Now, Sir, I will refer first of all to that part of the question upon which I am almost stricken dumb; and that is the arguments of the Mover of this Motion upon what he terms the extinction of the House of Commons, in consequence of communications that have been instituted between persons not ordinarily acting together in political matters. My hon. Friend has said that, in his opinion, the House of Commons is as good as extinguished; and even my hon. Friend the Seconder of the Resolution, though he carefully abstained from giving any opinion upon it, says that the House of Commons is humiliated, and that he is humiliated. I own it seems very difficult not to give an opinion in regard to transactions which have the effect of either extinguishing or humiliating the House of Commons. I hope myself never to be a party to any proceeding by which the House of Commons can be either extinguished or humiliated. If I shared in the slightest degree the sentiments that there is humiliation, much less extinction, attached to anything that has been done, or is likely to be done, most certainly I should not be one of those who would be found to enter upon, or to continue, such communications as may be referred to. My first duty as regards this part of the subject is—as that communication has been instituted, and, as I think, with very general approval—my first duty is perfectly clear, and it is to say nothing upon that point which could possibly interfere with any beneficial result to be anticipated from those communications. I would remind my hon. Friend the Mover of this Motion that at no period of this controversy has it been said by the Government that we refused to introduce a Redistribution Bill before the Franchise Bill became law.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: The Home Secretary, explaining the words of the right hon. Gentleman, said that the Bill would not be introduced into this House until the Franchise Bill had become law.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Pardon me. I rather think the statement was that our first work was the Franchise Bill, and that no other work would be allowed to interfere with it. That is the engagement upon which we have taken our stand from first to last. Well, my hon. Friend has said that there is no instance of an arrangement with the Opposition in regard to a measure of great importance. I do not think that he is accurate in that statement. [Mr. Newdegate: Hear, hear!] On the contrary, I venture distinctly to say he is inaccurate. I will not absolutely say I am aware of any case of a measure of very great importance in which it has been attempted to make an arrangement with what is termed the Opposition before the introduction of the Bill. But then, Sir, I must also point out the very great peculiarity of the case. Generally, when a great measure is introduced into this House, within the circle of Party politics you have reason to believe beforehand that there is considerable difference of opinion between the two sides of the House on the subject-matter of debate. Take the Irish Church Bill, or, indeed, either of the Irish Land Bills. In all these cases you have had reason to suppose that on the subject-matter of the measure there was a great difference of opinion. But here a distinction is to be drawn of a most solid and important character. This proceeding is inseparably associated with —I will not say our positive belief—but our belief that there is no sensible difference of opinion, and with our serious doubts whether there was such difference of opinion. It had been done in consequence entirely, not of communications underground, but in consequence of declarations made in this House; and proceedings perfectly and absolutely public, and within the cognizance of everyone who hears me, have been the ground on which what has recently been done has been done. But although it is true, or may be true, that such communications have not taken place, or have rarely taken place, in regard to great measures before their introduction, yet it is exactly the same thing which frequently—I may almost say habitually—occurs; and that is that when the differences between Parties have been argued out, and the mode of their adjustment has been arranged between the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Government, and with the full cognizance and approval of this House. The transactions are clear in my memory, as if they had been yesterday, both with regard to the Irish Church Bill and both Irish Land Bills; and in those cases this House was absolutely and perfectly aware that arrangements were made, to which it was invited to accede, as a means of passing those measures into law. That is precisely what is now in contemplation. I do not say whether it will be done, for I cannot tell whether it will be done or not; but I say that if it is done, just as in the case of the Irish Land Bills and the Irish Church Bills, the House was invited to accede to certain provisions for the sake of passing them, so it will happen in this case. The very worst is that a similar invitation will be given in this case; but with this difference—that in those cases there were sharp differences of principle which separated the two Parties; whereas, at the present moment, I have no knowledge of any sharp differences of principle which should separate us. But these are important questions bearing upon the large issue. Beyond that I will not go. I will not enter into the question of who has surrendered, or whether anyone has surrendered. Those are matters entirely beyond the purview of my present speech; but I will come to what is directly and properly the subject of debate at the present moment. Now, Sir, I will not enter at large into the observations made in the speech of the senior Member for Northampton with regard to the hereditary principle. I am by no means an idolater of the hereditary principle; in a long course of Office as a Member and as the Head of a Liberal Government I have often suffered considerably from it. But, at the same time, I am not prepared to treat the hereditary principle with the unqualified condemnation which has been passed upon it by the Mover and Seconder of this Motion. My hon. Friend seems to think that the transmission of talent, capacity, and certain habits of mind is hardly ever associated with hereditary descent. He quoted the case of Lord Chancellors in particular, as men illustrious for their intellectual distinction; but he might have recollected in the history of the country, not going back very far distant beyond a recent period, that a father and son were both Lord Chancellors, and I suppose that the second Lord Chancellor derived something from his male progenitor. Then there is the case of Lord Chatham and Mr Pitt, by common assumption two of the most powerful men who have ever directed the affairs of this country.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I referred to the eldest son of Lord Chatham.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member is shifting his ground. He did not say that he confined his observations to eldest sons; but I understood him to pass his sweeping condemnation on all sons alike. I understand him now to limit that proposition, and to say that no clever and distinguished man ever has an eldest son equal to himself. At the same time, I have in my mind many instances to the contrary. Take the case of the present Earl Grey. I can fairly take him, because he is a nobleman who never agrees with me; but who will doubt that the present Earl Grey, as the son of an able and distinguished man, is not an exceptionally able and distinguished man himself? Take, again, a Colleague of my own.

The present Earl of Derby is the son of a late most distinguished and brilliant Prime Minister. I think there is a strange exaggeration in the manner in which these questions are brought forward. But I will also say, in the face of the Mover and Seconder of this Motion, what I shall never cease to say before any audience, that the hereditary principle is a thing to be judged not merely by its absolute, but by its relative merits. It is to be judged by the considerations, not only of what it is in itself, but what is its power and influence in checking the domination of other principles which, if it were entirely removed, would come in in its place. Why, Sir, there is the principle of wealth. In a country where wealth is made on so large a scale and by so many persons, and where its influence is so enormous, if it were not for some counterbalance, its domination would become too great. If I were attempting to argue this question on its merits, I should say that you cannot consider the entire case of the House of Lords without taking into view the extensive and powerful local influence—the enormous influence—of these men. I should further point out that English society—I am by no means certain, notwithstanding what has been said—that the people of this country, that the mass of the people of the country, are prepared altogether to part with it. Of this I am convinced—that if we had arrived at the happy consummation desired by my hon. Friend—namely, of having only one House of Parliament—we should then have a state of things in which all Members of the House of Lords would be like other people, qualified to be elected as Members of it. My proposition is that, in these circumstances, you would find that a proportion of them would be elected infinitely larger than would be represented by their numerical strength, having regard to the general body of the people. They would be elected upon principles of absolute freedom, and elected for their worth; and if it be true, as it is admitted, that large numbers would come into this House upon their own personal merits, then it would mitigate and qualify the extreme condemnation passed upon them by my hon. Friend. These are the opinions which I conscientiously entertain; but, without entering into any broad position upon the subject, I would only say I do not think that the hereditary principle is entirely disposed of by censures of the kind which have been delivered upon it to-night. That is a consideration in the discussion of a general character which has nothing to do with the question whether this Motion ought to be entertained from a practical point of view. Now, Sir, the Motion made will have to be encountered by various sections of men, who entertain opinions very distinct from one another, but who will probably concur in voting against the Motion which has been made to-night. First of all, of course, there are a large body of men, a minority in this House, no doubt, but a considerable minority, who at times have represented the majority in it. All the Gentlemen who sit opposite will, no doubt, be prepared to oppose the Preamble of the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton; but there is a second class who will be disposed to hold that the House of Lords for very many years has been able, through its permanent majority, to deal with the legislation intrusted to it, and that it has done so in a manner beneficial to the best interests of the country. Another class of the opponents of the Motion will be those—and with these I am myself more nearly allied — who think that there is a great deal to object to in the legislative action of the House of Lords during the last 50 years, who are not prepared to commit themselves on that account to alter the Constitution of the country, and to enter into a difficult, long, and arduous controversy at a time when we have a great deal else to do. We, who are the Liberal Party, are inclined to complain a great deal of very much that has been done by the House of Lords. With that I fully agree. I go a considerable length in that direction. Yet I must, as a candid man, looking at this question for a practical purpose, consider this—that, notwithstanding all this action of the House of Lords of which we are inclined to complain, we have had a period of 50 years such as has never been known in the entire history of the country—I may almost say in the entire history of the modern world—for the vast amount of practical legislation which it has introduced upon the Statute Book of this land, and from which we are from day to day reaping the benefit. I must endeavour to weigh what we have reaped, and what has been achieved under the actual Constitution of the country, before I commit myself entirely to the changes for which I admit there is a great deal to be said; but which, at the same time, seem to me to require a great deal of consideration indeed before we take any single step in the adoption of their principles and aims. I would finally say that besides these considerations there is another. There is a phrase which has come, in connection with ecclesiastical affairs abroad, into use of late years—the phrase as to opportunity and the character of the opportunist. Is the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton an opportune Motion? I pass by now those who oppose the Motion on principle. I pass by those who feel it to be their duty to pause, hesitate, and consider much before they commit themselves to a controversy of such broad issues; and I must say, on the simple ground of opportunity, that if I entertained the general political opinion of the Mover and Seconder I would not make this Motion to-night. We have in view what is certainly a great occasion. We have invited the House of Lords to do a great act of justice, honesty, and policy, and, as we think, Liberal wisdom, by passing the Franchise Bill. That is what we have invited them to do; and it is in improving legitimate and honourable means our invitation, and strengthening that invitation, that we are at the present moment particularly employed. Is that a happy moment for bringing up this case and flinging in the face of the House of Lords all that we can, of disinterring from history all that we can disinter of the history of the last half-century to show how far, in our judgment, they have fallen short of what we think they might have done? No two Gentlemen are more earnestly desirous than the Mover and Seconder for the passing of the Franchise Bill; and if that is the object of their desire, I own it appears to me, even from their own point of departure, an error to press upon the House a Motion of this kind at a time when we are inviting the House of Lords to do what we are firmly convinced is an act of wisdom, but which we must all feel would be an act of grace. In these circumstances I do hope that they will not expect the House to receive this Motion with very great favour. I am sorry that, under the circumstances of the moment, it should be pressed on the House even by its extremest friends; and I say boldly for my own part, if I went the whole length with the Mover and Seconder in the opinions they entertain on the general question, I would not at this moment, with the issues before us, ask the House to give a vote in that spirit.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 145; Noes 71: Majority 74.

AYES.

Acland, rt. hn. Sir T. D.
Alexander, Major-Gen.
Allen, H. G.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Balfour, A. J.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Beresford, G. De la P.
Biddulph, M.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Blennerhassett, Sir R.
Bourke, right hon. R.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, Lord C.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Cartwright, W. C.
Childers, rt. hn. H. C. E.
Churchill, Lord R.
Clarke, E.
Clarke, J. C.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Coope, O. E.
Corbett, J.
Cotes, C. C.
Cotton, W. J. R.
Courtauld, G.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Crichton, Viscount
Cross, J. K.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
De Worms, Baron H.
Digby, Colonel hon. E.
Ebrington, Viscount
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Egerton, hon. A. F.
Elton, C. I.
Ferguson, R.
Findlater, W.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Giles, A.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gordon, Sir A.
Gorst, J. E.
Grant, A.
Greer, T.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harris, W. J.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Henry, M.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hicks, E.
Hill, T. R.
Holden, I.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Hubbard, right hon. J. G.
James, Sir H.
Jenkins, D. J.
Kennard, C. J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kinnear, J.
Lawrence, W.
Leatham, W. H.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Leigh, R.
Lennox, right hn. Lord H. G. C. G.
Lloyd, S. S.
Lowther, rt. hon. J.
Lowther, J. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Mackie, R. B.
M'Clure, Sir T.
M'Coan, J. C.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.

M'Lagan, P.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
Marriott, W. T.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
Northcote, H. S.
Norwood, C. M.
O'Brien, Sir P.
Onslow, D. R.
Otway, Sir A. J.
Parker, C. S.
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Percy, Lord A. M.
Phipps, P.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Ramsay, J.
Richardson, T.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Salt, T.
Scott, M. D.
Sellar, A. C.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Talbot, J. G.
Thornhill, T.
Tollemache, hon. W. F.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Torrens, W. T. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A Hanbury-
Tremayne, J.
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Verney, Sir H.
Walker, S.
Wallace, Sir R.
Warton, C. N.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watney, J.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Wilson, Sir M.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.
Grosvenor, right hon. Lord R.
Kensington, rt. hn. Lord

NOES.

Anderson, G.
Armitage, B.
Arnold, A.
Barclay, J. W.
Barran, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Bolton, J. C.
Borlase, W. C.
Brett, R. B.
Briggs, W. E.
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Burt, T.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Collings, J.
Corbet, W. J.
Cowen, J.
Deasy, J.
Edwards, P.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Firth, J. F. B.
Flower, C.
Gourley, E. T.
Gray, E. D.
Grey, A. H. G.
Hollond, J. R.
Ince, H. B.
James, C.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Johnson, E.
Leamy, E.
Lee, H.
Macfarlane, D. H.
Mackintosh, C. F.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Minnies, J. G.
Mason, H.
Morley, J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Kelly, J.
Peddie, J. D.
Picton, J. A.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, J. O'C.
Power, P. J.
Pulley, J.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reid, R. T.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Roe, T.
Russell, C.
Ruston, J.
Rylands, P.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Sheridan, H. B.
Storey, S.
Stuart, J.
Summers, W.
Webster, J.
West, H. W.
Williamson, S.
Woodall, W.

TELLERS.
Labouchere, H.
Lawson, Sir W.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed.

IRELAND—MANUFACTURING AND PRODUCTIVE INDUSTRIES.

OBSERVATIONS.

Sir EARDLEY WILMOT, who had on the Notice Paper the following Resolution:—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the present condition of the manufacturing and productive Industries in Ireland,"

but was prevented by the Rules of the House from dividing upon it, said: Mr. Speaker, the Motion which I have the honour to lay before the House is of an entirely different character from that which has lately occupied its attention, being one of a purely social character. Some hon. Members may consider that I have not that particular personal interest in that country which I ought to possess before undertaking a Motion of such importance; but I confess that I have for a long period of my life felt that but inadequate justice was done to the interests of Ireland. I regret that, not possessing the marvellous physical energy and never-failing eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Prime Minister, I am not able to do full justice to my subject; and the fact is that when, 11 years ago, I entered Parliament, I did so, like many others, almost too late to assist in the principal object I had in view—that of seeing justice done to Ireland. I therefore rejoice now in being able to make my small endeavour to further what I consider a sacred cause. Last Session, Sir, I placed upon the Paper of this House the Motion which I now have the honour to lay before it. As you are well aware, Sir, for many weeks before the end of the Session, the House was entirely occupied with the Business of the Government; and, therefore, while the Motion was still upon the Paper, I put a Question upon the subject to the Prime Minister, asking him whether he would be willing to advise Her Majesty to appoint a small Commission in order to do that which I aimed at doing by a Select Committee. My only object in asking that Question was to gain time in the event of the Royal Commission being granted; but the Prime Minister replied that, in his opinion, a Select Committee would be far preferable to a Royal Commission for the purpose we had in view. He did not, however, feel sure that a Select Committee would, by its action, further the interests of Ireland, inasmuch as it might interfere with the self-reliance of the Irish people; but, as I understood him, he promised to ascertain the feeling of the country upon the subject, and to give me a definite answer upon another occasion. Well, Sir, I myself endeavoured during the Recess to gauge public opinion in Ireland; and, in reply to the very numerous applications which I made, I received promises of the most cordial support from very nearly the whole body of Irish Representatives, to whom I tender my respectful and grateful thanks for the kindly and courteous manner in which they responded to my appeal. I do not think there was a single exception—yes, there were two or three Irish Members who, being abroad, failed to respond; but, with those exceptions, Gentlemen of all Parties, and of every shade of political opinion, were unanimous in according their hearty support to the Motion which I now bring forward. I had, in addition, communications with many gentlemen connected with industrial pursuits in various parts of Ireland; while the Dublin and Provincial Press were also of opinion that the carrying of this Motion would have a beneficial effect upon trade and commerce in Ireland. Now, therefore, Sir, I appeal to the Government to appoint this Committee, not necessarily for the purpose of sitting during the present Session, but for the purpose of meeting next year, when we hope to devote labour and energy, and I may be allowed to add patriotism, to this great and important question. I can only regret that, after the several appeals I have made to Her Majesty's Government, they have not, in deference to the unanimous voice of the Irish people, granted this Select Committee at once. I have long felt that the industries of Ireland should be stimulated and developed with a view of making that country prosperous and contented. It is not by dealing only with the land, and putting money from one pocket into the other, that you can make a country rich and prosperous; therefore, although I do not mean to question the policy of Her Majesty's Government, I say that their efforts to make Ireland prosperous and happy can never succeed so long as they are confined to agriculture alone. Agriculture, being only the second stage of civilization, by itself can never make Ireland busy and flourishing; so we must look beyond, to the Arts and Sciences and industrial pursuits of all descriptions, to effect that desirable object. Looking back at the history of that country, no doubt we shall find that she has sustained many disasters, and encountered many obstacles to the development of her industries, especially the woollen industry, so that the wonder is that the manufactures of the country are not totally destroyed. I need not go back to the time of William III. and Queen Anne to show that the people of that country had innumerable disadvantages to contend with, which nothing but the most persistent energy and perseverance on their part enabled them to stand against. I think it was about the year 1735, some time after those terrible Acts which tended almost to destroy the various manufactures of Ireland, that the Irish Parliament passed a Resolution declaring that they would use no manufactured articles, whether of clothing or furniture, unless they were of home make, and this with the object of saving those industries from destruction. During the years from 1735 to 1782 the condition of the country gradually improved; but in the year 1782, when Lord North was Prime Minister, he took off those fatal prohibitions which had so checked the growth of the industries of Ireland, and, giving her comparative freedom, the whole commerce of the country began to revive and flourish. I suppose that the commerce of no other country in the world ever increased so rapidly as did the commerce of Ireland about that time. In 1785 Mr. Pitt proposed certain commercial Resolutions which were not agreeable to the Irish Parliament; and in the year 1800 he brought forward those measures which ended in the Union between the two countries, and which, he said, in his speech on proposing them, "would make the Empire more secure, by making Ireland more free and more happy." But was he successful? I do not think the Prime Minister, with his great knowledge of history, will fail to admit that many great evils did result to the country from that Act of Union. I do not wish to appeal to him about that now; we cannot retrace our steps. "*Vestigia nulla retrorsum;*" but what I say is, let us go earnestly and zealously to work to try to mitigate some of those evils and difficulties which that country sustained in consequence of that Act of Union. I might mention, among other beneficial influences which might be exerted, the example which the Irish nobility and gentry would set by living more in their own country. No doubt, since the time of the Union, there has been a constant drain of wealth and fashion in the direction of the Court and of the seat of government; but I would speak more particularly of those laws by which protection was to be given to the woollen and other manufactures up to a certain period — that between 1800 and 1816 and 1821. At the time those duties ceased, according to the provisions of the 6th Article of the Union, the commerce of the country fell gradually away. The best proof of that which can be given is in the various Parliamentary inquiries which took place from time to time, beginning in 1805, and going on almost every year down to 1835, respecting the reclamation of land, the endeavour to extend a portion of the linen manufactures to the South, and various other matters. Especially would I refer to that great and remarkable Committee in 1835, of which the right hon. Gentleman the Premier, with Sir Henry Parnell, a Relative of the hon. Member for Cork, and Mr. O'Connell were Members. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman cannot carry his recollection back to 1835; but, at any rate, that was one of the most remarkable Committees that ever sat. At this period of the evening my object is to make a short speech, and so I will not trouble the House with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman as contained in the Report of the Committee upon the subject of public works in Ireland at the national expense; but the right hon. Gentleman at that time recommended that this should be done. But that is not what we ask for now. We have no intention of asking a grant from Imperial Funds to subsidize Irish industries. What we want is a Committee which shall look into all public Acts and Regulations in Ireland, and by that means and in other ways determine what steps shall be taken in order that those industries which require development may be encouraged, and in every way improved. I must ask the House kindly to excuse me if I do not do adequate justice to a subject so important. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Ministry upon the enormous energy and Herculean strength which he every day exhibits in legislative labour; but, with regard to myself, I feel that I have not bodily or mentally his power. Therefore, Sir, without further trespassing at any great length on your attention, I simply ask the Government to accede to the wishes and desires of the entire people of Ireland by granting this Committee. I am one of those who do not despair, and I say let us try to do all we can—and, for my part, I will endeavour as far as possible — to devote what strength I have to promote the interests of Ireland. There is a Gentleman there who will probably follow me, and, no doubt, do ample justice to this great question (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), to whom I should like to show a most extraordinary book which I have here, published in 1738, but which is now out of the reach of the public. It contains a series of resolutions—32 in number—drawn up in that year by Dr. Madden, a true and enlightened patriot, who gave prizes to a large amount for the purpose of developing the industries of the country. The last resolution I think I may trouble the House with. It is—

> "We resolve, as Members of Parliament, to employ all the best ways and means that we can for employing our people and increasing their industry."

I say, Sir, that if we follow out that resolution, we may, by our exertions, place the industries of Ireland in a better position than they are in now. I will not trouble the House by mentioning all the industries of Ireland; but there is one I may allude to which has been dwelt upon by the hon. Member for Dublin (Dr. Lyons), who, I am sorry to see, is not here to-night. That is the afforesting of Ireland. Now, I have had an opportunity lately of communicating with Mr. Howitz, the Forester Royal of Denmark, and that gentleman points out in a remarkable way the advantages which would result from the afforesting of Ireland. He told me himself that he had been all over Europe, and was never in any country where afforesting would be more productive of benefit in various ways than it would be in the Sister Isle. I have his letter here, which I propose to publish; as it is a long one, I will not trouble the House with it; but in it he shows how Ireland may be greatly benefited by judicious afforestation. Then there is the question of mines, which is one that has been very grievously neglected. We have it on the authority of both Professor O'Reilly and Professor Hull that there are in Ireland great opportunities for the successful carrying on of coal and other mining operations which require only enterprize and capital to secure a profitable result. There are the products of iron ore, slate, marble, and salt, the last so extensively resorted to in agricultural operations. Then, Sir, a great deal might be effected by the manufacture of peat. We have now to go to foreign countries for peat litter, now much used for bedding of horses; but in a country like Ireland, where peat is everywhere abundant, peat litter, instead of being wasted, or brought over from Holland and other places, ought to form an article of export. Then, again, I can myself remember—for I was for two years upon the Select Committee on the Harbour Question—the vast amount of evidence which we elicited with regard to fisheries upon the West Coast of Ireland. That Coast teems with fish of all descriptions; but, owing to the want of harbours and adequate communication by railway, and owing to the defective character of the boats employed, much of the fish either goes to waste on the shores of Ireland, or is taken away to the Isle of Man or to Scotland. That is a matter we have thoroughly gone into, and I believe that the hon. Members for Galway and Dungarvan (Colonel Nolan and Mr. O'Donnell) will agree that we have done some good in that direction, for, no doubt, that source of wealth is very much neglected. I do not wish to weary the House by going into the question of various industries exhaustively—although it is one of vast importance and magnitude—because it would require a long time to do so, even in the hands of such an orator as my hon. and learned Friend opposite the Member for Dundalk (Mr. C. Russell), who would make the subject one of immense interest, and deal with it far better than I can do. I conclude, then, by saying, let us show to Ireland that we, as Englishmen, have a sincere desire to raise her out of the state of deep depression into which she has fallen; but while we allow that what has already been done for the land by the right hon. Gentleman opposite has been productive of good to the agricultural interest, we must remember that agriculture and fixity of tenure by themselves will never make a nation prosperous and great. What the people of Ireland want is employment. Want of employment leads to poverty, and poverty to agitation and crime; and I believe that, to a great extent, the discontent and dissatisfaction which are so prevalent in that country are entirely owing to the want of employment. When opportunities of advancement are afforded them, no people are more intelligent and industrious than Irishmen. In the course of a conversation I had with Sir Charles Tupper only two days ago, I was informed by that gentleman that in Canada there was no body of men more trustworthy, hardworking, and honest — he would not say sober, although they became sober there when fully occupied—than the Irish; and he added this remarkable fact, that there were no people more loyal to the Throne and Constitution of Great Britain than the Irishmen in Canada. I think that does away with a great deal of what people say as to Irishmen being idle and indisposed to work when they have the opportunity. Give an Irishman work, and his natural ability will always carry him through. Look at their orators, and say what can compare with the eloquence of a Burke, a Grattan, or a Plunket? Look at their painters and their sculptors, among whom the names of Barry and Maclise and Foley and M'Dowell stand pre-eminent. There is, I affirm, an immense amount of latent ability and genius and artistic skill among the Irish people; and, therefore, I say, by granting this Committee, let every effort be used to wake up the industries of the country, and make the heart of Ireland yours by healing its wounds and arresting its decay. Do not say it is of no use. I have heard people say—"What is the use of a Committee? you have had it before." But I say times are different now. Why, only two years ago, owing to the action of the hon. Member for Carlow, who was then Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. Dawson), a most wonderful display of Irish industries took place in the Metropolitan City. Here I have in my hand the record of that Exhibition, and I say it does honour to the country which made such noble efforts to assist itself. Let this, therefore, be a corollary to that Exhibition, by following it up, as far as possible, with an endeavour to encourage the industries of the country, and thus earn the thanks of the Irish nation. I am quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman will find a far greater reward in paying attention to the social interests of Ireland than in exciting and fostering political controversies and contests; for the greatest honour he can possibly receive from those who come after him will be the recollection that he, at all events, during his lifetime, tried to do away with the disadvantages and miseries of the Irish people, and endeavoured to place them on the same pinnacle of prosperity and happiness as we ourselves enjoy.

MR. MOORE said, he cordially endorsed every word which had fallen from the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot); and he was sure the Irish people would be deeply grateful for any action which might be taken by the Government in the direction indicated. He (Mr. Moore) desired to bear testimony to the good conduct of the Irish labouring classes. Want of employment was the bane of the country; agriculture was the only stay of the people. Even in regard to that they were being left behind by other countries. The conditions of agriculture were rapidly changing, and they should keep pace with the times. The fisheries and also afforestation ought to be encouraged. It was impossible to over-estimate the value of scientific training in agriculture; and the importance of education in all that appertained to agriculture was important in England and Scotland—it was a question of life and death to Ireland. It would appear from the Report of the Royal Commission on Technical Education that we were, in fact, much behind Continental nations in the matter, for they were making most elaborate and continuous efforts in this direction. While forest culture was highly desirable, it was important that attention should be paid to the tendency of the present day to change the course of agriculture into the cultivation of products more lucrative than those hitherto grown. Surely it was time to ask for scientific instruction, in order that Ireland might compete with other countries in agricultural produce. In France there were many institutions for technical training in all branches of agricultural pursuits, and they were largely subsidized by the Government. There were schools for dairy farming, cheesemaking, and also for giving a knowledge of the principles of scientific drainage. It was even to the great French School of Forestry at Marci that the students for that branch of the Indian Civil Service were sent by our own Government. The Government in France also subsidized a school for the training of shepherds in all that concerned the treatment of sheep; and at Rouen they had a wonderful poultry industry fully demonstrated. Of all the different elements of agricultural training, probably dairying was the most important for Ireland, especially in the face of the many substitutes for butter which were now being imported from Holland, the United States, and other countries. The Munster Dairy School, which was mainly supported by local subscriptions, was an admirable instance of what might be done in that direction. That was one among many subjects which the proposed Committee could investigate. He earnestly trusted that the Government would take speedy action in the matter; and he should, if possible, have had great pleasure in seconding the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Warwickshire.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he deeply regretted that the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Eardley Wilmot), who had shown so generous an interest on behalf of Ireland, had been compelled to take the worst Parliamentary opportunity for bringing the question before the House. He hoped he should not disappoint the hon. Member by what he was going to say, because not only could not the vote of the House be taken, but it was quite impossible for the Government to accede to the request of the hon. Member at that moment. They could not see their way to appoint a Committee during the present Session.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT: I expressly said that the Committee would sit next Session.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he had intended to say in the course of this Sitting, because the Government were unwilling to continue unduly this Autumn Session. They would be unwilling, at that period of the Session, to appoint a Committee, simply for the purpose of commencing or continuing its operations next year. The only exception the Government had been able to make to the barrenness of these Sittings with regard to Committee work had been made in favour of Ireland on the subject of labourers' cottages. In reference to it a very important Committee was still holding its meetings; but, with that exception, the Government, in this extremely exceptional Parliamentary period, were quite unwilling to face the difficulties of determining to appoint and of appointing Select Committees. None the less the hon. Member might congratulate himself that he had brought forward the question that night; and the more so because it must be evident that the Government, having no fear of a discussion before them, did not speak under immediate pressure. The attention which he (Mr. Trevelyan) had given to the subject had been given freely; and he hoped the result would satisfy the hon. Member that the Government were not unmindful of the importance of the subject. He was sure that the present Parliament could not be accused of any indifference to the welfare of Irish industries. Assistance had been largely given to the most important of those industries—namely, agriculture; and loans had been given to Irish farmers on such terms as English farmers would be only too glad to obtain. Indeed, Parliament, as regarded internal communication, had departed, in the case of Ireland, from those fiscal laws which had hitherto been regarded as being like the laws of Minos. Besides the aid which had been given to agriculture, that Parliament had also given considerable part of its time to measures brought forward by Irish Members, and no fewer than three Bills had been passed dealing with Irish funds for the benefit of the fisheries of that country. With respect to the Committee which the hon. Member desired to see appointed, he would say that it was a subject on which the Government would desire to consult Irish Members; and he assumed that the hon. Member had spoken in accordance with the views of the majority of Irish Members. He was, therefore, very anxious that Irish Members should be brought face to face with the difficulties which the problem involved. From his experience as Chief Secretary for Ireland he would say that, of all the questions which came before him, the most abstruse, though by no means the most unpleasant, was the question of the encouragement of Irish industries. He could not but say that the expectations of Irish Members in that respect were sometimes rather too sanguine; and he should be glad for them to have an opportunity of judging of the facts of the case for themselves, and forming their own opinions as to what those branches of industry were which could be forwarded by legislation, or by change in administration, and what those Irish industries were which had best be left to themselves. He thought the question of afforestation was one which could advantageously come before a business-like Committee of the House of Commons; and he trusted that that Committee would look most carefully into the question, and that its recommendations would be well considered, and that they would take the evidence of our own experts of Kew Gardens, who were not only well acquainted with the natural history of trees, but had an intimate knowledge of all economical subjects connected with them. And he trusted that they would not merely look into the difficulties of afforestation, which had greatly increased of late years, as they were common to all countries; but likewise look into those difficulties of ownership in reference to afforestation which were peculiar to Ireland, especially since the passing of the Land Act of 1881. The hon. Member for Clonmel (Mr. Moore) had referred to the Report of the Royal Commission on Technical Education. He (Mr. Trevelyan) did not know whether anyone had yet had occasion to advert to the great voluntary and gratuitous labour of the Gentlemen who composed that Commission; but, if not, he felt bound to take that opportunity of expressing his appreciation of the great value of their services. He had only examined their Report occasionally and in part; but he was really astonished at the enormous volume of information which they had laid before the House, and, as far as he could make out, in no respect was that information superfluous. He was much gratified to find how bold they were in their Report; how many settled beliefs in this country in regard to technical education they had not hesitated to disturb; and he was told by some of them, speaking with considerable modesty, that their Report itself was not as valuable as the evidence which would be forthcoming in the course of a very few weeks. It was difficult for him to conceive that the value of that evidence would be at all out of proportion to the value of that Report. But when the Committee which the hon. Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot) proposed sat—if it did sit—it would have the advantage of having before it the four large volumes of the Report and Evidence of that Commission, and would not be obliged to go over again some of the most important ground which they would otherwise have to traverse. It was, at all events, satisfactory to find from the Agricultural Sub-section of the Commission, as stated by the Secretary, that it was doubtful whether in any European country there could be found so practical and apparently so successful a system of giving elementary instruction to children in regard to agriculture as that which existed in Ireland. To that, as to one important branch of technical education, instruction in agriculture—Ireland, therefore, appeared to be on the right road, however much further the Commissioners of Technical Education might desire to carry it. They also reported that there was a general consensus of opinion that the prosperity of the poorer districts of Ireland might be promoted by technical instruction in handicrafts and home industries; and it was also remarked that the children of the labouring classes in that country possessed a degree of manual dexterity which would prove useful to themselves, and to those among whom they live, if properly directed. The principal object, however, of the Government, in holding out great encouragement to the hon. Member for South Warwickshire to move for that Committee next February—if that was the month in which they were to meet—was that Irish Members should have upon them that responsibility, which heretofore had rested upon the Government, of determining what industries could be encouraged by Parliament and what could not. They were not afraid of the recommendations of such a Committee, because, after all, those recommendations left untouched the power which any Government worth the name not only had, but always would exercise over grants or loans from the public purse—a power which any Government worth the name would exercise as conscientiously when it was a question of a loan as when it was a question of a grant. Besides, he had no reason to think that the recommendations of the Committee, which examined into what, in the long run, was best for Ireland, would take the form of recommendations, to any extent, of an eleemosynary nature. He had, indeed, seen it asserted in print that the Committee might make recommendations that would run counter to the received laws of political economy. In the event, however, of that being so, it would be a question for the majority of the House of Commons; and as long as there was a majority of the House—and in the present case it was a large majority—who held to the received laws of political economy, they might believe, in the first place, that a Committee which was a representative Committee of the majority of the House would make no recommendations that were thoroughly contrary to those laws; and next that, if they did, the House would never assent to that part of the Report. He had, however, no desire to discourage the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire, and would therefore say that what they might hope from that Committee above everything was the authoritative elucidation, by a responsible Committee of the House of Commons, composed partly of Members for Ireland and partly of English business men, of several of those questions which they had debated at great length in that House, and sometimes with a most unsatisfactory result, because they were capable of being treated in speeches which required to be founded on the collection of a great body of materials which in most cases had not really been collected. Finally, the Government considered that that was a most legitimate subject for discussion as early next year as the hon. Member could contrive to get a day; and he (Mr. Trevelyan) earnestly trusted that the general views and expressions of goodwill which he had put forward would meet with the general acceptance of its supporters, and also enable them, perhaps, to get on more quickly with their fiscal Business.

Mr. P. J. POWER said he thought the hon. Member who had introduced that question (Sir Eardley Wilmot) was entitled to the gratitude of the Irish people for the trouble he had taken in the matter. Any casual visitor to Ireland could not fail to be struck with the appearance of destitution which prevailed North, South, East, and West upon the Island. It had been stated that Ireland was over-populated; but, from the tables which he would quote, he would prove the fallacy of the idea that emigration was the panacea for all the distress in the country. In Belgium there was a population of 421 persons to the square mile; in England, 480; in Flanders, 718; and in Ireland only 160. The hon. Member had a great deal to contend against. In the first place, there was the feeling of apathy and indifference which characterized the House in regard to Irish matters; and, secondly, the opposition of the Prime Minister and other Members of the Treasury Bench had to be encountered. The right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan) seemed to be at a loss to know to what the depressed condition of Ireland could be attributed; but the historian, Froude, by no means prejudiced in favour of Ireland, said that England destroyed Irish commerce by Navigation Laws, and Irish industries by differential duties, and that England kept Ireland poor to prevent her becoming troublesome. There could be no doubt that the policy pursued in the past by England had ruined the industries of Ireland, and numbers of even Conservatives in Ireland did not hesitate to say that restitution should be made by England. It was for that reason that Irish Members persisted in asking for their country a separate Parliament as a means of promoting her prosperity. If the proposed Committee were appointed they would be able to show that the only period of industrial success in Ireland was the few years during which they had a comparatively free Parliament.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL said he thought it was obvious that the last speech had been elaborated in anticipation of opposition to the Motion on the part of the Government. In his opinion, the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had every reason to be content with the course of the discussion, the result of which he (Mr. Charles Russell) understood to be, that if the Motion were renewed next year the Government would assent to it. It had been said that a very strong opinion prevailed upon the subject in Ireland, and he agreed with that statement. An inquiry would serve the useful purpose of focussing opinions that were based upon the careful consideration of evidence; and it would bring home to individuals—Members of the House and others—a sense of responsibility in any suggestions they had to make. Inquiry would also expose the unsoundness of some views by bringing them to the test of examination; it would dispel some illusions; and it would direct the views of practical persons into a practical channel. He therefore hoped that the Committee would critically examine the evidence which came before them, and that the Irish Members who formed a portion of the Committee would feel a due sense of their individual responsibility. He (Mr. Charles Russell) desired to add that in the opinion of many a Royal Commission would be the more effective method of proceeding.

Mr. GRAY said, he thought they had certainly cause for considerable satisfaction in the views which the Government had taken of the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot), seeing that they were by no means such as those they had hitherto entertained upon the subject. Thanks were undoubtedly due to the hon. Baronet for his exertions in the matter. As he (Mr. Gray) had said, the views which had been just expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan) were not always apparently entertained by the Government; but, now they had recognized the desirability of inquiry into the subject, he (Mr. Gray) hoped that they would take steps to have it clear and effective. The more thoroughly and exhaustively the inquiry went into the whole question, the more useful it would be. He ventured to suggest that the original Motion of the hon. Baronet, proposing the appointment of a Royal Commission, would have been more productive of good results than any Committee could possibly be. As to the responsibility of Irish Members, it was mainly due to the attention they had given to the question that it occupied its present position; and he was quite certain it would continue to be the subject of anxiety to them, and that they would be deeply impressed by a sense of their responsibility in connection with it. If the Government were anxious to fix responsibility upon the Irish Members, he was curious to know why they had not shown it in the appointment of the Royal Commission, to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded. The hon. Member for the borough of Carlow (Mr. Dawson) had appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella), and had elicited what they all understood to be a distinct promise, that an Irish Member should be appointed upon it. They were, however, surprised to find that that undertaking was not fulfilled in the composition of the Committee. He would earnestly impress upon the Government the difficulty of a Committee, in its limited hours, being able to focus opinion on the subject at all to the same extent as a Royal Commission. Therefore he trusted the Government would reconsider the matter, with the view of granting a Commission instead of a Committee.

MR. SALT said he fully approved of what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Trevelyan), and trusted that those who embarked upon this enterprize would be careful to conform strictly to the strict rules of political economy. Any violation of the plain rules of political economy were injurious both to the giver and to the receiver. He ventured also to express the decided opinion that whether the Members of the Commission or the Committee, as the case might be, were Englishmen or Irishmen, they would be actuated by a desire to do full justice to the Irish people. He would suggest that the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire should at once give Notice of his Motion for next Session.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER said, he would point out the difficulty of the hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot) bringing on his Motion again in February, if the Session was adjourned till that date. [MR. SEXTON: The Motion has not been made.] He was glad that that objection had been set at rest by the hon. Member for Sligo. He (Mr. O'Connor Power) thought that, in proposals of this nature, they should be very careful to do nothing that might be likely to raise false hopes in the minds of the people of Ireland, such as the expenditure of Imperial funds in stimulating Irish industries. If those funds were not to be used, the money must be raised by the Local Authorities; and in Ireland there were no Local Authorities who possessed the confidence of the people. He had had communications from the county which he represented, calling attention to the fact that a recent Presentment Sessions in the county had proved abortive, because the Justices, by whose attendance these Sessions would be legal, had not put in an appearance. The magistrates did not attend. The Sessions were held to sanction expenditure for making roads and other important business, and they found that the people of Mayo had not a voice in their local affairs. The Government should either increase the Justices, or take some steps by which the Justices already appointed would be compelled to attend their Sessions, so that the works going on throughout the country might not be distracted. What they wanted was a Representative Body in every county of Ireland, with statutory powers to levy rates for purposes of this description. When such a question came forward in a tangible form, it could not be treated in too exhaustive and elaborate a manner; and he thought that it would then be found necessary to point out the effect of the Act of Union upon the resources of the people of Ireland. There was a general impression in Ireland that the country had suffered great financial losses from that clause in the Act of Union by which the Exchequers of the two countries were amalgamated; and it might not be as difficult as Englishmen imagined to prove that Ireland had a distinct claim on the sympathies of the English people in the matter of taxation in connection with their industries. The first thing that was necessary was a good system of technical education in every part of the country. Fortunately, through the efforts of the Royal Commission on Technical Education, they had ample data to guide them on the subject. One of the chief points to which he would refer was the establishment of a good system of technical education such as had brought Würtemburg to its present prosperity from a state of things 50 or 60 years ago similar to those existing in Ireland. They wanted self-government in counties; and they wanted means of reclaiming waste lands. It was wrong to encourage emigration amongst a people while the resources of their own country were undeveloped, and while large tracts of land remained unoccupied for want of the application of labour and industry. The fisheries, too, required to be developed; and the one thing most necessary for the object was a good railway system in parts of the country remote from the daily life of the country because of their isolation. It would be necessary, in fact, to revise the whole railway system in Ireland. If the Government lent its countenance to a movement of this sort, it should do it with a whole heart, and not merely meet a case of political expediency.

Mr. FINDLATER said, he was greatly rejoiced to hear the promise that had undoubtedly been given by the Government. He must be allowed to express a hope that they would appoint a Royal Commission on the subject rather than refer it to a Select Committee.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY (RESTORATION).

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK, in rising to call attention to the present condition of Westminster Abbey, and to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether Her Majesty's Government have undertaken to make any money grant to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster for the general repairs of the Abbey Church and the renovation of the North Transept; and whether any plans and estimates relating thereto have been submitted to the Office of Works? said, he had heard that it was proposed that a sum of money should be advanced by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. He hoped, if that was the case, no money would be given to the Dean and Chapter without adequate guarantees as to how it would be spent. He was a strong supporter and a great admirer of the Church; but, at the same time, he had no confidence whatever in the æsthetic tastes of the clergy. He, therefore, protested against any question of taste being left to the Deans and Chapters. They had already seen in Westminster Abbey the result of such a policy. He regretted to say that in the so-called restoration of cathedrals in England the work of the old masters was, in too many instances, destroyed and replaced by workmanship of an inferior character. The late Dean of Westminster was a man of great piety and popularity. Unfortunately, he knew but little of the works of the old masters, and fell a prey to the late Sir G. Gilbert Scott, who had induced him to undertake work which had much better been left undone. At the same time, he quite agreed that it was absolutely necessary that assistance should be given to the Dean and Chapter in order to prevent the Abbey tumbling down altogether.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he thought it was right, in the first place, to ask whether the ground upon which money might be asked for such a purpose as this was that Westminster Abbey was a national institution, and, therefore, an object of concern to the British Parliament? If that were so, it might then be asked whether there were not sufficient funds in the hands of the Dean and Chapter that were available for the repair of the fabric of the cathedral? If his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not aware of what was taking place in regard to their cathedral funds, he (Mr. Illingworth) might refer him to Manchester, where, after a serious litigation, the Dean and Chapter found themselves in the wrong box in dealing with property. On the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the new towers of Peterborough Cathedral, the Bishop of Peterborough had expressed thankfulness that no public money was to be expended on the restoration of that cathedral, and that, therefore, the matter had been kept entirely out of the hands of the Government and of Parliament. Was it asserted that Westminster Abbey stood upon an entirely different footing from any other cathedral, because, if it were to be regarded as a public building belonging to a national institution, he (Mr. Illingworth) would remind the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) that there were some 40 or 50 buildings of a similar character in this country to Westminster Abbey, whose case was equally as well deserving of consideration for a grant of the public money; and before the House committed itself to a grant from the public funds the ground on which it was asked for ought to be stated. He held that the granting of public money for the restoration of cathedrals was altogether out of the question; and he should also object to the funds in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners being applied for that purpose as long as there were sufficient funds in the hands of the Deans and Chapters to defray the expenses of the restoration of those buildings. Doubtless, the Deans and Chapters throughout the country were most worthy men; but they were the most unsafe custodians of public money, large sums having been jobbed away under the pretence of restorations under their management. In his opinion, the question was, whether it would not be well that the repair and maintenance of such buildings should be taken out of the hands of the Dean and Chapter and placed under the control of a distinct authority? Would it ever enter the mind of any sane man, if the matter were now under consideration for the first time, to place the control of these funds in the hands of Bodies like the Deans and Chapters? Such control should, in his opinion, be placed in the hands of some authority who would be responsible to that House. In Scotland the custody of such buildings was not placed in the hands of any ecclesiastical authority, whom he did not consider the proper persons to be entrusted with such a duty; but it was in another Body—he believed the Office of Works. He thought they had neglected a national duty in leaving this property in the hands of the Dean and Chapter.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he agreed, to a great extent, with the observations of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), as to the fitness of Deans and Chapters for these duties; but he must forgive him if he (Mr. Childers) did not follow him through his dissertations on Gothic and Classic architecture. But no doubt, a large sum of money had been expended by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster on the fabric of their cathedral in a manner which would not meet with universal approval. As to the question itself, the main fact was that when their estates were resettled a few years ago these Ecclesiastical Bodies, by their own desire, instead of receiving a fixed sum, preferred to have landed and house property of fluctuating value assigned to them; and, as salaries and other expenses had to be met, the sum available for the repair of the fabric and the houses occupied by the Canons and others had sometimes fallen to an extremely small one, when rents fell or could not be got in. The question came before the Government last year; and the result arrived at, after inquiry, was to recommend Parliament to reverse the recent practice of re-assigning estates to Chapters. Of course, they did not dream of granting to these Bodies anything out of the Votes of Parliament. Accordingly, last Session it was the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill, the leading principle of which was that, instead of estates being given to Deans and Chapters, they should receive an annual fixed sum out of the moneys in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and that this money should be ear-marked for special purposes—so much for salaries, so much for services, and so much for fabrics; and that when large works of restoration were to be carried out the Dean and Chapter should have power to mortgage their fabric fund, repaying the amount by an annuity spread over a series of years. That was the proposal which the Government would have brought in at the end of last Session; and he undertook now that it should be introduced in the Sittings after Christmas, so that it might be passed in the course of the year. The Government, however, could not assume the additional responsibility of supervising the repair of ecclesiastical buildings throughout the country, as suggested by his hon. Friend the Member for Bradford; but he thought that the peculiar character of Westminster Abbey entitled Her Majesty's Government to require any large works there to be subject to their approval.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. RYLANDS said, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the whole of the necessary repairs on the fabric of cathedrals ought to be provided out of the funds at the disposal of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and not by means of grants of public money. As he understood that a Bill was to be introduced next Session in regard to this matter, he would suggest to the Government that in the new arrangements which would be effected by the proposed enactment there should be provided a suitable person as Representative of the Government, who, in some way or other, should have a voice in the management and in the expenditure of those funds. In that way the powers of the Ecclesiastical Authorities might, to a great extent, be kept under control.

FRANCE AND CHINA—THE HOSTILITIES.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, who had the following Notice on the Paper:—To call attention to the neglect of British Interests in the China Seas by Her Majesty's present Ministers; and to move—

> "That this House is of opinion that the British Government should, in conjunction, if possible, with the Governments of Germany and the United States, make proposals to the French Republic and China with a view to putting an end to the present War,"

said, that he had put the Motion on the Paper in consequence of the insufficient information upon the subject which the noble Lord opposite the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had recently given him in answer to a Question. The action of France in the China Seas at the present time was a very important question, because of the large amount of British trade which was affected by that hostile action. Twenty-five million pounds a-year, he believed, was the amount of commerce in this country which was affected, or likely to be seriously affected, by the present French hostilities. The position of affairs was very unsatisfactory. Legally, he had no doubt that France was in a state of war with China, although the French denied it. At the same time, it was well known that unless these hostilities were brought to a speedy conclusion they must inflict the gravest injury upon British commerce. The French were taking no practical measures either to make peace or to carry out an effectual attack upon the Chinese Empire. They were simply hovering about here and there, injuring trade, and practically, by their half-measures, encouraging the Chinese to fight. The Government had been guilty of great neglect in this matter. They had clung to the vain hope of coming to a satisfactory alliance with France on other questions, and they had deprived themselves of the valuable alliance of Germany, which would have enabled them to settle this question with the greatest ease, much in the same way as the late Government were enabled, some five years ago, to settle the threatened attack by Russia on China. On that occasion the late Government made overtures to Germany and to the United States, which resulted in a communication on the part of the Powers being made to Russia that the Treaty Ports should not be attacked. Russia, seeing by that statement that she was debarred from injuring China, did not begin the menaced war. This Government, however, instead of taking action of a similar character on the present occasion, had allowed this affair to drift until a state of hostilities now existed which was very injurious to British trade. He had warned the Ministry, when the French aggression upon Tonquin began, that it would lead to serious complications with China, and to great disturbance to English commerce. His remarks were ridiculed at the time, when timely action would have checked aggression. In regard to this war between China and France, he must say that after reading as carefully as possible the respective statements with regard to the original claim upon Tonquin, with regard to the affair at Langson, and with regard to the circumstances connected with the terms of the Treaty come to between the French and the Chinese Plenipotentiaries, he thought that right appeared to be on the side of the Chinese. They were not the aggressors, but the party attacked and injured; and, that being the case, the British Government ought to have taken some resolute measures to let France know that this state of hostilities must be brought to an early close. If the Government had remonstrated with France in the friendly and determined way in which Lord Palmerston addressed that Government on similar occasions, those hostilities would have long since come to a satisfactory conclusion. He would remind the noble Lord of the greatness of British interests at stake in China, and of the importance of maintaining the strength of the Chinese Empire in Asia. We had two great rivals in Asia—namely, Russia on the North West, and the great dominion which the French were seeking to build up on the Eastern side in Cochin China, Annam, and Tonquin. These were also signs that France might soon encroach upon Burmah. Her Majesty's Government ought to bear in mind the possibility of France and Russia agreeing to divide China between them. He hoped Her Majesty's Government would take action in time, and avail themselves of an opportunity to interfere effectually to put a stop to these very injurious, and still more threatening, hostilities that now prevailed. He was surprised, in view of the weakness of our Squadron in the China Seas and other important stations, that the Government should still continue to neglect the subject of the Navy, which was of infinitely more importance to the nation than 20 Franchise Bills.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that, whenever it was proposed to go into Committee of Supply, the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) brought forward a Motion on some question of foreign policy; but he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was inclined to think, from the small amount of support which the hon. Member received from his own side, and especially from his own Front Bench, whose policy he was always propounding in their absence, that they were of opinion that the time when the hon. Member brought forward his Motions was not always well chosen. In reply to a Question by the hon. Member the other day, he had given him information which was of interest and importance; and he thought the hon. Member would see that it was impossible for him to say more than he had done. What he had said was that communications had been proceeding with the Governments of both France and China in regard to the subject of mediation, but that, unfortunately, hitherto it had not been possible to bring these communications to any practical result, and that it was not possible for him for that very reason to make any further communication in regard to them. The House would see that for the same reason that closed his mouth the other evening on this very important and delicate subject, it must have remained closed this evening also, not from any desire to keep back information from the House, but because he felt that any premature statement that he might make to-night would only defeat the object the Government and the hon. Member had at heart—namely, the establishment of peace between France and China, which was so desirable in the interest of the world in general and the trade of this country in particular. The hon. Member asked why did not Her Majesty's Government use strong language in order to promote pacific relations between France and China?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I never said that. What I said, Sir, was friendly but determined remonstrances.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he had taken down the words; and did the hon. Member expect that peace between France and China was to be promoted by the use of this strong language? Most certainly it would not have accomplished the object in view. The hon. Member might rest assured that the Government were fully sensible of the importance of doing all in their power to restore friendly relations between France and China; and if any opportunity for mediation occurred that opportunity would not be lost.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *negatived.*

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, the sum of £2,049,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

INCOME TAX BILL.—[BILL 38.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. RYLANDS said, he must express his dissatisfaction with the course the Government had found it necessary to take in this matter. When the House was in Committee of Ways and Means last Monday, he had complained that the pressure of taxation had been unnecessarily increased at a period of commercial difficulty, and when the local burdens of the country had been exceptionally heavy, by the measures which had been adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the paying off of £7,000,000 a-year of the National Debt. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had urged, in reply, that his (Mr. Rylands's) argument might be carried to the extent of meeting annual Expenditure by the increase of Debt. But that was by no means his contention. He quite agreed that current Expenditure ought to be met by taxation; but, when they were adopting large measures for the reduction of Debt, they ought to consider not only the amount to be reduced, but also how far the circumstances of the time justified the addition of considerable burdens upon the taxpayers of the country. The present time and circumstances rendered, in his opinion, the reduction of £7,000,000 a-year inopportune, and added seriously to the financial difficulties of the Government. He also contended that, before adding another 1*d.* to the Income Tax, which pressed unfairly upon the precarious incomes of industry, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have dealt with the death duties, and imposed upon real property a succession duty equivalent in amount to the probate and legacy duties now levied upon personal property. But he went further, and maintained that the Government were responsible for the additional expenditure which had been incurred, and which was the occasion for increased taxation. The Prime Minister questioned his right to criticize the Expenditure of the Government, because he said—

> "I think I remember a speech of the hon. Member for Burnley which, instead of being conceived in the spirit of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), recommended and advised a war policy. My hon. Friend must really take his choice; he cannot have the luxury of making speeches of that class, and, at the same time, the luxury of protesting against the increased expenditure."

He (Mr. Rylands) was not conscious of having made speeches of a warlike tendency. No doubt, the Prime Minister referred to his speech of March 6; but in that speech there was not a word favourable to warlike measures from beginning to end. He had commenced the speech by denouncing the bombardment of Alexandria, and had ended it by condemning the slaughter of 6,000 Soudanese at Suakin. He need scarcely say that he was sure that the misstatement of the tenour of his speech into which the right hon. Gentleman had fallen was entirely unintentional. It was quite true that he (Mr. Rylands) had recommended, in the speech in question, a decided policy. But what was that decided policy? Not a policy of war, but a policy calculated to prevent bloodshed and the expenditure of millions of money. His argument was that the bombardment of Alexandria and the battle of Tel-el-Kebir entirely changed the position of England as regards Egypt, and added enormously to the responsibilities of the British Government. All authority in Egypt had been shattered and the National movement for the development of Egyptian liberty had been destroyed. Under those new conditions, he had urged that we had no right to "scuttle out" of Egypt, or to leave the Egyptians to "stew in their own juice." He had contended that the British Government ought to recognize the facts of the case, and accept their responsibility fully and without disguise. They ought not to set up a fiction of an Egyptian power which did not exist. The Government disapproved of the advance of Hicks Pasha beyond Khartoum; but they shrank from the responsibility of stopping him. They ought to have stopped him. A decided policy then would have prevented the destruction of Hicks Pasha and his army, and would have saved Egypt and this country from subsequent difficulties of the most serious character. Then there was the Mission of General Gordon;—it was announced as entirely a Mission of Peace. Gordon was to proclaim the freedom of the Soudanese from the loathsome tyranny and exactions of their Egyptian rulers. He was entrusted with a Firman from the Khedive to all chief notables and people of the Soudan, announcing its evacuation by the Egyptian troops, and informing them that the Soudan would be left to them, and that its Rulers would be appointed from among them. That no doubt was a decided policy, and if thoroughly and consistently carried out might have been successful. But Gordon kept this important Firman of the Khedive in his pocket, and within a short period adopted warlike measures, talked about "smashing the Mahdi," and sent his steamers, full of soldiers, to shoot Arabs on the banks of the Nile. Why did not the Government recall Gordon, when they found that he was entirely reversing their policy of peace? That would have prevented the necessity of the enormous expenditure now being incurred to bring him back. And then as to the measures taken for his relief—there was an impression that a more decided and active policy would have greatly lessened the difficulties of the situation. Gordon himself had said that if Berber had not fallen into the Mahdi's hands, the Expedition up the Nile would have been a "pic-nic." But Berber had fallen, and the Expedition would have to be carried out in the midst of great difficulties and at a large expenditure. It was no doubt the fact that in the various discussions on Egyptian and South African policy, he (Mr. Rylands) had taken little or no part. He entertained towards the Prime Minister feelings of the highest respect and confidence, and he had been at all times unwilling to take any course likely to embarrass the Government; but he could not refrain from expressing the belief that if a more decided policy had been pursued in Egypt and South Africa, the expenditure now contemplated would never have been incurred.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had always found it was the case, as it was then, that though the hon. Member for Burnley expressed a preference for a decided policy, he had always supported the Government by his vote against the Opposition, when the latter had demanded a policy of that kind. He rose, however, for the purpose of saying that he objected to the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the ground that no intimation had been given of the extent of the liabilities which the country was now incurring in different parts of the world. £1,324,000 was asked for to defray the cost of the Egyptian Expedition; but he did not think that the policy of the Government with regard to Egypt was an honest policy. They had been told that £2,000,000 would cover all the expenditure up to the end of the present financial year. They had been told nothing of the enormous expenditure that was now going on, and that would continue to go on, with regard to the Expedition to Khartoum. He hoped that if they ever got there, they would never leave it until they had established a firm and settled Government in it. If he said he believed that the expenditure for that Expedition would amount to £6,000,000, he was sure he would be within the mark. For the Expedition to Bechuanaland they were asked to vote £725,000; but the real cost of the Expedition would, he believed, be not less than £1,000,000. The sum which must be expended on the fortifications of our coaling stations and on the Navy could hardly amount to less than £3,000,000. £10,000,000 would during the year, therefore, be wanted in all, and yet the Government only asked for £2,000,000, saying that no more would be required until the end of the present financial year. He thought that the House ought not to sanction the addition of 1*d.* to the Income Tax without protest. In July, 1882, 1½*d.* was added to the tax to meet the cost of the war in Egypt. Being asked whether it was fair always to resort to the Income Tax in such emergencies, the Prime Minister acknowledged that the tax as at present constituted fell upon too limited a portion of the community, and that it would not be always right for a Government to look to the Income Tax alone in cases of emergency, and not to other sources of Revenue. The franchise was now about to be extended to 2,000,000 people, many of whom would not pay Income Tax. Were they, in the future, or would it be right or just that they should be, exempted from contributing to the cost of such a war as the war in Egypt, a country in which they were as much interested as the rest of the community? Were the Government going to tax only a limited class, which contained numberless persons who could not afford to be so mulct? The 1*d.* tax thus imposed was really a 2*d.* tax for the half-year; and, in the present state of agriculture and industry, its effect would be severely felt. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would state to the House that, should he again have to ask for money in exceptional circumstances, he would not depend upon the Income Tax alone, but would find some other sources of Revenue.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK said, that while he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be congratulated on having met financial demands by boldly increasing taxation, he could not agree with the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) in his remarks about the reduction of the National Debt. His hon. Friend said we must consider the time and amount. Now, since he (Sir John Lubbock) had had the honour of a seat in that House, he had never known those who opposed the repayment of Debt think that the time had arrived when this should be done. But if that view was to prevail, the Debt would never be reduced; and if we borrowed in times of war and did not repay in times of peace, there could be but one end—namely, national bankruptcy. Then we came to the amount. His hon. Friend said that £7,000,000 a-year was too much. To himself it seemed very moderate. At that rate it would take us over a century to repay our Debt. He admitted the importance of the question which had been raised by the hon. Member for Burnley with regard to the death duties, though he could understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might not consider this a fitting opportunity to make any statement on the subject. As to Egypt, he had always maintained that we should either have left the country after Tel-el-Kebir, or have taken a more decided course. If it was once understood in Egypt that there was to be a good and just Government, there would be no difficulty about Egyptian finance; and until that was understood, they would find that they would get deeper and deeper into these difficulties. He would not, however, pursue the subject which the hon. Member, he presumed, had raised principally as a personal explanation. He was anxious for a word of explanation from the Chancellor of the Exchequer on one point. He presumed that the additional 1*d.* of Income Tax was to be raised under exactly the same conditions as the previous amount. He had no doubt on the subject; but there was—perhaps only an apparent—ambiguity, and it would be satisfactory if the right hon. Gentleman would set the matter at rest.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that the House and the country would expect the Chancellor of the Exchequer to state to-night exactly how much he thought our liabilities would be, and whether the sum now asked for would carry the Government over the present financial year. They were now going to vote sums for two Expeditions, and they had good authority for believing that a further amount would be required for Egypt. It would be, therefore, more honourable for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say at once what our liabilities were likely to be. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) had stated that there was every reason to expect that the Expedition up the Nile would complete its operations and return before the hot season, and either the noble Marquess or some other Member of the Government had said that they hoped to leave a settled form of Government behind them at Khartoum. If that was the intention of Her Majesty's Government, it would take many years and many millions of money before it could be done. Did anyone suppose that, with a number of tribes opposed to one another in the country, we could establish a settled form of Government there before the hot season in March, supposing that our troops were to get to Khartoum in January? Surely, the right hon. Gentleman opposite (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) must see that the sum now asked for would be enormously exceeded. He (Mr. Onslow) was one of those who thought that the money to meet the cost of the Expedition was a burden which ought not to fall on the shoulders of one particular class, and that a class not able to bear it. No doubt, we must do all we could to bring back General Gordon, at whatever cost, for we all looked upon him as a hero; but those sitting on that (the Opposition) side of the House maintained that, if the Government had taken a bolder course, if they had been guided by wiser counsels, and if there had not been dissensions in the Cabinet, all this expenditure might have been avoided. The arrival of our troops at Khartoum, whether at the end of this year or the beginning of next, would be a matter of enormous difficulty—he doubted whether they would ever get there at all—and the cost would be very great. Of course, the Income Tax was a very easy mode of getting the money—they had only to put on the screw and the thing was done; but it was preposterous to think that if more money was wanted, the whole was to be obtained from the Income Tax.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he was rather surprised to find, as was the case, that the objections to this proposal should come from the advocates of a "spirited foreign policy," the very persons who were always urging the Government to do that for which this money was required. Those who were in the habit of voting for fighting should pay the taxes required to be levied for that end; but he denied that the working classes of this country were in favour of war; on the contrary, they were in favour of arbitration, for they had not the same interest in these Egyptian wars as those who paid Income Tax. He hoped when they had an extended franchise, and a more complete representation of the people in Parliament, that they should be much less likely to get into these wars than at present, and more inclined to enter on an era of peace. He believed that these wars were mostly made by the middle classes—by the newspapers and their supporters—who paid the Income Tax; and, therefore, he was very glad that the tax was laid upon these people. He hoped that the additional 1*d.* would suffice, but a good deal more might be required; but he had no doubt that, if England established a civilized Government in Khartoum, the ratepayers would have to pay heavily for it, and that a further 2*d.* would have to be added to the Income Tax. In that case, he trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not shrink from putting on 2*d.*, if need be. The lower middle classes already bore more than their fair share of taxation, and he had no wish to see the Income Tax go to a lower class than it did now.

MR. SALT said, he entirely demurred to the statement made by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir George Campbell) to the effect that the Members of the Opposition were responsible for the war in Egypt. It was both unfair and ridiculous. He maintained that when the Government of the country was involved in war, they ought to ask, and they had a right to ask, for the generous support not only of their Friends, but of both sides of the House. The Opposition might not be able to give their assent to the policy of the Government; but Her Majesty's Ministers had a right to ask for help from both sides in the circumstances he mentioned, and they ought to receive that help. It was in that spirit that he met the claim of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for aid. He quite agreed with a great deal that was, said by the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). The question really before the House at that present time was, How were they to meet the Expenditure, and were they meeting it in the best way? In that matter they must trust very much to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and although he (Mr. Salt) felt, and the right hon. Gentleman must also feel, how grievous a thing it was, at a time when trade and agriculture were in a depressed condition, to call for 2*d.* in the pound increase of the Income Tax, still, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that it was the best, and perhaps the only, way he had of raising the money required at the moment, they must accept what he said. They might condemn and dislike the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, but they must for the moment support him. With regard to the general question, he (Mr. Salt) did not wish to complain so much of the Expenditure as the quality of the Expenditure. They were constantly saying that the Expenditure was too large—larger than it was five, 10, or 20 years ago—but the real point was not what was the Expenditure for the moment, but what was the amount that was required for the interests of the country for the time being. The Government ought to show —and he did not think that they had sufficiently shown—that the Expenditure proposed was really necessary for the wants of the country for the year for which it was asked. Would the proposed Expenditure increase the trade, strengthen the resources, and promote the interests of the Empire. But this was not the moment to press a point of that nature, and he only mentioned it to say that, when the proper time came, he should call attention to it. There was another point of a general character, and that was whether the money asked for was sufficient. He was doubtful in the matter, and almost wished that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked for the full amount at once. The right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, simple weapon which they must use for dealing with warlike expenditure, but that it was not right to go to the Income Tax alone, when a large expenditure was being incurred, except in cases of emergency towards the end of a year. The hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. H. S. Northcote) had held up what had been done by the late Government as a pattern to them. Now, the late Government raised certain sums for Military Expeditions by taxation, and still larger sums by incurring Debt; for, instead of paying their way as they went, they threw on future years about £8,000,000 or £9,000,000. The whole amount that was raised by indirect taxation by the late Government for those wars was a flea-bite.

Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE explained that, in the reference he had made, he had merely spoken of the principle that was followed.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that practice was much better than principle. The whole sum raised by the additional Tobacco Tax was as nothing compared with what was raised by the Income Tax and what was borrowed. The hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had asked whether there was any difference between the incidence and the machinery of the present Income Tax Act and the new Bill. It would be a little difficult to discuss these technicalities on the second reading; but he would explain any point, which might appear novel, in Committee. With regard to trading profits, as to which a question had been asked, there would be no practical difficulty in assessing them, as the tax on them was practically paid in the first quarter of the calendar year. They would then be charged only 6*d.* for the whole year. In conclusion, he hoped that the House would now give the Bill a second reading.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

POLLUTION OF RIVERS BILL.

(*Mr. Hastings, Earl Percy, Colonel Walrond.*)

[BILL 34.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. HASTINGS, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time,

said, that he would consent to its being referred to a Select Committee, where every detail could be thoroughly sifted.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hastings.*)

Mr. ELTON said, that the Bill made a very distinct and important change in the principles of the law applicable to rivers and streams. The creation of a new offence, where a neighbour could not prove an individual nuisance or the public show the act of any particular person, would be a great innovation. He therefore appealed to the Government to adjourn the debate, so as to arrange that the great Corporations and Companies affected might make their wishes known in the matter.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at a quarter after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 22nd November, 1884.

The House met at half after Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Ways and Means — *considered in Committee—Resolutions* [November 21] *reported*—£2,049,000, Consolidated Fund.

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1).

Committee—Report—Income Tax [38].

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—ALLOWANCES TO OFFICERS OF THE ROYAL MARINES.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, that he had sent private Notice to the Secretary to the Admiralty to the effect that, on the bringing up of the Report of Ways and Means, he intended to call attention to the subject of the allowances granted to officers of Marines serving in Egypt, and their subsequent withdrawal; also to an order given by the Admiralty as to the payments being afterwards refunded. He wished to know what were the facts of the matter?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY, in reply, said, that, as to the Marines at Suakin, he understood that all, except those living afloat, had received field allowance at the naval rates, which were in excess of the field allowance granted to the Army. In addition to these allowances, this climate pay of the Army at the rate of 3*s*. a-day was also paid to the Marines at the order of the officer commanding. When the circumstances were reported to the Admiralty, directions were given that the double allowance should cease, and also an instruction that the sum which had been paid in respect of climate pay should be recovered from the officers at rates not exceeding from £4 to £5 per month. An appeal had been made against the decision, and the Admiralty were in communication with the War Office on the subject. The object of the order was to prevent the Marines from receiving allowances in excess of those granted to the Army, and an arrangement had been made with the War Office by which the Marines would receive the same allowances as those granted to the Army.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Is it intended to exact repayment of the climate allowances already received by the Marines?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I understand that that is the present intention.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Then I shall call attention to the matter on the Report of Ways and Means—that is now.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

WAYS AND MEANS.—REPORT.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 1) BILL.

Resolution [November 21] *reported.*

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought it would be more convenient that he should now call the attention of the House to the subject of the allowances to the Marines in Egypt rather than pursue the practice of putting down Questions on the Paper to add to the enormous number addressed to the Government. That appeared to him a most inconvenient way of bringing a subject of this kind before the notice of Parliament. As he understood the explanation just given by the Secretary to the Admiralty, what he might call the properly-constituted authority at Suakin, whoever he might be, had sanctioned the payment to the officers of Marines serving in Egypt a certain rate of pay under the designation of "climate allowance." Having been so sanctioned, those payments had been made, and now, as he understood, the authorities at home had not only ordered the discontinuance in future of the very moderate emoluments of officers discharging very trying and arduous duties, but had actually ordered that the sums which had been paid should be refunded by reductions from their future pay at the rate of £5 per month. If that really were the case, it was a decision of the Admiralty which it would be very difficult indeed for the hon. Gentleman (Sir Thomas Brassey) seriously to defend. He did not understand whether the fault was due to the British Government or whether they were giving a lesson to the Egyptian Government in the art of how not to discharge their obligations. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, although he had obtained an honourable position in the Government, had not yet learned to speak of the so-called Egyptian Government without a smile. That was a qualification to which he had yet to attain. It was unnecessary to refer to the admirable services done by the Marines. When increased pay had been sanctioned, and such payment had been actually made, he thought the honour of the country was pledged to the arrangement, and they should be very jealous in sanctioning any action on the part of the Executive Government by which that increased pay should be subsequently deducted. That increase of pay was, he understood, made nominally by the Egyptian Government, but Her Majesty's Government had been a party to the transaction. Was it, he asked, intended that there should be deducted from the officers of Marines serving at Suakin, and other places in Egypt, money which was officially sanctioned, and which the officers had actually received? If he were right in thinking that the Admiralty had not yet decided this matter, he would ask the hon. Gentleman to weigh it carefully before the Department committed itself finally to an act of repudiation, and, he might add, of dishonourable conduct towards those who were serving the country in such a gallant manner. Though he believed it was not in the power of a private Member to move a distinct Amendment to any of the Estimates of the country, in the event of the Admiralty persevering in the course of which he complained, he should certainly take such steps as lay in his power to obtain the judgment of Parliament in the matter.

SIR JOHN HAY wished to add his appeal to his right hon. Friend's on this matter. It did seem to him a most impolitic thing, when officers were serving abroad, and extra payments were made to them, that through some mistake of a paymaster they should be asked to refund them—especially in the case of officers of Marines, who, having received the money ostensibly from the Egyptian Government for good services, were about to have it reclaimed by our own Government. He trusted the Marine officers who were serving their country so well would not be treated in this very unhandsome manner.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER also appealed to the Admiralty on the matter. The course that had been pursued towards these officers simply meant this, that a Department having made a blunder the officers of the Marines were to be called upon to repair the blunder out of their own pockets. In this House there was unbounded admiration for the Marines, and the Secretary to the Admiralty himself had not been slow to express his admiration of that Force. He thought it would be exceedingly ungrateful to call upon these officers to repay the money, as the order required, and he hoped the Admiralty would not carry out their intention.

MR. O'KELLY asked whether the Secretary to the Admiralty would inform the House what allowance was given to the Egyptian officers who were serving in the same district and under the same conditions? What were the relative positions of the Egyptian and English officers?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, that through the courtesy of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Lowther) he had received an intimation that this subject was to be raised, but he had necessarily only had very short Notice. He had come down to the House prepared with such information as he could obtain with regard to the orders which had actually been issued, and he had stated the effect of those orders to the House. He understood that the sole object of the Admiralty had been to place the officers and men of the Marines serving in Egypt on exactly the same footing with regard to pay and allowances as their comrades in the Army. There was no desire whatever to put the Marines in any inferior position.

MR. J. LOWTHER remarked that he had never even hinted that there was.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, he had already specified the orders which had been issued. He had said the Admiralty were in communication with the War Office with reference to the adjustment of the pay of the Marines in the future. With regard to the order which had been actually issued for the repayment of the pay already given to the Marines, he would take care that the expressions of opinion he had heard to-day in the House were carefully considered by the Admiralty. He might add that he was himself quite aware of the general and strong objection there was to calling for repayment of money already paid to these officers.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. NORWOOD said, he desired to express his regret that the Government had not taken advantage of this opportunity to ask for a small amount for extraordinary naval expenditure. He was one of those who believed that an addition to our naval resources was a matter of absolute necessity, because, in view of our vast commerce, he regarded our present position as one of great danger. If any demand for money was delayed until the Spring, it would result in the postponement for three or four months of the step which, he thought, was urgently necessary. He expressed this opinion all the more strongly because he knew of his own knowledge that there never had been a moment at which the Admiralty might go to the outports and contract for the construction of vessels on more advantageous terms than the present. The shipbuilding yards of the country were at a standstill, and the workmen were unemployed. The Committee on which he had the honour to serve reported that the evidence brought before them was distinctly such that the private builders could build as well as our Royal Dockyards, and, therefore, he expressed regret that any time should be lost in taking, at any rate, preparatory steps towards additions to our naval strength. He must go one step further, on behalf of his own constituents. The Prime Minister, the other day, in reply to a Question, laid down a very sound doctrine. He declared that it was not the duty of the State to come to the assistance of any special trade. He (Mr. Norwood), however, ventured to point out that, assuming his argument to be correct—namely, that additions to the strength of the Navy were necessary, and that this was the moment of all others for building vessels at the lowest possible price—it was worth the consideration of the Government whether they ought not to take steps to improve the condition of the Navy, and, at the same time, assist our working populations. He was sorry to say his constituents had been obliged to call a town's meeting to provide the means for alleviating the distress which prevailed in the town. He believed a similar state of things existed at Sunderland and Newcastle. He did not wish the Government to give employment merely for the sake of employing any portion of the population; but he thought that the conjunction of circumstances at this moment might have induced the Government to take proper steps for the strengthening of the Navy, and to, at the same time, give employment where it was greatly needed.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he wished to express his concurrence with the remarks of the hon. Gentleman opposite. He regretted there was no symptom as yet of any proposal for a sum of money for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of our Navy. As there would be another opportunity for raising this question, he would not detain the House upon it; but he would like to say, with respect to the distress existing, that in Glasgow the building of two or three iron-clads would be not only useful to the country, but to those who were at present thrown out of employment. There was no time, he believed, at which the Navy of the country could be increased with greater advantage than the present, and means ought at once to be taken for doing so; while the public was of opinion that the Navy was far below its proper strength. Orders for iron-clad ships to be built on the Clyde, the Humber, the Mersey, the Tyne, the Thames, and at Belfast could now be executed at a very low price, and would give employment to thousands of starving mechanics. The Government ought to avail themselves of these low rates. He must say, looking to the very low condition to which our Navy had fallen, and to the enormous strides which were being made in foreign parts—the French having in the last 10 years launched seven more iron-clads than England had done—it was full time that means should be taken to increase the Navy; and he trusted that the suggestions which had fallen from the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood) would have influence with those whom he supported. He had urged this matter on this attention of the House for the last 14 years, and he could only congratulate himself that the country was at last awakening to its danger.

Mr. GOURLEY endorsed the remarks of the hon. Member for Hull as to the necessity of reinforcing the Navy. The Admiralty never had a better opportunity of giving out contracts at a low price than they had at present. He held that it was the duty of the Government to ameliorate, as far as possible, the distress now prevailing in the country. Something like £1,000,000 was proposed to be spent, for ameliorating the condition of the poor of Egypt, in irrigation work in Egypt; but he thought it would be more to the point, and would do far more good, if the Government came forward with a proposition to expend £1,000,000 in private yards in reinforcing the condition of the Navy, and putting it in a more efficient condition than at present. By so doing, they would give employment to those who could not find work, and who were in a state of starvation, and for whom neither the Prime Minister nor any Member of the Government had yet expressed one word of sympathy. In doing this, Parliament would interfere with no principle of political economy, as the ships must be built somewhere. It was the duty of those who were in power to help those who were suffering from want of employment to tide over their existing difficulties, and he hoped the Government would bring forward some proposal by which the Admiralty would be enabled to give out shipbuilding contracts, which could now be had on such reasonable and favourable terms. The fact was, that Ministers were always ready to help, practically, Colonial races, whilst their own people they governed, with regard to their bread and cheese, on theoretical dreams. He thought that some of our men in authority were behind the requirements of the age. Academic qualifications were no longer adapted for successful government.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER said, he hoped it would not go forth from that House that there was any want of sympathy for the suffering men in Sunderland. The Government should do everything they could to encourage the industry which was now so very much depressed. He hoped the judicious remarks of the hon. Member for Hull would not be lost on the Secretary to the Admiralty, and that the hon. Gentleman might be able to give the House some assurance that the Government had the full intention to take advantage of the present favourable opportunity for making contracts.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. CHILDERS): After the appeal which has been made to the Government by my hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. Norwood), I wish to remind the House that the Government are under a pledge on Monday week to state fully their intentions on the subject of the Navy. It would, therefore, be altogether premature for me to refer to those intentions now.

Resolution *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir ARTHUR OTWAY, Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, and Mr. COURTNEY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time.

INCOME TAX BILL.—[BILL 38.]

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

MR. J. G. HUBBARD, who had a Notice on the Paper to the following effect:—

> "That, in view of the continued and aggravated imposition of the Income Tax pressing with special severity upon land and industry, this House is of opinion that the adjustment of the Tax and its equitable administration should be no longer delayed."

said, he would have abstained from asking the indulgence of the House for the consideration of an unworthy subject, or if he did not feel convinced that the statement which he should make was one founded upon facts and sustainable by argument, or unless the scheme which he had formulated was very different indeed from that which had been called a visionary project. He felt it his duty to call the attention of the House to a very important portion of the National Revenue of the country—the Income Tax—and he desired at the onset to refer to the powerful assault which was made upon his views by the Prime Minister a short time ago. The right hon. Gentleman did him the credit to say he was endowed with great courage and persistency. It was very easy to be courageous and persistent when he had got a perfectly good case. The speech which he made on this subject some months ago was not, as the Prime Minister represented it, a mere echo of a speech he made 20 years ago. Since that time he had learned a good deal from the Prime Minister himself, from observation, and from friendly communication with the officials of the Inland Revenue Department, and the consequence was that the scheme which was laid on the Table of the House last Session was very different indeed from the one which was attacked by the Prime Minister in the year 1861. As a matter of fact, while his (Mr. Hubbard's) speech was an exposition of an improved scheme, the speech of the Prime Minister was nothing more than an echo of the speech he made in 1861. The right hon. Gentleman absolutely ignored the whole of the changes which had been induced by circumstances during the last 20 years. His right hon. Friend in the course of his remarks took occasion to charge him with having enlisted the good will and support of the landed interest by concealing the fact that his scheme, if carried out, would involve considerable loss to the landed interest. The right hon. Gentleman implied disingenuousness; but the *amende* which he subsequently so unreservedly and courteously made more than compensated for the pain which the charge had given him (Mr. Hubbard). But the allegation remained — "that the scheme which he proposed would inflict injury on the landed interest." The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, when he made that allegation, alluded to the circumstances that he had many years before remarked upon, the very suffering condition of the landed interest. He had remarked that the real property of the country—houses and land — must be considered as encumbered to a certain extent with charges either for mortgages or settlements, and he concluded that according to his (Mr. Hubbard's) plan land would be charged with no less than 8½*d.* at a time when incomes coming under Schedule D could only be charged at the rate of 5*d.*, thus throwing upon land an extra 70 per cent Income Tax. The Prime Minister had instituted inquiries into the amount of outgoings and charges for maintenance both for land and houses, and the conclusion at which he arrived was that 16 per cent might be taken as representing the outgoings on land and houses under Schedule A. Now, he (Mr. Hubbard) had taken up the Inland Revenue Return of 1883, and he found this result—that Schedule D being assessed under the scheme which he proposed at 5*d.*, while Schedule A would only have to pay 4¾*d.*, that was to say, instead of 100 it would have to pay 95, or instead of being charged 70 per cent more than Schedule D, as calculated by the right hon. Gentleman, Schedule A would be charged 5 per cent less. Now, that was a very important discrepancy and inaccuracy in the statement of his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister; but the statement had gone forth to the world, and he desired that this correction should go forth also. He asserted deliberately and confidently in the House of Commons, that under the scheme which he proposed, Schedule A, so far from being charged more heavily than Schedule D, would be charged considerably less; less in the aggregate, but how in individual cases? The facts alleged by his right hon. Friend induced him to look very closely into the question of how individual proprietors were affected by assessment upon the gross, and he had found this most distressing and inequitable result. An estate of £2,000 a-year would, if 10 per cent were allowed for outgoings, yield a net rental of £1,800. If the estate were mortgaged for £1,600 a-year, the residue, £200, would alone come into the pocket of the proprietor. But what about the Income Tax? The mortgagee would pay his tax upon the £1,600 which he received, while the actual owner would be required to pay, not upon the residue, £200, but upon £400; the tax would not be levied upon the £1,800, but upon the gross value. Now, that was one of the consequences of the present most unscientific, irregular, and inconsistent way of charging the Queen's taxes. Instead of following the scientific and the well-accepted principle adopted in local taxation—namely, of charging on the rateable or net value, the Queen's taxes were levied upon the gross value. Why did he lay stress upon this fact at the present moment? Because at the present time land was in a condition of depression it never was in before. In North, South, East, and West, landowners were in straitened circumstances, and farms had been very much reduced in rent, and, in many cases, had entirely gone out of cultivation. Under the circumstances, it was a cruel thing on the part of the Government to increase the operation of the tax, which, even if it operated equally, was heavy, but when it operated unequally, was oppressive and intolerant. He maintained that a tax which operated in the way he had described ought not to endure. But was that all the mischief? Of late years, rents had been so greatly reduced that the present rental of many estates hardly sufficed, indeed in some cases did not suffice, to pay interest on the mortgage. The consequence was that when they charged the owner of the property upon the nominal rental, they were charging him upon his outgoings, upon money which he never received—in fact, they were perpetrating a simple act of confiscation. That was his case, and that was the fact which he wished to enunciate in the Resolution of which he had given Notice. He objected to landed property being taxed upon the gross rental. The remedy for the evil was a very simple one; all that was needed was to change the word "gross" in the Income Tax Bill to "rateable value." No one could contest the grievances he had stated. So far from the

Prime Minister having questioned them, or attempted to mitigate them, he had accepted them to the fullest extent. He (Mr. Hubbard) had described the present administration of the Income Tax as unjust, unequal, oppressive, favouring wealth, and oppressing poverty; and the Prime Minister said that he (Mr. Hubbard) had not exaggerated—indeed, the right hon. Gentleman had recently declared in emphatic terms that the anomalies of the present Income Tax were cruel. But then, when one asked for a remedy for the evil, the Prime Minister said there was none; there was no remedy possible, and inequalities were incorrigible. That was a strange doctrine to be laid down in the 19th century, and in this highly cultivated Legislature of Great Britain. Instead of demonstrating that the scheme which he had proposed was an impracticable one, the Prime Minister had merely told him that however desirable the remedy or the adjustment might be, it had never yet been successfully carried out. There had been great Ministers—there was Mr. Pitt, Sir Robert Peel, and the present Prime Minister himself—and yet none of them had as yet contrived a scheme which would apply a remedy to the evil which they acknowledged to the full existed in the present system. He did not want to compare his powers upon the subject with those of the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman was a man of great intellectual power, of immense and unbounded knowledge, but he was not infallible; the humblest artizan might be able to accomplish in his own peculiar art what he had in hand much better than the most scientific and most learned man in the world. Upon this question he (Mr. Hubbard) did claim to have acquired some pretence to a knowledge of the subject; he had studied the subject most carefully for at least 30 years, during which time he was afraid he had been carrying on what had been very like a controversial duel with his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. The position of the right hon. Gentleman was a peculiar one. From the day on which, in this House, Mr. Disraeli brought in his Budget in which he recognized the distinction between precarious and real property, and the present Prime Minister taunted him with the bad preparation of the Schedule, and beat him and turned him out of Office—from that day the right hon. Gentleman would never entertain the subject of a revision of the tax, or recognize the difference between the several classses of income. If the Bill brought in by himself and others were placed before the Heads of the Inland Revenue, he undertook to say it would make the foundation for a thoroughly good working tax on equitable principles. His right hon. Friend might taunt him (Mr. Hubbard) with the scantiness of his following, but he could quote a very important authority, and that was the House of Lords. The House of Lords, by a formal Judgment, not very long ago, decided that which was the crucial principle in the whole of his contention; the House of Lords determined that "annual value" for the purpose of assessment for taxation or rating was net or rateable value. Apply that to the subject before the House, and his contention was satisfied. He only had to make this appeal to the Government in all friendliness. Do not let them any longer persevere in setting aside one of the most important subjects they could entertain. The subject was far more important than any of those which had occupied their attention for days and weeks past. The question was whether they should levy a very important portion of the Revenue of the country upon principles which were equitable, which would insure a friendly reception by the taxpayer, and which would deliver both the taxpayer and the tax-collector from the miseries and immoralities which accompanied the enforcement of an oppressive and unjust impost. It had been suggested in the course of discussion on this question that he should go back for many centuries, but he would only go back two. Two hundred years ago, Galileo was driven to prison by the Inquisition for maintaining his thesis that the earth moved; and while submitting to the irresistible tyranny of the Inquisition, he left their presence, exclaiming as he went—"*E pur si muove*"—"The earth moves all the same." He adopted that attitude. He did not intend to move the Motion of which he had given Notice, but would leave the subject to the sense of the House and the country, trusting that before long some measure would be adopted which would relieve the Government from the humiliation of year by year reimposing on the country a tax which they admitted was accompanied by many vices, a tax which favoured the rich, oppressed the poor, demoralized the taxpayer and the tax-collector, and, as his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said, was a tissue of cruel anomalies.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): My right hon. Friend opposite always speaks with so much clearness that it is a pleasure to hear him, and, therefore, I must confess that I do not regard the half-hour which he has spent in developing his plan as altogether a loss of time; but, at the same time, I must remind him of the position in which this question stands. My right hon. Friend brought forward this Motion—although it was then couched in different words—in April last, in a speech every word of which he has repeated on the present occasion. His Motion on that occasion became the subject of an interesting debate, and my right hon. Friend himself admits that the Prime Minister answered him with great force. Having heard the Prime Minister, and after full debate, the House divided, and my right hon. Friend's proposal was defeated by a large majority. And now, in the same year, my right hon. Friend thinks it necessary to raise the question again in order that he may, in the absence of the Prime Minister, answer the Prime Minister's former speech. This is a proceeding in which the right hon. Gentleman is in his technical right; but I appeal to him and to the House whether, when a question has been debated so very recently as this, it is usual to raise precisely the same issue merely by taking advantage of a proposal to add 1*d.* to the Income Tax, and to discuss the whole incidence of the tax on such a Motion, although the Mover knows that, inasmuch as the 5*d.* Income Tax is raised according to the system which has been in force for 40 years, it would be impossible to raise the additional 1*d.* on any other system? So that we have, in fact, listened to the mellifluous tones and pleasant observations of my right hon. Friend for half-an-hour, in order that he may have the luxury of answering the First Minister in his absence.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD: I did not anticipate, and I lament, the right hon. Gentleman's absence.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Then I suspect my right hon. Friend stands alone in expecting the First Minister to be here. It was well known that we were to meet to-day merely as a matter of form to take a stage of the Tax Bill. The whole burden of my right hon. Friend's speech is an attempt to answer the Prime Minister, and he complains that the Prime Minister based his speech on arguments derived from the discussion in 1861, and that he was not possessed of the facts and circumstances connected with the Income Tax which had been developed since that date. Now, nothing has occurred since the Select Committee of 23 years ago of which the Prime Minister had not the most complete knowledge, and, practically, no point has been raised now which was not before that important Select Committee, which, I may add, was moved for by those who wish to make the change now proposed, but which reported against any such change. There was one novelty in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He said he would appeal from the House of Commons to the House of Lords, and he said that the House of Lords had come to a decision which was in favour of his plan—namely, that the "taxation" of property should be upon the net and not upon the gross. But the decision of the House of Lords had nothing whatever to do with taxation. It referred to the construction of the Water Acts, and the Lords decided that the words of those Acts, properly interpreted, made the charge to be paid by householders for water based, not upon the gross value, but upon something less. It had nothing whatever to do with taxation. The very object of this Motion is not to interpret the law, but to alter the law. Therefore, when my right hon. Friend says that the decision of the House of Lords was in his favour, I challenge that altogether.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD: I stated that the decision of the House of Lords was in favour of the principle I was contending for.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): But the House of Lords was not deciding principles.

In its judicial capacity, it was interpreting the words of an Act of Parliament; and it said of a particular Act that it levied the water-rate, not on the gross, but on something less than the gross value of the house supplies. Therefore, the decision of the House of Lords has nothing whatever to do with the present question. But I am not going over the whole of this long argument over and over again. It was so fully discussed before that it would be wasting the time of the House to go over it again. I will answer carefully, however, that part of the speech of my right hon. Friend which claimed, in opposition to the declarations of the Prime Minister last Session, that his proposal would lead to an alleviation of the burdens upon land. The Prime Minister stated last Session, in the course of an unanswerable speech, that it would not. To-day my right hon. Friend has simply repeated his old argument, but has altogether passed by the Prime Minister's answer. The proposal of my right hon. Friend is embodied in his Bill to amend the administration of the Income Tax, which he brought into the House of Commons on the 6th of February last year. He there states clearly what are the deductions he would allow on the different Schedules of the Income Tax, so as to arrive at the net assessment which he proposes. In the 1st Schedule of the Bill he says there should be deductions of 5 per cent on land without buildings, and 10 per cent on land with buildings, and other deductions are set out. Then, in the 2nd Schedule, he sets out the percentage of deduction which ought to be made from the profits of professional gentlemen, traders, and others. And he not only gives the principles, but he gives illustrations of these deductions, so that we may more easily see what would be the actual result. I have taken pains to ascertain what would be the effect of these proposals, and I venture to think the House would be interested in seeing how far it would justify the contention of my right hon. Friend. I will assume that the amount to be obtained from the Income Tax is the amount we propose to obtain this year —that is to say, about £12,000,000 sterling. It would be obtained, on the present system, by an Income Tax of 6*d.* in the pound. Under that computation, the amount to be paid by land would be £1,575,000; the amount to be paid on houses would be £2,775,000; the amount on occupation profits would be £385,000; the amount to be paid by traders would be £5,775,000; about £1,000,000 on dividends, and about £675,000 on salaries. These figures altogether make up a trifle over £12,000,000. Now, we will suppose the same amount to be levied under my right hon. Friend's system. It would require an Income Tax of 7*d.* in the pound, instead of 6*d.* Let us see what the result would be. The amount to be paid on land would be £1,691,000, as against £1,575,000, so that the landowners would have to pay £116,000 a-year more than they do at present. The tax on occupation profits would be £380,000—about the same as now. House property would yield £2,595,000, as against £2,775,000; trade, £5,364,000, as against £5,775,000; dividends and salaries, £1,924,000, as against £1,675,000, and the total produce would be just £12,000,000. Therefore, if my right hon. Friend's proposal were adopted, there would be a much heavier charge on land, and on all persons who receive dividends or fixed salaries; and, on the other hand, those who receive their incomes from trade would pay so much less. I ask those who will be disposed to vote with my right hon. Friend, are they prepared, in re-adjusting the Income Tax, to put a heavier burden on land or the recipients of salaries or dividends? Because the direct effect of the change would be to place a heavier charge on them, if we attempt to alter or amend the admitted anomalies of the Income Tax by picking out the particular anomalies to which my right hon. Friend has referred, and adjusting the Income Tax according to his plans. I say nothing of the other anomalies, which are far greater than those mentioned by my right hon. Friend. It is a consideration to which the attention of the House and of those who take an interest in these subjects ought to be very carefully drawn. I will repeat here what the Prime Minister said last Session. In one word, the Income Tax is full of anomalies. The Prime Minister has shown his sense of that, because it was he who went to the country proposing to repeal the tax altogether. The country did not respond to that appeal, and the Income Tax is still one of the principal sources of our Revenue. But I say, as he said, that you will introduce or leave many more and worse anomalies if you deal with the matter in the way proposed by my right hon. Friend. If the Income Tax is to be a part of the permanent law of the country, it must be taken with its anomalies, such as they are, and the particular plan which my right hon. Friend proposes would throw a larger burden on the land. On those grounds I think his proposal is not likely to be acceptable to the House. I had made up my mind to say as few words as possible in reply, and I hope the House will admit I have confined my remarks within as small a compass as possible. The figures which I have given I should like to see criticized, but they are such as, in my opinion, are fatal to the proposal of my right hon. Friend.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had forgotten to make the distinction that a very large proportion of both lands and houses belonged not to owners at all, but to capitalists. If that was taken into account, the right hon. Gentleman would find a very different result.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill *considered* in Committee, and *reported*, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon *Monday* next.

QUESTION.

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PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: What will be the Business on Monday?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): So far as I am aware, the only Business will be the last stage of this Bill.

House adjourned at a quarter before Four o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 24th November, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Scottish and Irish Peerages* (10); Income Tax* (11).

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Infants.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES—THE WAR OFFICE AND ADMIRALTY—MESSRS. LEEMING'S DESIGNS.—QUESTION.

In reply to The Earl of WEMYSS,

LORD SUDELEY said: I have to state that, since the close of the last Session, Messrs. Leeming, the architects of the new Public Offices, have been occupied in carrying out on their plans the alterations and amendments suggested by the First Commissioner of Works. These have now been completed and approved of. The models are now being proceeded with, and will be ready for inspection early next year. It is proposed to have two models, one on the same scale as the drawings, showing the whole plan; and the other on a much larger scale of a small section of the building, to show all the details of the architectural workings.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS suggested that the models should be on such a scale as would show how far the new buildings would harmonize with the general character of the surroundings and neighbouring buildings.

LORD SUDELEY: My noble Friend is aware that there already exists a large model on a small scale, showing the whole area covered by Public Buildings about Whitehall and Parliament Street, which was made in 1878. The First Commissioner is at present considering how that model may be altered to show the new Offices in their position relatively to the Horse Guards and other Offices.

HOUSE OF LORDS — PROCEDURE OF THE HOUSE.

POSTPONEMENT OF RESOLUTIONS.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL rose to move the following Resolutions:—

"1. That in the event of two or more Lords rising to address the House at the same time, the Lord Chancellor or Chairman of Committees, whichever then presides, shall call on one of them to speak, and the Lord so called upon shall speak, unless the House do order otherwise:

"2. That Private Bill Committees shall consist of three, and that all applications to Lords to serve upon them shall be in writing, and delivered at their residences:

"3. That the House be lighted always at the commencement of Public Business and continue lighted until the adjournment, unless the Lord Chancellor or Chairman of Committees gives a different instruction:

"4. That no Lord who has a Motion or Bill upon the Paper shall rise to bring it forward out of its precedence:

"5. That where the House permits reply to any Lord upon his Motion or his Bill, the debate shall on no pretence be continued after the reply is over:

"6. That a false roof be introduced, similar to that in the other House of Parliament, to correct the present difficulty as to hearing."

THE LORD CHANCELLOR asked the noble Lord to consider whether it would be convenient for their Lordships to discuss the Resolutions in the unavoidable absence of the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees (the Earl of Redesdale). The Resolutions contained a great deal of debatable matter, with which, in some respects, the noble Earl was particularly conversant, and in regard to which he knew he desired an opportunity of expressing his opinion.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL said, he was willing to accede to the suggestion of the noble and learned Lord. He had communicated with the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees, and had no reason to suppose that he would be absent. He would postpone the Resolutions to a time when the House might hear the Chairman of Committees with regard to them.

INFANTS BILL.

(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD FITZGERALD, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, reminded their Lordships that it had been brought before them on the 4th of August last, when he had fully explained its provisions, but, in deference to the views of the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns) and of his noble and learned Friend behind him (Lord Bramwell), it had not been proceeded with. He explained that the object of the Bill was to amend the law relating to the custody and guardianship of infants, and to amend it in points which were a discredit to the present state of their law. Its main object was to constitute the wife, if she survived her husband, guardian of her children. It too frequently happened that the husband was not a person who ought to be intrusted with the custody and guardianship of children. It also frequently happened to the wife that the knowledge of her husband being wholly unfitted for the guardianship of her children, had caused her last hours to be embittered by that reflection. This Bill, therefore, sought to provide a remedy, and to enable the wife, on an application, to obtain the sanction of the Court to the appointment of a guardian to her children to act after her decease in conjunction with the husband. The mother of any infant might apply to the Court for the appointment of some fit person or persons to act as guardian or guardians of such infant after her death jointly with the father of such infant; and the Court, if satisfied that, having regard to the character or habits of the father, or other grave cause, such appointment was necessary in the interests of the infant, might appoint a guardian If the guardian or guardians were unable to agree on a question affecting the welfare of the infant any of them might apply to the Court for its directions. The Court might, upon the application of the mother of any infant, make such order as it might think fit regarding the custody of the infant, having regard to the welfare of the infant and to the conduct of the parents and to the wishes as well of the mother as of the father, and might alter, vary, or discharge such order on the application of either parent, or, after the death of either parent, of any guardian. The Bill now before the House was in terms the same as it had come from the Commons. It had been carried last Session by very large majority in the House of Commons, being supported by many leading Members of the Conservative Party. Since last Session, his having charge of the Bill had brought him into communication with a large number of persons interested in the question. If the present Sittings ended by Prorogation, his introducing the Bill at present would be useless; but if they ended by an adjournment, its chance of becoming law would be increased by being proceeded with now. He had presented a large number of Petitions in favour of the Bill, and it was certainly considered to be a subject of the greatest importance. It had excited more passionate interest among ladies than even the great subject of including them in the Franchise. If their Lordships desired that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee, with the view of examining its details and making it as perfect a measure as possible, he had no objection.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

LORD BRAMWELL said, he desired that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. He did not object to the principle or to the intention of the Bill; but it required very careful consideration and very careful guarding against possible mischiefs which might result from its provisions. He had been written to by a distinguished legal Member of the House of Commons requesting that he should watch this measure and take care that no harm would come of it. He might mention another name connected with the House of Commons, a solicitor who probably knew more about this matter than a barrister did, because he came much more into contact with the persons interested. This Gentleman also very much objected to the Bill in its present shape without some guard or qualification being introduced. He, therefore, thought the Bill ought to be referred to a Select Committee.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, it would be in their Lordships' recollection that many of those noble Lords who addressed the House in the last Session agreed as to the importance of the Bill, and the impossibility of insisting that those were unreasonable, who thought it necessary to examine its provisions with care, in order to see that they were such as were right in themselves and productive of no mischiefs. He was not really aware of any mischief which would be likely to result from the passing of the Bill exactly as it at present stood; but he agreed with his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) in saying that this was not the time for going into details, and the course which had been mentioned was one which their Lordships ought to accede to.

Motion *agreed to*; Bill read 2ª, accordingly, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

And, on December 1, the Lords following were named of the Committee:

L. Chancellor.	L. Watson.
D. Bedford.	L. Brabourne.
E. Cairns.	L. Bramwell.
L. Sudeley.	L. FitzGerald.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

PUBLIC WORKS AND RECREATION GROUNDS (METROPOLIS)—THE MAIN DRAINAGE EMBANKMENT.

OBSERVATIONS.

EARL COWPER, in rising to call attention to the great benefit which would be conferred upon the inhabitants of the crowded districts of Stratford, Plaistow, and East Ham if the Main Drainage Embankment passing through those districts could be converted into a public boulevard, said, the structure, on the top of which he wished to place a public walk, was a very large work, three miles in length and about 30 feet in breadth. It was raised above the level of the street, and it would enable persons on the top of it to obtain a breath of really fresh air, and to retire for a time from the noise and bustle of the streets. It would make a most acceptable walk, and would somewhat resemble the walks seen in some of their old towns along the top of walls. He would be glad to know what the objections of the Metropolitan Board of Works were in regard to the planting of this Embankment with trees and shrubs. To do so would not interfere with the works. No reason for objecting to do so had been given; and they were, therefore, driven to conjecture. One reason, it was supposed, was that there would be a certain amount of smell; but if there should be any from the drains it could be obviated by having ventilating shafts constructed at a small expense. Another objection that had been taken to the proposal was upon the ground of safety; but he thought that would be really one of the strongest arguments in its favour. At the present time there was a fence throughout the whole length of the Embankment, on each side of it, eight feet high, which afforded facilities for people bent on mischief hiding behind it. Therefore, there would be less danger if the fence were down and the Embankment thrown open. West Ham was densely crowded with poor people, and it was extremely desirable to make this improvement to enable them to have recreation and enjoyment.

Earl GRANVILLE remarked that they had only heard one side of the question; but, personally, he was inclined to say that his noble Friend had made out a good *primâ facie* case in favour of his proposal. He had, however, communicated with his right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department; and he was informed by him that, as his noble Friend was probably aware, the matter primarily rested with the Metropolitan Board of Works. The Home Secretary had sent the Notice of his noble Friend to Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, the Chairman of the Board of Works, and had requested him to make his observations upon it. As soon as the reply was received the Home Secretary would consider it in connection with his powers in the matter; but, as his right hon. and learned Friend stated, it was very doubtful if he had any power at all. However, the Home Secretary would communicate with his noble Friend on receiving the reply.

The Earl of LONGFORD said, he thought that no opportunity whatever should be lost of calling the attention of the House to the possibility of providing fresh places of recreation for the people of the Metropolis, and this particular case was one which appeared to recommend itself to the consideration of the House. He recollected being present at the opening of the great Metropolitan sewer, and a great variety of benefits were then promised which had not all been entirely realized. It appeared to be a reproach on the Local Authorities in London that they should have to be awakened by means of private Associations to what appeared to be their paramount duty.

Lord MOUNT-TEMPLE said, that the subject deserved attention from its bearing on the question of Municipal Reform. The Municipal Authorities in London ought to take into consideration the best means of affording recreation and healthy exercise to the masses. It was the misfortune of London that its open spaces were being rapidly covered with buildings; and it became necessary that the Government of the Metropolis should look beyond the material advantages of drainage and convenient thoroughfares, and the employment of rates, and should look, as part of its duty, to the mode of meeting the comforts and enjoyments and happiness of the masses of toiling people who were placed beyond the reach of any open air exercise. It appeared that this Embankment might be made a promenade for the enjoyment of large numbers of people without any additional expense of any consequence; and he hoped that the Metropolitan Board of Works might rise to their great duties in that respect, and not suffer itself to fall behind the Corporation of London, who had preserved Epping Forest for the public, and had used their powers for the promotion of the comfort and enjoyment of the population under their control.

Lord WAVENEY remarked on the improvement of ventilation in the low-lying North Woolwich district from the rush of air caused by the passage of the railway trains.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Earl GRANVILLE said, he would ask the House to suspend its Sitting during pleasure. He proposed that their Lordships should meet to-morrow to forward a Money Bill and two other Bills which were not opposed, and that they should not meet for political purposes during the remainder of the week.

SCOTTISH AND IRISH PEERAGES BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the laws relating to the Representation in the House of Lords by election of the Scottish and Irish Peerages—Was *presented* by The Lord Waveney; read 1ª. (No. 10.)

INCOME TAX BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be *printed;* and to be read 2ª *To-morrow*, and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with (*The Earl Granville*). (No. 11.)

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 24th November, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading* —Consolidated Fund (No. 1). *
Third Reading—Income Tax [38], and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN WHELAN, R.M.

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If Captain Whelan has resigned his position of Resident Magistrate?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that the state of Captain Whelan's health has been for some time such as to disable him from the full performance of his duties. He has been granted leave in order that it may be ascertained whether this incapacity is likely to be permanent.

MR. MACARTNEY: Can the right hon. Gentleman state whether Memorials have been sent forward from Lisburn, Dungannon, and other places, signed by clergymen, including Roman Catholic clergymen in Dungannon, praying that Captain Whelan might be retained?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes. I am aware that Memorials to that effect have been received and are under consideration; but I have already announced that he is to be removed from Portadown, the state of his health not really enabling him to discharge the duties of his position there, and what I have stated has reference to the question of his being able to discharge his duties as a Resident Magistrate anywhere.

MR. MACARTNEY: But not in consequence of misconduct?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Not directly. There was an occasion recently at Portadown when, probably owing to Captain Whelan's weakness of health, certain occurrences took place which would possibly not have otherwise taken place.

MR. SEXTON: Have the Memorials for his retention come from the Orange Lodges that created the riot?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no knowledge of Orange Lodges in the matter.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND) — ALLEGED FIRING AT THE PERSON BY A GAMEKEEPER.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on 9th August last, Owen M'Govern, caretaker on Commis Mountain, near Swanlinbar, fired a revolver at a man named Maguire; and, whether M'Govern had any licence to carry arms; and, if not, will he order a prosecution?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed that Owen M'Govern, a gamekeeper, chased a man named Maguire, whom he saw poaching on his employer's property. After he had given up the pursuit, and when Maguire was out of sight, M'Govern fired one or two shots in the air to let him, and some other men who were about, know that he was armed. There is no foundation for the statement that he fired at Maguire, nor did Maguire ever make any complaint of the kind. M'Govern had a licence under the Peace Preservation Act; but his Inland Revenue licence had expired a few days previously to this occurrence. The matter is before the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in connection with his application for a renewal of his licence. It is for them to decide whether there is ground for a prosecution.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND) — THE RIOTS AT PORTADOWN.

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has received a Memorial from the magistrates of Portadown, complaining of the conduct of District Inspector Smith; if it is the fact that the magistrates met on 1st November to consult as to the preservation of the peace on 5th November, and unanimously agreed that the public houses should be closed at four o'clock upon that day; if it is the case that District Inspector Smith was present, and was directed by the magistrates to have the necessary notices prepared, and stated to the magistrates that he would carry out their instructions; if it is the case that District Inspector Smith did not carry out the order of the magistrates; if it is a fact that District Inspector Smith attended a special meeting of magistrates on Saturday 8th November, to arrange for the preservation of the peace on Sunday the 9th; if, on Sunday the 9th, District Inspector Smith, without any authority from the magistrates, despatched cars to Armagh, Lurgan, and other places for extra police, and placed them across one of the leading streets, and if, when the police were ordered by a magistrate to withdraw, any disturbance followed; and, if, taking into consideration the friction which exists between the magistrates and the District Inspector, the Lord Lieutenant will order the removal of Mr. Smith to another district?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Memorial referred to has been received, and is before the Government. The Question of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) compels me to anticipate the reply to that Memorial. It is true that the local magistrates at Portadown decided to close the public-houses at 4 o'clock on the 5th of November, a day when, according to annual custom, Orange drumming parties march into the town. Had the notices been issued, it was not the duty of the District Inspector to prepare them, but only to have them delivered. This arrangement was not carried out, because the Resident Magistrate, who was temporarily in charge of the district, decided, and, as I am advised, rightly, that he could not issue the orders except on sworn information that a breach of the peace was apprehended. The police were not in a condition to tender such informations, as they did not apprehend disturbance, nor did any occur. The drumming parties did not march through the town in anything like the usual numbers, directions forbidding them having, I understand, been issued by their Lodges. These directions were given after the magistrates had held their meeting, at which they decided to close the public-houses; and probably if they had been given earlier the fact would have modified the opinion of the magistrates as to the necessity for closing the public-houses. It is to be regretted that these circumstances were not communicated to the magistrates, which course would probably have prevented any misunderstanding in the matter. With regard to the circumstances which occurred on Sunday, the 9th of November, it is true that the magistrates had held a meeting on the previous day to consider what steps were necessary to preserve the peace; but on the Sunday District Inspector Smith became aware that the Salvation Army intended to march into a Roman Catholic quarter of the town. The magistrates had been led to believe that they would not do so, and had made their arrangements accordingly. In the emergency caused by this change of plan on the part of the Salvation Army, the District Inspector, on his own responsibility, and not having time to consult the magistrates first, collected a sufficient force of police to prevent the carrying out of the plan, which would certainly have seriously endangered the peace. It is, no doubt, to be regretted that on this occasion also the change of circumstances was not at once communicated to all the magistrates; but in the emergency of the moment this may have been difficult, if not impossible. The District Inspector did communicate with, at least, two magistrates, who proceeded to the spot and took charge of the police. If there has been any friction between the magistrates and the District Inspector, it does not, at all events, appear, from the evidence now before the Government, that it has existed to such an extent as would necessitate or justify his removal.

NAVY—LIFE INSURANCE.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the attention of the Board has been directed to an article in *The Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette* of the 15th of November, putting forward a plan of Life Insurance for Petty Officers and Seamen of the Royal Navy; and, whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to take into consideration such proposals, as making provision for the wives and orphans of those serving in the Navy?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: It is a question in which the Board have taken a great interest, and which has been specially brought to the notice of the First Lord by the Duke of Edinburgh; but there are some considerable difficulties connected with it, and I am not in a position to make any statement upon the subject.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Are the Admiralty prepared to proceed with the consideration of the subject?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Certainly.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS) — CASES LISTED AT LONGFORD.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether only forty-four Land cases are listed for hearing by the Sub-Commission at Longford on the 1st of December; whether considerably over one hundred cases were last March, at the landlords' instance, transferred from the County Court to the Sub-Commission; if so, why these transferred cases have not been listed for the 1st of December, when they could be conveniently heard; and, when these cases will be heard?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts are as stated in this Question. The Sub-Commission could not, within the period it can sit at Longford, hear more cases than the number listed. With regard to the transfer of cases from the County Court, the terms under which that arrangement was made were that the judicial rents, when fixed by the Land Commission, shall commence and run as if they had been fixed at the sitting of the Civil Bill Court, at which the applications would, but for the transfer, have been entered for hearing. It cannot be precisely stated when these cases will be heard; but, in the foregoing circumstances, suitors will not suffer by the delay.

SCOTLAND — DESTITUTION IN THE HIGHLANDS—THE CROFTERS' COMMISSION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Lord Advocate, If he is aware that dissatisfaction exists in reference to the recent application of funds collected from the public to relieve the destitution in the Highlands; and, whether the Government have made inquiry as to complaints in Lewis, Skye, and other places, alleging irregularities in dealing with the funds in question, and declaring that certain factors, who acted as distributors of meal, seed, oats, and potatoes, are now demanding payment from tenants who accepted the contributions on the understanding that they were gifts; and, if so, whether, in view of the official assurance conveyed to the Royal Commission, the Government will adopt any measure to protect the small tenants in the Highlands and Islands?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): No complaints have reached me on the subject of this Question, and the terms are so general that I have not been able to make any inquiry. The Government have no special means of information as to funds which have been collected by private charity and are not under their control. But if the hon. Member will give me a more definite indication as to any particular instance of misappropriation of a charitable fund, I shall cause inquiry to be made.

MR. SEXTON asked the Lord Advocate, If he is aware that certain small tenants of the Duke of Sutherland are now being threatened with summary actions for payment of the value of seed corn and potatoes distributed to them by their landlord during the recent period of distress; whether his attention has been drawn to the evidence before the Royal Commission on the condition of the Crofters of Mr. Crawford, Factor to the Duke of Sutherland, that—

> "Instead of making a reduction to the small tenants, the Duke has expended £515 this year, during the destitution, in providing seed corn and potatoes for them;"

and, whether, if this assurance was given to the Royal Commission by the Duke's official representative, the Government can take any steps for protection of the small tenants, now threatened with prosecution for repayment of the value of the gifts?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I have caused inquiry to be made at the Sheriff Clerk's office, the only public place where it could be made, and have ascertained that no summonses have been taken out against the Duke of Sutherland's tenants for claims of the kind indicated in the Question. Beyond that I have no means of inquiring into the management of a private estate.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to the evidence of Mr. John Crawford, factor, given at Bonar Bridge before the Royal Commission, in which that gentleman, in reply to question 39,595, said—

> "There has been a considerable reduction made to large tenants, and, instead of making a reduction to the small tenants, the Duke has expended £515 this year in providing seed corn and potatoes for them. He has also given me £500 to lay out in works of trenching and improving their lots;"

if he is aware that Mr. Crawford is now threatening summary proceedings before the sheriff for the recovery of the cost of the seed corn and potatoes said to have been given instead of a reduction of rent; and, if the crofters have any legal remedy against this claim? The hon. and learned Gentleman says that no summonses have been taken out. Is he aware whether any factor or other person has written making this demand?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I am not. But I wish to point out that in neither of the Questions is there the slightest indication given as to where this information can be obtained. It is not even said what county.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I will give it to the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Mr. SEXTON: So will I.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—FAIR RENTS—AGREEMENTS OUT OF COURT — CASE OF JAMES LOUGHLIN AND OTHERS, BALLINTOGHER, CO. SLIGO.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If he is aware that James Loughlin and other tenants in the townland of Cortron, Ballintogher, county Sligo, who entered into agreements out of Court with their landlord, fixing a fair rent, and who, at the time of entering into such agreements, were promised by the agent of the property, in the presence of witnesses, that a right of way from their holdings to the high road would be provided for them, are still, to their great injury and loss, left unprovided with such right of way; and, whether the Land Commission Court will cause to be fulfilled the condition upon which the agreements, confirmed by the Court, were made between the landlords and the tenants, or in what other manner can the tenants obtain redress?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): I am informed that nothing appears in the agreements of James Loughlin and the other tenants referred to in the Question, as filed in the Land Court, to show that

a condition as to the giving of a right of way was made. It is obvious, therefore, that the Land Court has no jurisdiction.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882 — EXTRA POLICE TAX AT CURRANS, CO. KERRY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that a tax for the maintenance of extra police is now being levied upon the occupiers in the parish of Currans, Farranfore, county Kerry, which is the parish in which Constables Kennedy and Donovan were quartered as extra police until within the past few days; whether the said tax is being levied, although no grave offence has been committed in the parish for a considerable time, except the offence of which the Inspector General has convicted Constables Kennedy and Donovan; and, whether the Lord Lieutenant, under the circumstances, will remit the tax?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The men referred to formed a part of the police force at Farranfore. That is a permanent station, and is not within the Currans proclaimed district at all, but in another parish which pays no part of the tax.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CONVICTION OF PATRICK GRENNAN FOR NIGHT POACHING.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Grennan, who was tried at the Petty Sessions Court, Newtownforbes, Longford, on the 4th of this month, on a charge of having been out on the night of the 29th of September for the purpose of taking and destroying game; whether the charge against Grennan was that he was seen to lift a trap apparently set for pheasants on the estate of Lord Granard; whether he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in Mullingar Gaol, and afterwards to find sureties for twelve months, or to be further committed for six months; and, whether, considering that he is a very young man, and the chief support of a large family, the Government will take steps for a mitigation of the sentence?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts as to the conviction are as stated. The young man has not, however, been committed to prison, as he absconded. So long as he is a fugitive from justice, the case cannot be considered with a view to mitigation should His Excellency see ground for it; but when the accused surrenders to the law, any memorial which may be presented on his behalf will receive the careful attention of the Lord Lieutenant.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: Was he tried in his absence?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; he was sentenced in his absence.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—RIOT AT CLOGHER—ASSAULT ON JOHN MACKEY.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that an old labouring man named John Mackey, while returning from his work, was attacked by a party of Orangemen at Killyfaddy, near Clogher, on the night of the 13th of November; whether the assailants lit matches to scan Mr. Mackey's face, and, having satisfied themselves of his personality, beat him so cruelly that he had to be carried to his home in Clogher; whether his life is in danger from the attack of which he is the victim; whether any arrests have been made in connection with this outrage; and, whether, as Clogher is a proclaimed district, the provisions of the Crimes Act will be put in force to discover the authors of this outrage, and the direction of the investigations committed to a magistrate who is not a member of the Orange Society?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have received a Report on this matter, but as I find that summonses have been issued against some persons, and that the hearing of the cases is pending, I cannot at present make any observations on the subject, or enter at all into the merits of the case. I may say, however, that it is not the case that Mackey's life is or has been endangered by the occurrence.

EGYPT—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, At what date Mr. Clifford Lloyd obtained leave of absence from his post at Cairo; for what length of time leave was granted to this functionary; whether his leave was with pay or without; and, what was the amount of salary drawn from the Egyptian Treasury during the continuance of his absence from duty?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, Mr. Lloyd took three months' leave, to which he was entitled, on the 1st of June, with the pay of his appointment. His salary was at the rate of £2,500 a-year. At the termination of his leave he resigned. He drew one quarter's salary during the continuance of his absence from duty.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, At what time Mr. Clifford Lloyd was granted leave of absence; for what period leave was granted, and whether it was with pay or without; and when Mr. Clifford Lloyd became re-chargeable on the Irish Estimates?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, he assumed that the hon. Member's Question was intended to refer to the leave of absence granted to Mr. Lloyd to enable him to accept service in the Egyptian Government. It had already been stated in the House that that leave was without pay. After his return from Egypt his leave without pay was extended to the 1st of September of the present year, when Mr. Lloyd again became chargeable on the Irish Estimates.

MR. O'KELLY said, that what he wanted to ascertain was, for how long a period Mr. Lloyd got leave of absence when he left this country to take service in Egypt?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN replied, that Mr. Lloyd received leave of absence without pay up to a certain date, and then it was renewed to cover the total time of his absence in Egypt. That leave of absence without pay ended on the 1st of September, when he became re-chargeable on the Irish Estimates, and then leave of absence with pay as Resident Magistrate was given him for three months.

MR. O'KELLY said, he would again call attention to the matter as to how long this gentleman received leave of absence for when he left this country, and when it was renewed, and if it was renewed for an indefinite period?

Mr. O'BRIEN asked if anything had been determined as to his future employment?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: No, Sir.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—RIOT AT CLOGHER, CO. TYRONE.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that, on the 12th of November, the town of Clogher, county Tyrone, was left without police protection; whether the county inspector is not aware that the presence of a police force is especially necessary on that day, owing to the occurrence of the Hiring Fair in the neighbouring village of Augher; whether, owing to the complete absence of the police, a party of Orangemen took possession of the village, and murderously assaulted some of the Catholic inhabitants; whether a Mr. Hynes was so severely beaten that his life was for a time in danger; whether Mr. Hynes complained to the Constabulary, and asked them to institute proceedings against his assailants, who are well known members of the Orange Society; whether the Orange magistrates of the district refuse to instruct the Constabulary to prosecute their brother Orangemen; and, whether the Government will send down a resident magistrate to inquire into the state of the Clogher district?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN replied, that he had referred to the proper authorities, and had not yet received a reply to enable him to answer the Question.

DEFENCES OF THE MERCANTILE PORTS.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any, and, if any, what steps have been taken to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee on the Defences of the Mercantile Ports?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: This subject will be included in the Statement as to Naval Affairs which has been promised for Monday next; and I therefore ask the right hon. Gentleman to defer the Question until then.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CONSTABLES M'CARRY AND BRADY—WHITEGATE POLICE STATION, CO. CORK.

Mr. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Constables M'Carry and Brady, of the Whitegate Police Station, county Cork, have often, when returning from shooting excursions, left a fowling piece at the house of a Mrs. Shaw; whether a man named Williams got a licence under the Arms Act to have and carry arms for his own protection; whether the said constables have frequently used Williams's gun for sporting purposes; whether they have more than once taken it to the forge of a blacksmith named Walsh; whether, if the above allegations be true, he will order Williams's licence to be cancelled; and, can he explain on what information he gave the answer to a Question on the same subject on 17th instant?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: My former reply was based on a Report from the local Constabulary officer, who had carefully investigated the matter, and has again done so now, without arriving at any different conclusion from those already stated. According to my information, the constables did not act in the manner mentioned in this Question, and there is no sufficient ground for revoking Williams's licence.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—SHERCOCK, CO. CAVAN.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, On what grounds telegraphic communication has not been extended to Shercock, county Cavan, where a market is held weekly and a large fair once every month, and which is also situated in the midst of a populous district and is eight miles from the nearest telegraph station; and, whether, in view of the reduced tariff for telegrams coming into operation, any steps will be taken to extend to Shercock the benefits which smaller places derive from having telegraphic communication extended to them?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that application for a telegraph office at Shercock was made in the year 1881, and was refused, on the ground that the revenue which it was estimated would be derived from such an office would fall very far short of the working expenses. As three years have since elapsed, it is possible that the circumstances may have altered; and I will, therefore, have renewed inquiry made, and communicate the result to the hon. Member.

CIVIL SERVICE (INDIA)—CASE OF LALA HAKIM CHAUD.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the statement made in *The Statesman* of Calcutta, of 9th October, that, whereas a Native magistrate, one Lala Hakim Chaud, has been forced by Government to resign the Service for submitting an incorrect travelling statement, the conduct of Dr. Macleane, Madras Covenanted Civil Service, in committing the same offence when officiating chief magistrate of Salem, has passed unnoticed for two years; and, whether he can assure the House that inquiry will be made into the matter?

MR. J. K. CROSS: From the "Proceedings" of the Punjaub Government for June last, it appears that Lala Hakim Chaud had been suspended for certain misconduct of which he had been accused, and that an inquiry into the case had been ordered. The further "Proceedings," which will contain the results of the inquiry, have not yet been received at the India Office. A Native Sarishtadar, who was removed from his appointment for neglect of duty on the occasion of the Salem riots, has brought certain charges against Dr. Macleane, one of which was of the nature alluded to by the hon. Member for Cavan. The Madras Government, having called upon Dr. Macleane for a Report upon the matter, have informed the Secretary of State that they consider his explanation satisfactory. In these circumstances, it does not appear necessary to cause any further inquiry to be made.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—MOVILLE, CO. DONEGAL—DANIEL MORRISON.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, If Daniel Morrison, of Moville, now daily driving the mail car from that town to Culdaff, is the same person who in 1882 committed a robbery on one Neal Doherty, for which he was convicted before the magistrates at Moville Petty Sessions, committed to gaol for said offence, and also ordered to pay ten shillings compensation to Doherty for stealing his fish; and, if so, will he be continued in daily employment in the service of the Postmaster General, conveying important letters, money orders, and valuable parcels?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Morrison is not a servant of the Post Office, but is employed by a contractor for a mail cart, who is also his brother-in-law. I am informed that, three years ago, he was convicted of petty larceny when under the influence of drink; but, as he has otherwise borne a good character, I see no reason to call upon the contractor to discharge him.

IRELAND — COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION—DISMISSAL OF MR. J. G. FITZGERALD, DISTRICT INSPECTOR.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Commissioners of National Education, some twenty years ago, dismissed Mr. J. G. Fitzgerald, when he was the Inspector of the Waterford District of Convent and Model and Parochial National Schools, for a delinquency in connection with his travelling charges, and what was the exact date of his dismissal; and, whether it is not now under the consideration of the Commissioners of National Education and the Treasury to give him a pension?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Fitzgerald was dismissed between five and six years ago, on the ground stated in this Question. The date of the Board's Order was the 29th of January, 1879. It is not under consideration to give Mr. Fitzgerald a pension.

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS' ACT—COOTEHILL POOR LAW BOARD—REGISTRATION OF ELECTORS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, on Friday 7th November, at Cootehill Poor Law Board, without notice, a resolution was passed by a majority in a Board of eight members present, and after the ordinary business was over, awarding the clerk £27 for looking after the registry of Parliamentary electors; whether a similar motion had been refused at a former meeting of the Board; if so, whether the Local Government Board will sanction so large a payment for the amount of services; and, whether such a motion could be legally carried without notice, and in view of the fact that it had been refused at a former meeting of the Board?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The payment for the duty referred to is made under the authority of Section 73 of the Parliamentary Voters' Act. In the Cootehill Union the Clerk has heretofore been paid annually the sum of £25. This year he applied for an additional sum of £2, in consideration of the establishment of a new Revision Court in the Union. The matter was twice before the Guardians. On the first occasion the voting was equal (only four Guardians being present), and therefore no order was made. On the second, the sum was voted by a majority of five to two. Notice was not necessary under the Local Government Board's Regulations, or under any legal enactment. The Local Government Board do not consider the additional £2 unreasonable, in consideration of the additional duty, and accordingly they have sanctioned it.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—COLLECTION OF POOR RATES.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the numerous complaints which have been made by several Boards of Guardians in Ireland of the excessive poundage paid for the collection of Poor Rates, the Local Government Board will make the appointment of Poor Rate Collector in Ireland an annual instead of a life appointment, and thereby enable Boards of Guardians to throw open that office to competition?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is competent for Boards of Guardians from time to time, subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, to vary the poundage on the collection paid to collectors as remuneration; and the Board do not think it necessary or advisable to amend the General Order under which these appointments are held by permanent officers.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—ATHLONE BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Athlone Board of Guardians passed a resolution approving of the Labourers' Act, and determining to act on it; whether, more than a year ago, a representation of twelve or more ratepayers of the division of Carnagh was placed before the Athlone Board of Guardians, showing that a cottage ought to be built in the division of Carnagh (or in any area approved of by the Guardians) for a labourer named Martin Donnelly; whether the Guardians approved of that representation of the ratepayers, and appointed a Committee to choose a proper site for said cottage; whether such site was chosen, or anything else has been done, in reference to said proposed cottage; and, if nothing has been done, whether the Local Government Board have taken, or intend to take, any steps, under Sections 10 and 11 of "The Labourers' (Ireland) Act, 1883," to have such cottage erected?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is true that an application was made for the erection of a cottage in the Division of Carnagh for a man named Martin Donnelly. The application was referred to a Committee of the Guardians; but the matter fell through, because it was ascertained that Donnelly had been offered a good house, with a kitchen-garden and a rood of land, provided he would take service as a workman with the person who had offered the house and land. It was considered that in these circumstances it would be an imposition on the cesspayers to have a cottage erected for this man under the Labourers' Act. The case is not one in which the Local Government Board are called upon to take action under the 11th section.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—POLICE PROTECTION AT KILMOON, COUNTY CLARE.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, For what reason a police hut and five policemen are continued at Kilmoon, in the county of Clare; if they had been stationed there originally for the protection of a man named Gardner, who took a farm from which a person had been evicted; and, if Gardner has recently surrendered back the farm, and thereby regained his popularity; and, if so, whether the Government will order the removal of the hut and extra police?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Gardiner has surrendered the farm, but another person has taken it; and the protecting police force cannot, therefore, be removed.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE XXIII.—MACEDONIA.

MR. BRYCE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to accounts recently received from Macedonia, describing the state of anarchy which prevails there, and the frequent occurrence of murders and other outrages; whether, having regard to the state of Macedonia, and to the fact that there is only one British Consul now in that country, viz., the Consul at Salonica, Her Majesty's Government will again consider the propriety of placing Vice Consuls at other points of the country, such as Uskiub or Prisrend; and, whether Papers containing the representations which Her Majesty's Government are understood to have recently addressed to the Porte, pressing upon it the necessity of proceeding to carry out the Organic Law for the European Provinces of Turkey, framed in 1880, will be presented to Parliament; and, if so, when?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Reports from Her Majesty's Consul General at Salonica and the Consular Agents in Macedonia do not confirm those which have appeared in the newspapers, and which have been referred to him. But it appears that the state of things on the actual borders of Macedonia, Eastern Roumelia, and Bulgaria, and in Upper Albania and the adjoining district of Kossovo, is not satisfactory, the force at the disposal of the Government being insufficient to maintain order. There are Vice Consuls or Consular Agents at Kavala, Drama, Janina, Serres, and Previsa; but some of these places are outside the limits of Macedonia. The question whether any advantage is to be gained by appointing Vice Consuls at Uskiub and Prisrend will require consideration. Despatches showing the condition of affairs in Macedonia will be laid before Parliament; but Her Majesty's Government have not addressed any recent representation to the Porte in regard to the execution of the Organic Law of August, 1880, beyond those under which Lord Dufferin had discretion to make efforts in the manner and at the time which might be most judicious. I may, perhaps, be allowed to point out in connection with this subject that the Treaty of Berlin restored the direct government of the Porte in Macedonia, and that, consequently, the attempt to carry out the reforms stipulated for by Article XXIII. have had to be made under conditions which did not exist in regard to the autonomous Province of Eastern Roumelia.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, BALMORAL (BELFAST).

MR. DEASY asked the Postmaster General, Upon what requisition, if any, or upon whose representation, was a Telegraph Office opened at Balmoral, near Belfast, and if it is a fact that such an office was not thought necessary for the requirements of the district until a few months after Mr. James M'Mullen, the superintendent of the Telegraph Department of the Belfast Post Office, went to reside in Janeville, which is in the immediate vicinity of the Balmoral Post Office; is not the creating of a Telegraph Office at Balmoral, in a rural district, and within easy distance of one of the Telegraph Receiving Offices of Belfast, virtually extending to this Mr. James M'Mullen the rights and privileges of a private wire, by placing within his reach means of easily communicating with the department of the Belfast Office, over which he is superintendent; and, if it is usual in the Post Office Service to subserve that service to the convenience of a servant of the public?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the Balmoral Office was opened for the transaction of telegraph business on the recommendation of the Postmaster of Belfast, who informs me that, at the time when he made the proposal, the Superintendent of the Belfast Telegraph Office did not reside at Janeville, nor was he aware that the Superintendent proposed to reside there.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—POLICE PROTECTION AT BALLYHAUNIS, CO. MAYO.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the four policemen acting as protection escort to John Cassidy, of Crossara, Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, are charged as extra police to the district; and, whether the district is not peaceable and orderly?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The protection party are not charged as extra police to the district. They are a part of the county force. The district is at present peaceable; but the local police authorities do not think it would be prudent at present to withdraw protection from Cassidy.

CIVIL SERVICE (INDIA)—THE UNCOVENANTED INDIAN SERVANTS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he will obviate misapprehension by ceasing to class as "uncovenanted" Indian servants officers sent out from this country, under covenants, contracts, or commissions from Her Majesty, to serve in the Public Works, Education Trust, or other Departments, or as Judges of the High Courts, and by confining the term "uncovenanted" to officers taken into employment by the Governments in India without such covenants or contracts; whether he will give a Return of Civil appointments of all kinds of 400 rupees per mensem, and upwards, held by uncovenanted servants in the above sense, and distinguishing Europeans from Natives, appointments held by Europeans to which, under existing Orders, Europeans may always be appointed in India, appointments ordinarily reserved for Natives, but now held by Europeans, on the ground of prior appointment to the service; also a Statement showing how far appointments to special Departments, to which Europeans are eligible, are made by pure patronage, or how far, and by what rules, patronage is limited and restricted; and, how many Natives have been appointed to "offices, places, and employments" ordinarily reserved for the Covenanted Civil Service, on the ground of "proved merit and ability," as provided by 33 Vic. c. 3, s. 6; how many of these are Natives who have been promoted on account of merit and ability proved in the public service; how many are young gentlemen appointed to the Civil Service generally without previous service; and, how the merit and ability of the latter class has been proved?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I conclude that the first paragraph of my hon. Friend's Question is based on an answer I recently gave to a Question asked by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin, in answering which I adopted his technical classification. As a matter of fact it has been decided that the term "uncovenanted" shall no longer be officially applied to the engineering staff of the Public Works Department. Before pledging myself that this term will be discontinued in the case of other Departments, or promising to furnish the Return asked for by my hon. Friend, it will be necessary to communicate with the Government of India, by whom alone such a Return could be prepared.

THE CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE)—SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether Sir William Gurdon has as yet elected whether he will continue his Parliamentary candidature, or resign his appointment in the Civil Service?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): In answer to the hon. Member's Question, I am sorry to have to state that Sir William Gurdon has elected not to retire from his candidature, and that he has been informed that this decision is incompatible with his retaining his appointment in the Treasury later than the end of January. This date was named because there would be considerable public inconvenience in giving effect to changes among the principal officers of the Treasury during the period in which the Estimates are in course of preparation. I ought to add that Sir William Gurdon has been most scrupulous in the performance of his duties at all times, and not less so during the last few months, in proof of which I may mention that during the Recess he has, in addition to his ordinary work, represented the Treasury on two Committees of Inquiry.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Inasmuch as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has given an electioneering testimonial in favour of his clerk, I should like to know why, in contravention of the orders recently given in a Treasury Minute, Sir William Brampton Gurdon is allowed to make a convenience of the Civil Service while prosecuting his candidature?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I did not give any electioneering testimonial in favour of my clerk. What I did was to state that Sir William Gurdon was one of the most distinguished members of the Civil Service, and performed his duties well. I am sorry that the hon. Member opposite should have made that remark.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I entirely adhere to it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I have already given reasons why, in the interests of the Public Service, it would be exceedingly inconvenient for Sir William Gurdon to retire during the preparation of the Estimates. As soon as the preparation of the Estimates is completed he will retire.

MR. GORST asked the right hon. Gentleman whether any undertaking had been required from Sir William Brampton Gurdon not to prosecute his candidature during the period he would remain in office?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I did not think it necessary to ask Sir William Gurdon such a question. He is a gentleman of judgment and discretion. [*Laughter from* Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.] The noble Lord thinks that nobody is a man of judgment and discretion except himself. I have no doubt that Sir William Gurdon will do what is right in the circumstances.

NAVY — DOCKYARDS — THE HAND-DRILLERS AT PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Board has as yet received the Petition from the hand-drillers in Portsmouth Dockyard?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: No Memorial on the subject has been received by the Department.

THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENTS TO ASSISTANT SURVEYORSHIPS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If there have lately been two vacancies for Assistant Surveyor of Buildings in the Office of Public Works, Ireland; if one of these appointments has been placed open to competition, and an examination held for it, while the other was filled by the Board of Works without any examination; if this appointment is included in Schedule A, under Order in Council, 4th June 1870, which requires that all appointments in that Schedule must be filled by competition; and, if two vacancies in 1881, and one in February 1884, have been filled by open competition?

MR. COURTNEY: This is a newly-created grade, replacing the former clerks of works. Two appointments were required in it, and one was filled by the promotion of an established draftsman of 20 years' good service in the Office. This course was quite in accordance with regulations.

NAVY—FIRST-CLASS TORPEDO BOATS.

SIR JOHN HAY (for Lord HENRY LENNOX) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, How many First Class Torpedo Boats we have built and ready for the defence of the coasts of the United Kingdom; and, what is the date when those boats were built?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I must ask the noble Lord to allow me to defer the answer to his Question until the general Statement is made on behalf of the Government on Monday next.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — EX-CONSTABLE M'SHERRY.

VISCOUNT CRICHTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If Mr. Ffrench, R.M. Omagh, county Tyrone, has lately had in his official employment an ex-constable of the Royal Irish Constabulary named McSherry; whether McSherry, during the time of his employment, was an active member and an agent of the National League; and, whether he is still in Mr. Ffrench's office?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The only ground for the suggestions in this Question, so far as I have been able to ascertain, is that when the Peace Preservation Act was put into operation in the county of Tyrone, M'Sherry, who was, or had been, clerk in the District Inspector's office, gave some assistance to the Resident Magistrate in copying out gun licences. This constable received a first-class certificate of character when leaving the Constabulary Force; and it is not known that he was ever, during his employment, a member or an agent of the Land League.

ARMY—A CATHOLIC CHAPEL AT CHELSEA HOSPITAL.

COLONEL COLTHURST asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can now state what decision has been arrived at with respect to providing a chapel for the use of the Catholic inmates of Chelsea Hospital, in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee of 1882?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: This question will be considered with reference to the Army Estimates for 1885-6.

NAVY—THE DOCKYARDS—LEADING MEN OF THE ENGINEERING BRANCH—PAY AND POSITION.

MR. GORST asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is intended to deal with the pay and position of the leading men of the engineer branch in the Dockyards in a similar manner to that recently adopted in the case of the leading men of shipwrights; and, if so, when the changes are likely to take place?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: It is not intended at present to make any organic changes in the engineer branch of the Dockyards. The advancement of the leading men to the rank of Inspector would involve a general revision of the pay in the engineer branch, and for this we are not at present prepared.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—POLICE PROTECTION AT SWANLINBAR, CO. CAVAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that Mr. Pearson, District Inspector Royal Irish Constabulary at Swanlinbar, county Cavan, has during several days and nights during the month of October told off a Constabulary patrol to watch the fair green of Swanlinbar; if he and a number of the men under his charge have attended to assist and protect Mr. R. H. Johnstone, J.P. Orange Grand Master of the county of Cavan, in interfering with the fair green referred to, and if the people of the locality assembled in large numbers in open day to assert their rights to the fair green named, when the Constabulary took the names of those present; and, if so, for what purpose, as these people were only asserting a long-established custom; what are the present residences of Messrs. George Nugent and Robert Francis O'Brien, whose names appear in *Thom's Directory*, in the list of magistrates for the county of Cavan, and if those gentlemen have at present any property qualification for the office of magistrate; and, would he state to the House the names of the five Roman Catholic gentlemen whose appointment to the Commission of the Peace for Cavan was recently announced by him?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that a stream runs between Mr. Johnstone's property and the fair green, and that Mr. Johnstone claims a right to erect an embankment for the purpose of preventing the stream from encroaching upon his land. On this question of title I cannot, of course, enter. About a month ago a large number of men, accompanied by a band, proceeded to destroy the partially-erected embankment, which Mr. Johnstone's men were at the time actually working at. The District Inspector, on hearing of this, immediately proceeded with the police to the place, but only to preserve the peace and prevent a collision between the opposing parties. The District Inspector subsequently directed the ordinary night patrol to visit the place; but no special patrol has done so. With regard to the two magistrates named in the latter part of the Question, I have no information as to their property qualification, nor do I know the address of Mr. Nugent. Mr. O'Brien, I understand, resides at Birkenhead. I am not at present able to answer the inquiry in the last paragraph of the Question.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS DISTRICTS, CO. CAVAN—MR. WILLIAM BRACKEN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If there is any local Catholic magistrate resident or attending Petty Sessions in the following Petty Sessions districts in the county of Cavan, viz. Ballinagh, Ballyconnell, Bawnboy, Blacklion, Beltrooket, Donon, Killashandra, and Swanlinbar, comprising the greater part of the baronies of Lower Loughtree, Tullyhomer, and Tullyhard; and, if not, how many Catholic local gentlemen have been nominated by Boards of Guardians as eligible for the Commission of the Peace in those districts, and if there are none of them entitled to hold the Commission of the Peace; and, if Mr. William Bracken, of Blacklion, has or is about to be appointed a J.P.; and, if so, is not Mr. Bracken an Orangeman, and brother to Mr. James Bracken, a J.P. for Cavan and Fermanagh, who resides only about half a mile from his brother William?

MR. BERESFORD: Before the Chief Secretary answers, I wish to ask the hon. Member for Cavan whether he has read over his Question; and whether he is aware that there is no such place as "Beltrooket" in the County Cavan, and that there are no such baronies as Tullyhomer and Tullyhard?

MR. CALLAN: Might I ask the hon. Gentleman whether there is not such a place as Belturbet?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no information as to the proportions in which the different religious denominations are represented on the different District Benches referred to; but the state of the Cavan magistracy in relation to religious inequality is engaging the Lord Chancellor's attention; and—as I have already stated—of the nine gentlemen his Lordship has appointed to the Commission of the Peace, five are Roman Catholics. There have been but six names laid before the Lord Chancellor by Boards of Guardians in such a way as to enable him to bring them under the notice of the Lord Lieutenant of the county, with whom he is at present in communication as to some of these very gentlemen. With regard to Mr. William Bracken—who, I believe, belongs to the Wesleyan Body—I do not know whether the statements as to his being an Orangeman and a brother of Mr. James Bracken are correct or not. But the Lord Chancellor regards him as a gentleman having very high qualifications, and certain to make an honest and impartial magistrate.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE 4TH ROYAL IRISH FUSILIERS (LATE CAVAN MILITIA)—VACANCIES FOR CAPTAINS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Why two vacancies for Captains in 4th Royal Irish Fusiliers (late Cavan Militia) have not yet been filled up, although the vacancies have existed for a year past, and although the two senior lieutenants have qualified for same; and, if they are considered to be not fit for promotion, why are they allowed to remain in the regiment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that the question of the vacancies for Captains in the 4th Royal Irish Fusiliers (late Cavan Militia) had been referred to the Military Authorities in Ireland, with whom such appointments rested, and he had not yet received their answer.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE MAILS TO KINSALE.

MR. DEASY asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Post Office authorities have received a Memorial from the Kinsale Town Commissioners, praying that such alterations would be made in the time of the arrival and departure of the mails to and from Kinsale as would enable the people of that town to answer the letters arriving by the morning and evening mails in time for the departure of the morning and evening mails respectively; and, whether he will comply with the prayer of said Memorial?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Memorial from the Kinsale Town Commissioners was received on the 5th instant, and is under inquiry; but I am unable at present to say whether it will be practicable to afford the improvement desired.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. BARRY, LATE INSPECTOR OF CONSTABULARY.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that Mr. Barry, late County Inspector of Constabulary in the county of Cork, has been appointed to the Commission of the Peace for that county; and, whether he has approved of Mr. Barry's appointment?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that it is the case that Mr.

Barry is a magistrate for the County of Cork. It is no part of my functions to approve selections for the Commission of the Peace; but I have no doubt the Lord Chancellor had excellent reasons for the appointment.

NAVY (CONTRACTS)—THE BACON CONTRACT.

Mr. DEASY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will state the contract price per cask of the bacon now being supplied to the Navy by a Danish firm?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: It is not usual to disclose the prices at which contracts are made.

Mr. DEASY asked, Whether the Secretary to the Admiralty could give him an assurance that the tender made by a Cork firm was not lower than that made by the Danish firm?

[No reply.]

Mr. DEASY gave Notice that he would call attention to the subject.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—LOCAL MAILS.

Mr. DEASY asked the Postmaster General, If, in view of the growing importance of the fishery at Baltimore, County Cork, the Post Office authorities in Ireland will establish a mail car service between that village and the town of Skibbereen during the fishing season?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The question of either establishing a mail car or mounting the rural postman between Baltimore and Skibbereen during the fishing season is under inquiry; and I hope that I may be able to meet the wishes of the hon. Member.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—DIFFERENTIAL DUTIES IN VENEZUELA.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has succeeded in inducing the Government of Venezuela to withdraw the thirty per cent. Differential Duty imposed by Venezuela on the trade of our West India Colonies, in derogation of Treaties?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The negotiations with General Guzman Blanco have commenced; but the commercial questions have not yet been discussed. They will, however, shortly be approached.

IRELAND—CONVENT NATIONAL SCHOOLS—TEACHERS' PAY.

Mr. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Education Commissioners have yet made arrangements for the grant of increased pay to the teachers in the Convent National Schools; and, if not, when such arrangement is likely to be made?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It has already been more than once stated, in reply to Questions on this subject, that in the event of the Treasury consenting to any arrangement involving increased expenditure it could not take effect during the current financial year. The matter is engaging the careful attention of the Government.

Mr. SEXTON: Will any provision be made in the Estimates for next year?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have already stated that the matter is engaging our attention; but nothing can be done this year.

IRELAND—THE PARLIAMENT HOUSES, DUBLIN—LEASE TO THE GOVERNOR AND COMPANY OF THE BANK OF IRELAND.

Mr. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the lease made between the Government and the Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland of the Houses lately occupied by the Lords and Commons of Ireland?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think the document referred to is in the custody of the Irish Executive; but I am making inquiry on the subject. The hon. Member having given only one day's Notice of his Question, I have not yet received a reply.

Mr. LEAMY: I gave Notice on Friday.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It was only received in the Irish Office on Saturday.

FRANCE AND MADAGASCAR—ABANDONMENT OF BRITISH CLAIMS.

Sir HARRY VERNEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government accept the statement of M. Ferry to Lord Lyons, Despatch 50, received

July 16th, 1884, as true, that there has been a retrocession on the part of England of the Island of Madagascar to France, and that England has abandoned all claims ("pretensions") to the island?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: If my hon. Friend will examine the despatch which he quotes he will see that the statement alluded to was not made by M. Ferry to Lord Lyons, but is the heading given to an annexe to the Report of the Madagascar Committee of the French Chamber. As regards the retrocession of Madagascar to France, the passage in question refers to what took place in 1816, when the British Government restored to France the establishments on the coast which had belonged to her before the war.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CHARLEVILLE PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. O'BRIEN asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether, at the last Charleville Petty Sessions, the magistrates imposed fines of a guinea each upon two policemen named Gallagher and Lee for a series of wanton assaults upon James Boland; whether, after this decision was come to, the magistrates, on a threat from the policemen's solicitor, reopened the case and dismissed the summons; whether he will call on the magistrates for a statement of their conduct on this occasion; and, whether Mr. Attorney General will give Boland facilities to proceed by indictment against the policemen?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): It is not correct that fines of a guinea each were imposed upon the two policemen. The magistrates intimated their intention to impose fines of 10*s*. each, when the solicitor for the defence stated he thought some part of the evidence for the defence had been misunderstood, and also asked if a fine were imposed that it should be increased to a guinea in order to give a right of appeal. The magistrates recalled two of the witnesses for the defence, and after re-examination unanimously dismissed the case. There does not appear any ground for impugning the conduct of the magistrates or giving special facilities to Boland. If any application is made to the Attorney General he will consider it.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MISCONDUCT OF EMERGENCY MEN, CO. TIPPERARY.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that three armed Emergency bailiffs, in the employment of the Land Corporation, broke into the licensed premises of Miss Cusack, at Drangan, county Tipperary, on the 2nd October last, and attempted to provoke a disturbance by drinking toasts justly offensive to Catholics, and, on their way home, repeated their offensive shouts, and discharged their revolvers along the road; whether conduct of this description is constantly indulged in by Emergency bailiffs, who are licensed to carry arms, and for whose protection extra police are quartered on the district; and, whether any steps have been taken to bring the offenders to justice, and deprive them of arms' licences?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed that the facts are not as stated in this Question. Three caretakers on evicted farms entered Miss Cusack's shop in the ordinary way, and it was afterwards alleged that when supplied with drink they drank a toast offensive to Roman Catholics. This they denied, stating, in fact, that they were refused drink. Two of them, however, were dismissed by their employers for having been absent from their posts. The third, a man of previously exemplary character, was cautioned by his employers to be very guarded in his future conduct. It is not the case that they fired off revolvers along the road, or that Emergency bailiffs constantly indulge in conduct such as is described in the Question. It does not appear that any offence was committed for which any of the men could be prosecuted.

MR. O'BRIEN: Have the two dismissed persons been deprived of their licences to carry firearms?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know how that stands; but I presume they have.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—CARMEEN DIVISION, COOTEHILL UNION.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that, previous to the late election of guardians for the Carmeen

Division of Cootehill Union, the name of David Blyzard, Esq. was erased on the Valuation Lists, and that the name of Vaughan Montgomery, Esq. was fraudulently written above same as a lessor of a Patrick M'Cabe, said Vaughan Montgomery having no interest therein; if the Local Government Board will inquire how and by whom such falsification of the Valuation Lists was effected; and, if means will be taken to prevent a repetition of any such offence?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): The alteration in the Valuation Lists was made by the Valuation Department on the report of the Revising Valuer on statements made to him. The alteration was quite *bonâ fide* so far as the Revising Valuer was concerned. The Board of Guardians have power to make a correction when an erroneous or false statement is made. The Commissioner of Valuation, if applied to, would have investigated the matter and corrected any error. I am informed that the error originated in a mistake caused by reason of Patrick M'Cabe having a small holding under Mr. Montgomery, and also one under Mr. Blyzard, and that both were included in the holding valued at £19 10*s*., instead of being shown separately.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it has come under his notice that at the late election of Poor Law Guardian for the Cormeen Division of Cootehill Union, the clerk and returning officer illegally refused a voting paper to Catherine Fitzpatrick, and permitted Vaughan Montgomery, esquire, J.P. to be illegally put on the valuation lists as lessor of a Patrick M'Cabe, and allowed him a vote on his fraudulent claim; that Constable Anderson swore at inquiry he delivered into the hands of the clerk and returning officer 17 property votes of the townland of Latton, that Owen M'Cave, candidate, and his nominator, who were at the poll, swore the clerk and returning officer acknowledged their receipt, and though not forthcoming counted them as if present; that John Primrose, the declared guardian swore, said 17 votes were counted at the poll and that the clerk and returning officer did not object to their validity; that the clerk and returning officer swore at inquiry did not count them officially or make a return of them; that the said clerk and returning officer in his statement to Local Government Board, paragraph 11, No. 14,583, swore he allowed four votes on a property in the townland of Carmeen, and that he swore at inquiry these were four of the said 17 property votes of the townland of Latton, which he swore at same inquiry he did not count officially; if this clerk is the same person who, in September 1879, fell under the notice of the Local Government Board, for fraudulent dealings in the coal contract for Cootehill Workhouse; and, if, considering the decision then come to by the Local Government Board and his conduct in the late election, as proved by his own contradictory testimony on oath, he will be continued as a fit and proper person to hold the office of clerk and returning officer?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): It is the fact that the Clerk and Returning Officer disallowed the vote of Catherine Fitzpatrick. He did this in error. He also allowed Mr. Montgomery to vote as a lessor. There was nothing to show he was aware this claim was unfounded or fraudulent. Constable Anderson, at the inquiry, swore as stated in the second paragraph. Owen M'Cabe swore the Returning Officer admitted the receipt. The officer denied this on oath. The Returning Officer swore that no votes were recorded by him in respect of the missing papers. John Primrose swore that an arrangement was made between himself and the other candidate to count these votes. The Returning Officer swore no votes were recorded by him in respect of these papers. The Returning Officer did not allow four votes in respect of claims lodged by the Rev. Mr. O'Donnell, and an inquiry was held in 1879 into alleged misconduct of this same clerk, but no fraudulent dealings were proved. Nothing transpired in connection with the proceedings at the late election to lead the Local Government Board to the conclusion that the Returning Officer was unfit for his position, and they do not propose to remove him.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — BARTLEY HERNON, RELIEVING OFFICER, ARRAN ISLANDS.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the result of the inquiry recently held by the Local Government Board Inspector, with respect to the charges against Bartley Hernon, who occupies the positions of relieving officer and estate bailiff on the Isles of Arran; was it proved that Hernon used his twofold office to defraud a poor fisherman, named Michal Logan, of a house, under threat of withdrawing out-door relief from him; was it further proved that Hernon kept no book showing his distribution of relief, and that the traders to whom he gave his orders (one of them a cousin of his) were also unable to give any satisfactory account of his transactions; has Hernon been previously charged with similar irregularities; and, will the Local Government Board now insist on his removal from the office of relieving officer?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Since the inquiry was held, some further complaints have been made against Hernon, and the Local Government Board are in communication with the Guardians on the subject. They cannot, therefore, report on the case at present, or come to a final decision; but they will deal with it as speedily as possible. Perhaps, therefore, the hon. Member will be so good as to put his Question down again at a later date.

MR. O'BRIEN: I will renew the Question, and I will further ask whether this is the man upon whose evidence Kilmartin was sentenced to penal servitude.

BURIALS ACT—BURIAL GROUND FOR THE PARISH OF COLSTERWORTH—SENDING OF CORPSE TO THE HOME SECRETARY.

MR. ILLINGWORTH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will state what measures he has taken in the matter of the clergyman who sent the dead body of a child to the Home Office, in consequence of a dispute as to the appropriation of a cemetery?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: As this matter arose out of one of those unhappy quarrels about burial grounds, I will ask leave to state the facts of the case. The churchyard in the parish of Colsterworth had been closed, and a Burial Board was constituted, on which the Rector had the principal voice. It was proposed to make two burial grounds. There was to be one for the exclusive use of members of the Church of England; while another was to be allotted to the Nonconformists. Upon that proposal I received a remonstrance from Lord Dysart and 90 ratepayers objecting to the burial ground for Nonconformists—firstly, because they wished to have a common burial ground, which seems to me to be the principle of the Act; and, secondly, because the ground allotted to them was a disused quarry. I referred to the Inspector of Burial Grounds, who reported that the arrangement was offensive to the Dissenters, and that the Burial Board ought to have shown more consideration for their feelings, especially as the ground would have been used almost entirely by them. Thereupon, I told the Rector that I would not consent to a proposal which appeared to me to be offensive, and I recommended that some other arrangement should be made. I added that until some arrangement was made which would be satisfactory to people of all religious opinions I should not give my sanction. In the answer which I received on the 29th of October, I was told that I should be attacked in the House of Commons by six influential Members of Parliament; but I have the satisfaction of knowing that that never occurred. The next proceeding was that on Sunday, the 2nd of November, a box containing the dead body of a child was delivered at the Home Office. I ordered inquiries to be made; and it then appeared that a clergyman, the Rev. J. Mirehouse, had been to the house of the parent of a still-born child and had obtained the body on the promise that he would bury it that night in the presence of the father. The father accordingly went to the clergyman's house, but was put off with some excuse. On the morning of the next day the clergyman drove to the railway station, and carried a box with him. The footman whom he instructed to pack up the box says his master told him to address it to the Home Secretary, as he was sending him a small present. The servant thought it was a box of game. The clergyman instructed the porter not to put a label upon it. He says now that he sent it as a protest, but he desired that a label might not be put on the box in order that it might not be known where it came from. When inquiries were made by the police, Mr. Mirehouse denied that he knew anything about the matter—a statement which he now admits to be untrue. Mr. Mirehouse is prepared to make an apology to me. In my opinion, there was no offence committed against me. The offence was against the Church of which he is a minister, against public decency, and against the parents of the child, whom he deliberately deceived. I have instructed the Law Officers of the Crown to advise me whether it is an offence which can be proceeded against by law. If so, the case will be placed in the hands of the Public Prosecutor. Whether it be a legal offence or not, I shall bring the conduct of this clergyman before the Bishop, in order that, if possible, he may remove him from the charge of a parish, for which, in my opinion, he is entirely unfitted.

THE WEST INDIA COLONIES—TRINIDAD AND BRITISH GUIANA—FINANCE.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, in view of the present crisis in West Indian industries, measures will be taken without delay either by sending out the Royal Commissioners who have already dealt with the other West India Colonies or otherwise, to inquire into what appears to be the excessive expenditure of Trinidad and British Guiana, and to suggest measures for its reduction?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Government have been carefully considering the expenditure in these Colonies, and are of opinion that it presents no such question of difficulty as to render necessary at this moment an inquiry by a Royal Commission, which involves a heavy outlay and gives rise to expectations, or apprehensions, which it is well to avoid. The Governors of British Guiana and Trinidad have recently been in this country, and have had opportunities of discussing the financial reforms, which appear practicable.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE CORK MAIL.

Mr. PARNELL asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that the accelerated mail train arrives in Cork daily at 12.10 p.m., and that on arrival a delay of half-an-hour takes place in the sorting of the letters carried by it; whether he is aware that replies to these must be posted by 1.20, or with an extra stamp by 1.30; and, whether it is possible to expedite the sorting of the letters in the Post Office at Cork; and, if not, whether, in view of the short time afforded to the people of that city for answering their correspondence, he will consider the advisability of sorting the letters en route from Dublin, having them ready for delivery upon their arrival?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I am fully alive to the importance of expediting as far as possible the delivery of letters at Cork after the arrival of the day mail from Dublin, seeing how short an interval it has been possible to allow for preparation of replies for the up-day mail. Inquiries are now being made whether it would be possible to effect some further sortation of the letters *en route;* but I am assured that it would not be possible, under any plan, so to arrange the letters in the travelling post-office as to have them ready for delivery to the postmen on the arrival of the train. The letters are arranged acaccording to streets in the travelling office; but it is the postmen alone in Cork who can arrange them in the actual order of delivery, and this necessitates letters being taken to the Post Office.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ROMAN CATHOLICS IN WORKHOUSES—RIGHT OF ATTENDING MASS OUTDOORS — THE SHEFFIELD BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether (in spite of his assurance last Session that the cause of complaint should be removed) the representations of the Local Government Board to the Sheffield Board of Guardians in respect of the Roman Catholic inmates of the workhouses there have remained practically disregarded; and, whether his Department is prepared to vindicate the Law in this respect, and also the religious rights of the Catholic poor in question?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: The Board, on the 12th of August last, wrote to the Guardians of the Sheffield Union, expressing their view as to the importance of permitting those inmates of the workhouse for whom a service according to their own creed is not provided in the workhouse to attend religious service on each Sunday, instead of on alternate Sundays as proposed by the Guardians, and urging the Guardians to amend their regulations so as to provide for this. The Board, receiving no reply, wrote to the Guardians again on the 4th of September. They were then informed that the Board's letters had been referred to a committee, and that the subject was under consideration; and that, on the committee reporting, the determination of the Guardians would be communicated without delay. Receiving no further communication, the Board wrote again to the Guardians on the 31st of October; and as they received no answer, they arranged for one of their Inspectors to attend a meeting of the Guardians. He attended the meeting held on Wednesday last; and I regret to state that, although the workhouse committee reported in favour of such an amendment as the Board desired, the Guardians determined to adhere to the arrangements which they had made as to alternate Sundays. The Board, having regard to the distinct refusal of the Guardians to allow the inmates such rights as to attendance at Divine Worship as the Statute contemplates, considered that they had no alternative but to issue a compulsory order in the matter, and before this notice appeared the directions for the issue of such an order were given. The order was signed on Saturday, and will be issued to-day.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—MARYBOROUGH GAOL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will state the result of the special inquiry he promised into the circumstances of the recent sickness and deaths among the warders in Maryborough Gaol; whether, since his answer of the week before last, another death has occurred in the prison; and, whether he will cause a sworn inquiry to be held into the work which has been required of the warders since the additional prison was opened in August last?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Very full inquiry is being made by my direction into the cause of the recent cases of illness and deaths in Maryborough Prison. It is true that another death has occurred since the former Question. I expect to receive the full Report in the course of this week.

EGYPT—STATE OF AFFAIRS—BRIGANDAGE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the following statements that have recently appeared in the correspondence of *The Times* and *Standard* are correct: that there are now 16,000 British troops in Egypt, and 9,000 of these south of Assouan; that brigandage is rife in the province of Minieh, and that the Minister of the Interior has gone to investigate it; that Mason Bey, Governor of Massowah, reports that the arrangement with Abyssinia as to the Egyptians at Kassala and other towns is wholly impracticable, and that the French are actively intriguing against us in Abyssinia?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The British troops in Egypt, including Marines, amount in round numbers to 16,000 men. The troops south of Assouan, or moving up the Nile, may be estimated at 9,000. No report has been recently received by Her Majesty's Government such as is referred to by the hon. Member, neither are they aware that the Treaty arrangements with Abyssinia, in regard to Kassala, &c., have been declared by Mason Bey to be impracticable. Colonel Chermside, Egyptian Governor of the Red Sea Littoral, is taking steps for the evacuation of the places referred to; but, before carrying it out, he wishes to consult the Egyptian Government personally as to some details, and has started for Cairo with that object. I must decline to reply to the last part of the hon. Member's Question, which is offensive to a friendly Power.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—SUSPENSION OF THE SINKING FUND.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What reply Her Majesty's Ministers have made to the protest of the five Great Powers against the act, which they declared to be one of financial repudiation, which the Khedive committed on the advice of the British Cabinet?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The protest was replied to by the Egyptian Government, to whom it was addressed. In that reply the Egyptian Government acknowledges that the suspension of payments to the Caisse was a breach of the Law of Liquidation and expresses the hope that the Powers will take into consideration the abnormal state of affairs which rendered the step necessary. Her Majesty's Government, in their communications with Foreign Powers, have supported the action of the Egyptian Government, and expressed their regret that exceptional circumstances should have made it necessary. The Correspondence on this subject will be laid before Parliament.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—12 & 13 WILL. IV., SECTION 12—EXTRA POLICE, CO. WATERFORD.

Mr. P. J. POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the number and cost of the extra police force, with the different areas of chargeability, at present quartered in the county of Waterford?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There are 116 extra men in the county of Waterford under Sections 12 and 13 of the Act of *Will.* IV. The area of chargeability is the county at large, and the cost to the county, after allowing for vacanies as prescribed by the Statute, amounts to £1,016 for the six months ended 30th September last.

Mr. P. J. POWER: What has occurred in the County Waterford to justify this very high-handed conduct on the part of the Government?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is another Question that can hardly be answered at once.

Mr. P. J. POWER: I beg to give Notice that on the earliest opportunity I will call attention to the very high-handed proceedings of the Irish Government in this matter.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MR. JAMES ELLIS FRENCH.

Mr. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that, during Mr. French's suspension, a constable in the Kilcrea Police Barrack, county Cork, swore informations of a criminal assault against him; if so, why the said constable was not examined at Mr. French's trial? Before the right hon. Gentleman answers this Question, I wish to say that the prefix "Mr." was introduced after I handed the draft to the Clerk at the Table. I wish to know now whether it is irregular or out of Order to omit the prefix "Mr." from the name of a man who was twice tried for an abominable offence, and who is now awaiting trial on the same charge?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): It is not correct to say that informations were sworn by any constable as alleged. That is a sufficient answer to the last paragraph of the Question; but I may say that if such an information had been sworn it would not be evidence.

Mr. DEASY: I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether it would be irregular to omit the prefix "Mr." from the name of French under the circumstances I have mentioned?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not see that any question of Order would arise in adding the prefix "Mr.," or in omitting it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—FINTONA PETTY SESSIONS, CO. TYRONE —TRESPASS IN PURSUIT OF GAME.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the 10th instant, at Fintona (county Tyrone) Petty Sessions, in a case in which Peter M'Casker charged a man named M'Cauley, gamekeeper to Mr. Eccles, a local landlord, with assault, although it was proved in evidence that M'Cauley had presented a gun at M'Casker, and that M'Cauley and his three sons attacked M'Casker and a boy twelve years old, who was in his company, and beat M'Casker so seriously that he had to be attended by the dispensary doctor, the Justices dismissed the charge against M'Cauley; whether, when M'Casker applied to the bench for a summons against M'Cauley, one of the Justices said that M'Cauley, as a gamekeeper, was in the execution of his duty, and afterwards, when the case against M'Cauley had been heard, the same Justice declared from the bench that there was nothing wrong in the assault upon M'Casker; whether, notwithstanding that at the time of the assault upon him M'Casker was proceeding across the fields from his father's house to the house of a neighbour, had neither dog nor gun with him, and was at least a mile distant from the mountain preserved by M'Cauley's employer, the Justices fined M'Casker ten shillings for being in the pursuit of game; whether the Justices, on the same day, fined two other men £2 10*s.* for carrying a gun without a licence, but refused to impose any penalty on M'Cauley, although he had no licence, and did not procure an Inland Revenue licence until after the summons had been taken out against him; and, whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland will investigate this case?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed by the police authorities of the district that the facts of this case are as follows:—A gamekeeper, named Mellon, with his son, a lad of 15 or 16, met M'Casker and another man on a preserved property, beating for game with sticks, and having stones in their hands. He warned them off, and a scuffle ensued, in the course of which M'Casker got a cut on his head. The gamekeeper did not present a gun at him, but threw his gun down. M'Casker went to the dispensary, and had the injury dressed. It was not serions. He applied to the magistrates for a summons against the gamekeeper for assault, and it was at once granted. The case was dismissed by a Bench of eight magistrates. I have not been able to ascertain that any such statements were made from the Bench as are mentioned in the Question. M'Casker was convicted and fined 10*s.* for the trespass in pursuit of game. On the same day two other men were fined £2 10*s.* each for carrying a gun without a Revenue licence. This was the lowest penalty the magistrates could legally impose, but it has since been reduced by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue. The magistrates could not have imposed a similar penalty on the gamekeeper, as he was not charged with the offence. It is a fact, however, that he had not a licence at the time, and I understand the case is now before the Inland Revenue authorities for consideration whether a prosecution should be ordered.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES—THE ADMIRALTY AND WAR OFFICE—MESSRS. LEEMING'S DESIGNS.

MR. BROADHURST asked the Postmaster General, Whether he will state what progress is being made towards commencing the Government buildings in Whitehall; and, whether he will use his influence to commence the works as soon as possible?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: As my Successor in the Office of Works has not yet been appointed, I may be permitted to answer this Question. I stated at the end of the last Session that the Government had adopted the conclusions of the judges in the recent competition for the new Admiralty and War Office, and would submit a Vote next Session for erecting a building on the design of Messrs. Leeming. In the interval Messrs. Leeming have been engaged in making various improvements in their design, which I had suggested to them after considering all the criticism which had been made. A short time ago they submitted their design with these improvements, and I gave a final approval to them. They are now engaged in making more detailed drawings embodying all these improvements, which will be laid before Parliament; but the Government are under an engagement to the House not to commence the building until a Vote shall have been taken.

In further answer to Mr. WARTON,

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that the alterations which had been suggested had not been submitted to the other judges.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked if the final drawings would be exhibited before the Vote was asked?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE replied, that he should certainly exhibit the final drawings, including all the improvements he had suggested.

ARMY PROMOTION—THE 19TH HUSSARS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the fact that the Senior Major of the 19th Hussars has been lately passed over in promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel by a junior officer of the same regiment; whether the Major thus superseded was considered unfit for promotion; and, whether he is now on probation for, or attached to, the Army Pay Department?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: A man may make a good paymaster who could not command a Cavalry regiment; and it is a fact that an officer considered ineligible for the command of his regiment is now a paymaster on probation. His confirmation in the Army Pay Department will depend on the manner in which he passes through his probation, and on the examination held at its conclusion.

TREATY OF BERLIN—THE JEWS IN ROUMANIA.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the fact that, notwithstanding Article 44 of the Treaty of Berlin, which provides that equal civil and political rights should be enjoyed by all persons in Roumania irrespectively of creed, the Jews in that Country, who have been reduced to destitution by the edict against hawking issued by the Roumanian Government, are debarred from the privilege accorded to all other Roumanians of obtaining passports for the purpose of earning their living elsewhere, and are only granted documents enabling them to leave the Country on the condition that they shall not re-enter it, such condition imposing upon them the alternative of banishment or starvation; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will, under these circumstances, as one of the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of Berlin, protest against all violation of its provisions?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Legation at Bucharest, notwithstanding diligent inquiries, have been unable to obtain any confirmation of the allegation as to passports made in the hon. Member's Question. There may have been cases of individual hardship, due to the formalities unfortunately existing in Roumania which are insisted upon to prevent the sale of passports and the introduction by that means of destitute Jewish families from neighbouring countries. It does not appear that any complaints to the Roumanian Government have been made by the Jewish community on this subject.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Will the noble Lord state whether he has ascertained as a fact that passports are granted to Jews in Roumania as in other cases?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: That is what I understand, except that they are subject to certain formalities, which are taken where it is supposed that an emigrant is likely to attempt to sell his passport to somebody else with a view of bringing in a strange Jewish family from over the border. There appears to be some kind of understanding on the part of the Roumanian Government, and I think also on the part of the Russian Government, to prevent the sale of these passports with the view of preventing the bringing in an over-population into the country.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Can the noble Lord state whether it is a fact that any Jew applying for a passport in Roumania is informed when receiving it that it prevents his return to the country?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I believe it is so in some cases, and the effect of these formalities is no doubt the cause of the inconvenience referred to. The answer of the Roumanian Government is that they are necessary as a matter of internal arrangement.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: In consequence of the answers of the noble Lord, I beg to give Notice that I will take the earliest opportunity of calling the attention of the House to this subject.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS—PORTSMOUTH.

MR. HOPWOOD asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it be the fact, as stated in the local press, that the Watch Committee of Portsmouth have received a letter from the Admiralty suggesting that the working of the Contagious Diseases Acts should be taken up by the Borough Police; and, whether it be true that the Government contributes 2*s.* 6*d.* for every woman induced to go to the hospital?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The police, as my hon. and learned Friend is aware, no longer exercise any compulsory powers, but voluntary applicants are received into the Lock Hospitals on signing a form attested by an Inspector of Police. It has been suggested to the Mayor of Portsmouth that the duty of attestation should be performed by the Superintendent of Borough Police on payment of a fee of 2*s.* 6*d.* This payment is proposed as a remuneration for the extra duty entailed on the Superintendent, and not as an inducement to patients to enter the Lock Hospitals.

NAVY — H.M.SS. "AJAX" AND "AGAMEMNON."

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If the defects in the steering accuracy of the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon* have been rectified; if not, what measures the Admiralty intend adopting for this purpose?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The *Agamemnon* made the passage from Portsmouth to Plymouth, and is now on her way to Malta, from which port we shall learn the results of further experience of the steering qualities.

SIR JOHN HAY asked whether it was true that the speed of the *Agamemnon* did not exceed nine knots an hour?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I do not know.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)— MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he was correctly understood to have stated that Mr. Clifford Lloyd is at present in receipt of the pay and allowances of a first-class Resident Magistrate in Ireland, although his functions in that Country practically ceased in 1882; if at the time his attention had been called to an answer given by his predecessor on July 28th of this year to the Junior Member for Wexford County, reported in *Hansard*, as follows:—

> "Mr. Lloyd is not at present in receipt of any sum from any Irish Vote, nor, so far as I am aware, from the Revenues of the United Kingdom. The last payment made to him from the Vote, out of which the salaries of Resident Magistrates are provided, was up to the 18th of September, 1883."—(3 *Hansard*, [291] 647.)

and, if he will now state the grounds upon which Mr. Lloyd has been replaced in receipt of pay and allowances?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is no inconsistency between anything I have said and the reply of my right hon. Friend to the Question asked on the 28th July. Mr. Lloyd has simply reverted to his original position as a Resident Magistrate, and is now enjoying a period of leave, with pay, to which he was considered entitled.

MR. KENNY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that when I asked his Predecessor early in last Session, whether it was not a violation of the Civil Service regulations that Mr. Clifford Lloyd should be absent without a medical certificate of illness, that the Chief Secretary replied—

> "A medical certificate is not requisite under the regulations of the Civil Service, unless the leave granted to the officer be sick leave which allows pay. Leave without pay is often granted Civil servants for their own private business on due cause being shown to the head of the Department."

And are we to conclude from this either that Mr. Clifford Lloyd is now absent on sick leave, which allows pay, or that he has satisfied the head of his Department that the urgency of his private affairs entitles him to leave of absence with pay?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Lloyd is at present in the enjoyment of three months' leave, with pay. He was entitled to that because he practically served in 1880 without any leave.

MR. KENNY: I want to know from the right hon. Gentleman, is it not a distinct breach of the regulations of the Civil Service that any person in the position of Mr. Lloyd should be absent on leave, and at the same time be in receipt of pay without due cause being shown?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware there is any such Civil Service regulation.

MR. KENNY: I am aware that there is.

MR. O'KELLY: Will the right hon. Gentleman state whether Mr. Clifford Lloyd's absence in Egypt was not a prolonged leave of absence and a very remunerative one as well?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It was not a leave which would enable him to recover his health. It was not one ensuring any leisure.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—CO. MAYO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Irish Government has been given to the character and circumstances of the eviction of a number of families, on the 6th and 7th instants, at Killasaer, county Mayo, from the properties of Mr. Roger M'Carrick, of Kilglass, Mr. John M'Carrick, of Cloonboney, and Mr. William Lyons of Ballina; whether, in most of the cases, the tenants owed but one year's rent, to which an amount, for law costs, about equal to a year's rent, was added in consequence of the expensive mode of legal procedure adopted by the landlords; whether the widow Nieland, with her six children, was evicted because she could not pay the legal costs on the spot, though an offer of the year's rent due by her was made; whether, in the case of Martin Joy, in which the tenant had gone to a neighbouring town to arrange for immediate satisfaction of the decree, the sheriff refused to wait for half-a-day; whether, in the case of Thomas Brennan, the tenant went to England to labour, and sent from England to the agent, Mr. Scott, £3 out of a total of £6 15*s.* due for one year's rent only, but the agent took out a decree for the full amount (not acknowledging the remittance), and added over £3 for costs; and, whether the Government will consider the need of legislation to oblige landlords, in cases of small tenants, to use the cheapest system of legal procedure, and, in cases where the full amount of rent due is tendered, to give time in respect of the legal costs?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed that several families were evicted for non-payment of a year's rent, as stated in the first part of the Question. I have not been able to ascertain the relative amounts of debts and costs in the several cases; but, as the decrees were obtained in the County Courts, the incidental costs must have been small. I am informed that, though there was some proposal for a subscription being made to pay the widow Nieland's rent, no money was offered. In the case of Martin Joy, the Sheriff's assistant himself lent the money to pay the amount of the decree, and no eviction took place in that instance. In the case of Brennan I am informed that credit was given in the decree for the £3 paid, though the receipt of it was not at the time acknowledged. All the tenants evicted were readmitted as caretakers. I am informed that the costs have been reduced by law to the minimum scale which would cover expenses. I believe it to be quite true that in some cases the necessary costs form a considerable proportion of the decree; but if the acceptance of the rent apart from the costs were made obligatory, it would, I fear, be practically impossible to recover the costs.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary of State for War, If he is aware that General Gordon, in Egyptian Papers, No. 8, stated in a telegram to Sir Evelyn Baring that "what would have greatest effect would be rumour of English intervention;" whether it is possible to prevent intelligence being passed on that a relieving force is on its way to Khartoum for the purpose of liberating General Gordon and other garrisons, and also for the purpose of liberating the Soudanese from Egyptian rule; and, whether it is true that all communications transmitted to this Country are subject to supervision by the British Military authorities?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I think the statement made by General Gordon is accurately stated in the first part of the Question. I am not quite certain that I understand the second portion of the Question. It probably would not be possible to prevent intelligence being passed on "that a relieving force is on its way to Khartoum" for the purposes stated in the Question. But, whether it is possible or not, there is no desire that I am aware of on the part of anyone to prevent such intelligence from reaching Khartoum and its neighbourhood. It is true that the telegraph wire from Dongola is under the superintendence of the military authorities, but not for the purpose of preventing the transmission of such intelligence as is referred to in the Question, but simply to prevent the transmission of details of a military character, a knowledge of which might be injurious to our own troops.

THE CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE).

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, with reference to his Minute of the 12th instant declaring that a Civil Servant seeking a seat in the House of Commons shall resign his office so soon as he announces himself as a candidate, and to his intention to submit an Order to the Queen in Council binding upon the entire Permanent Civil Service, he will also submit or support an Address to Her Majesty praying that the Writ of Summons to the House of Lords of any

Peer accepting Office in that Service may be cancelled?

MR. GLADSTONE: The subject of my hon. Friend's Question is an important one, and it is not to be dealt with in the summary manner as the Question rather appears to suggest. The incompatibility of a position in the Civil Service with candidature for a seat in the House of Commons has relation to a statutory provision which prevents a Civil servant from sitting in the House of Commons. There is no such statutory provision against the holding of an Office by a Peer. Consequently, the positions of the two are quite different; and it would require a good deal of consideration and investigation, I think, before any full view could be given of the case. I do not mean to say that there ought or ought not to be any restraints whatever upon the holding of Civil Offices by Peers, because there are such restraints imposed from time to time by the Executive Government in making particular arrangements, as, for example, in the case of a very distinguished Civil servant, the late Lord Tenterden, who was Permanent Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, and who abstained altogether from action in the House of Lords. Indeed, I am not quite certain that he ever took his seat. [SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: He did.] Again, in another case where the action of a Civil servant would lead him into immediate contact with the Executive Government, Lord Arran, Commissioner of Customs, upon being made a Peer of the United Kingdom, and contemplating the taking of a share in the Business of the House of Lords, will shortly resign the Office of Commissioner of Customs. The question, however, is a large one, and I am unable to do more at present than point out that the cases are by no means parallel.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—LORD NORTHBROOK'S REPORT.

MR. M'COAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is now the intention of Her Majesty's Government to offer to the Government of the Khedive any advice founded on Lord Northbrook's Report?

MR. GLADSTONE: It would be premature to give an answer to this Question, because, as I have already stated, Her Majesty's Government have been preparing a plan which it is their intention and which they are on the point of submitting to the European Powers. Upon that approval would depend in many points of detail the advice Her Majesty's Government may give to the Government of the Khedive. We cannot give any information about it until we know if that plan will meet with the approval of the European Powers.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Can the right hon. Gentleman form any opinion when that approval is likely to be received?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir, I really cannot, because the Powers may have to communicate together; but I do not think the delay will be very long. At the same time, I cannot undertake to say when the Powers will communicate their reply, and consequently when the plan will be laid upon the Table.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: When will the plan be laid before the Powers?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think I may say immediately.

MR. MARRIOTT: Will the plan be in accordance with Lord Northbrook's Report?

MR. GLADSTONE: It would be still more absolutely premature for me to say whether it would or not.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: May I ask the Prime Minister, whether he did not state last Session, before the Conference met, that the financial condition of Egypt was one of the utmost urgency? I wish to know whether that condition of urgency has passed away?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; it still continues to be urgent. Some measures have been taken, but with considerable inconvenience, for the purpose of meeting the difficulty for a time; but the urgency still continues.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Then are we to understand that, in spite of Egyptian Finance being in a condition of the utmost urgency, the Prime Minister is totally unable to state any period at which he is likely to make a statement to the House?

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Are the plans of the Government, which are to be communicated to the other Powers, also to be submitted to a Legislative Council in Egypt, instituted by a Decree of the Khedive on the recommendation of Lord Dufferin that all Budgets are to be laid before the Assembly?

MR. GLADSTONE: The plan of which I have spoken has no connection with the Legislative Council.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the statement reported to have been made on Thursday in the French Senate by M. de Freycinet, to the effect that England intended to propose a second Conference on Egyptian Affairs, is correct; whether an assurance will be given to the House that before any such Conference meets Lord Northbrook's Report, together with the proposals of Her Majesty's Government on the subject, will be laid upon the Table; and, whether he will give an assurance that no separate agreement will be made with another Power or Powers which would restrict the action of this Country, either as regards finance or general policy in Egypt, before an opportunity is given to the House of discussing the question?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think the hon. Gentleman must have put the Question under some misapprehension. We have not received, nor is it likely we shall receive, any official information with regard to the statement of a private Member of the Senate of France upon his own responsibility. M. de Freycinet is not a Member of the French Government, and he has no official information. Whatever he stated, I have no doubt he stated in perfect good faith, but undoubtedly in error. There is no proposal for a Conference before the European Powers, or about to be before them. That disposes of the second part of the Question. With regard to the third part, as regards finance, I believe most explicit assurances have been given; but to say that the Government would not agree with anybody to do anything with regard to Egypt until it brought the particular matter before the House would be an entire abdication of the functions of the Government.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I would like to ask whether it is in the power of the Government to establish, with other Powers, a system of Multiple Control without consulting the House of Commons?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not sure that that is a Question within the fair scope of Questions; but, as I understand, a Multiple Control is for the management of finance, and the Government will take very good care, as I have said, not to trench on the functions of Parliament.

THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES—CONFEDERATION.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as five of the Australian Colonies are willing to confederate, he will now propose the Enabling Bill which, in reply to the then Member for Waterford County, he expressed his readiness to introduce in the closing days of the last Session?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will not say that the expressions used in the Question are incorrect, but they might mislead. The draft Bill which was under consideration is not what is commonly understood by a Bill to enable the Australasian Colonies to confederate. The word "confederate" is too wide. It is a Bill to enable them to establish simply a Federal Council for the purpose of dealing with certain questions of common interest, leaving Colonial institutions intact. It is more limited, then, than what is commonly understood by confederation. There is, however, such a Bill; and the opinion of the Government about it is this. It is tolerably clear that if it were introduced it would require amendment in certain respects. That being so, the Government consider it would be the much more convenient course to have these amendments considered, in concert with the Colonies, before they produce the Bill in the Imperial Parliament.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOTT: I wish to ask the Prime Minister a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It is, Whether any opportunity will be given to the House of discussing the arrangements between the Government and the Leaders of the Opposition in regard to redistribution before the introduction of the Government measure?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; there is not the least intention on the part of the Government to afford such an opportunity. Indeed, it appears to me that it would be highly inconvenient to the House if such a course were pursued. After the Redistribution of Seats Bill is introduced the House will have an opportunity of passing judgment on its provisions, and then it will have a chance of saying whether it approves or disapproves of any arrangement that may be made; but if a discussion were raised before the Redistribution Bill is introduced, there would be no matter for the House to discuss.

SOUTH AFRICA—BECHUANALAND—MONTSIOA'S TERRITORY.

SIR WILLIAM M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have received any information as to the hoisting of the Transvaal flag by Mr. Dutoit, a leading official of the Transvaal in Montsioa's territory?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, the Government had received no information as to the alleged hoisting of the Transvaal flag by Mr. Dutoit, a leading official of the Transvaal, in Montsioa's territory, but they would take steps to find out whether the report was true.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE—OUTBREAK IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

In reply to Mr. CLARE READ,

MR. TREVELYAN said, that there had been an outbreak of cattle disease at Newstead Abbey. A communication was received from the local authority, and three Inspectors went down. The local authority consented to the slaughter of 39 cattle. He was sorry to say a second outbreak occurred about a mile off, and five cattle were attacked. The Inspector, who was especially cognizant of this part of the subject, had not yet made up his mind as to the probable origin of the outbreaks. He was without information as to whether the local authority would consent to slaughter in the second case.

MR. CLARE READ asked whether it was certain that it was foot-and-mouth disease?

MR. TREVELYAN said, that in the first case there was no doubt whatever.

ARMY—LONGFORD BARRACKS.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Secretary of State for War, When the Government intended to quarter cavalry again in the barracks of Longford; and, when it is proposed to rebuild the wing of the barracks lately burnt down, and to repair the existing buildings?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The distribution of the troops in Ireland rests entirely with the General Officer Commanding in Ireland. He reports that, under present circumstances, he has no occasion for Cavalry at Longford. The existing buildings will be put in proper repair; but it is not considered necessary to rebuild the wing which was burnt down.

NAVY—SAILORS' GROG.

MR. WARTON desired to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty a Question of which he had given verbal private Notice—namely, Whether the appointment of Mr. Caine to the post of Civil Lord must be taken as an indication of a desire on the part of the Government to deprive sailors of their grog?

[No reply.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, REDISTRIBUTION, BILL.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. GLADSTONE: The House is extremely anxious to know what demands are likely to be made upon its time; and the Government, of course, are most anxious to meet the views and the necessities of the House in that respect as far as they can. On that account I am going to take a step which, of course, is not very usual—that is to say, to give Notice of a Bill, at the same time stating that I cannot be absolutely certain that I shall be in a condition to introduce it. But I think it will be for the convenience of the House to state that I have hopes of being able to introduce a Bill for the redistribution of seats for immediate circulation among Members on this day week, and I propose to give a Notice to that effect to-night. I cannot be quite certain of performing it, and in that case it would be necessary to have a postponement; but I will take care in that case that Members shall be put in possession of my intention to postpone. In the meantime, I will place a Notice on the Paper to-day for that purpose. Then, Sir, as I say, my hope is that it might be introduced and circulated immediately; and I am inclined to believe that, viewing the nature of the measure and the general acquiescence in its principles, it would be for the convenience of the House in that case that we should proceed with the second reading of the Bill on Thursday in next week. The House, I think, would much prefer that to any proposal to introduce the Bill on an earlier day, because that would necessarily interfere with the adjournment, which, upon the whole, appears to be desired by the House.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I understand the right hon. Gentleman to make this statement partly in view of a contemplated adjournment of the House for some days; and, if that is so, although undoubtedly the course is one which is not exactly in accordance with many precedents, yet it is one, being for the general convenience of the House, to which I shall offer no objection. It is understood that it does not prejudge the question with regard to the period at which the Bill will be ready.

Mr. Gladstone intimated his assent.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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INCOME TAX BILL.

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

[BILL 38.] THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR called attention to the imposition of the police tax in certain parts of Queen's County. There was no portion of Ireland more free from crime of every description than the county which he had the honour to represent; and, at the same time, there was no portion of Ireland which suffered more from landlord oppression and injustice. Within the last few weeks the authorities in Ireland had thought fit to place in the most peaceable districts in the county a number of extra police. There was no reason whatever for that step, and the presence of those officers was a standing outrage upon the people. The Chairman of the Quarter Sessions, Mr. W. R. Fitzmaurice, had stated recently that he did not think there was any more vexatious or tormenting measure than that which placed upon the county the extra police.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I apprehend that the hon. Member is not in Order in discussing a police rate when the Income Tax Bill is before the House. The Income Tax Bill has nothing to do with the police rate.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it was a Constitutional principle in this country that the redress of grievances should precede Supply. It was now proposed to tax the people of Ireland and the people of this country in the shape of additional Income Tax. He would oppose any additional tax upon the people of Ireland. He maintained that this taxation was most unjustifiable, and a great grievance. Of course, if the Speaker was prepared to rule that a Member was not at liberty to object to existing taxation and to a Money Bill on the ground that it was unjust and grievous, he would at once resume his seat; but he did not think that any Member would contend that he was departing from a very long line of precedents in resisting the imposition of additional taxes on the third reading of a Money Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that this Motion should be moved on going into Supply. He certainly held that any question as to the imposition of a police rate would be quite irrelevant upon the consideration of the Income Tax Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Then, Mr. Speaker, I will content myself by making a protest against this measure.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS.

——o——

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next."—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, it now appeared likely that the House would adjourn over Christmas without being made in any degree acquainted with the course which the Government intended to take with regard to Egyptian finance. It was perfectly clear that if the condition of affairs was, as the Prime Minister had stated, critical in June or July, it was ten-fold more so at the present moment. The question was one of the greatest possible urgency; and he thought the House ought to be informed whether the Government proposed to adjourn over Christmas without knowing anything of the position in which the country was placed with reference to Egyptian finance and kindred matters?

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he had heard the Motion that had just been made with very great regret, and he could not acquiesce in it without respectfully protesting against the course proposed. In the first place, it was a new attack on the rights of private Members. Indeed, if this were to be taken as a precedent, it would practically almost annihilate them. If the Government were to take private Members' nights when they wanted them, and to call on the House to adjourn when they did not, a private Member would, indeed, be fortunate whoever got a chance of bringing forward a Motion at all. In the present case the hardship was all the greater, because, at the urgent appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, they had forborne to press the question of proportional representation when the Franchise Bill was before the House. The right hon. Gentleman said, indeed, that the mode of voting was a question entirely separate and detached from the question of the franchise. But a large number of hon. Gentlemen were of the opposite opinion, and considered that the mode of voting was more germane to the franchise than to redistribution. At any rate, they would have been within their rights had they pressed it; but in response to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman they had not done so; and what was their reward? Now, when the Franchise Bill was safe, and when they had secured an opportunity, the right hon. Gentleman proposed to adjourn just over the day, and thus deprive them of their chance. He said deprive, because on Friday they could have discussed the question on its own merits, which would have elicited the opinion of the House much more satisfactorily than could be done by an Amendment to a Government Bill. This would be so under almost any circumstances, but was peculiarly the case in the present instance. The Leaders of the two great Parties were settling a Bill outside of this House and without its cognizance. He did not in any way complain of this; quite the contrary; but it certainly had its inconveniences. There were large sections of that House who were thus left unrepresented. Let them take, for instance, those Gentlemen, more than 200 in number, who were in favour of proportional representation. If a Bill were brought in which did not recognize their principle, it was quite clear that they would be placed at a disadvantage much greater than could be the case under ordinary circumstances. No one would say that this question was unimportant or unworthy the attention of Parliament. Far from that, it was, perhaps, the most vital question they had still to settle. It appealed to no Party, or, rather, it appealed to all. It secured to both sides what they most desired. On the one hand, it protected the minority; on the other, it secured the majority.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Baronet is not entitled to discuss the principle of his Motion on the question of the adjournment of the House.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK asked if he might point out to the House what the effect of the present system was.

MR. SPEAKER: That would be in direct violation of the ruling I have just given.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, what he was endeavouring to do was to point out the importance of the Motion on the Paper for Friday next, and the effect of the present Motion in preventing its being discussed. He would, of course, bow to the ruling of the Chair, expressing, at the same time, his regret that Her Majesty's Government should have taken the course they had taken. If it was the general wish of the House that they should discuss the whole question when they had the Bill before them, he would not desire to oppose the Motion.

MR. GLADSTONE: Nothing could be more legitimate than the appeal of my hon. Friend when he demands that he should have opportunities of discussing the important subject in which he takes so great an interest after the Redistribution of Seats Bill is before the House. In point of fact, if we were so disposed, we could not deprive him of those opportunities; but they are evidently both legitimate in themselves, and we should not have any desire in any way to stint them. My hon. Friend has rather complained of the Government for making this Motion of Adjournment. Now, I agree with my hon. Friend that it would be a very great stretch of power on the part of the Administration if we were to endeavour, by the use of influence, to force a Motion of this kind upon the House. But that, as my hon. Friend, I am sure, knows, is not the case at all. We have no such idea. Our idea has simply been to take the course which, although, unfortunately, it could not command the assent of all Members, yet should be, on the whole, agreeable to the general sentiment of the House; and I think we have interpreted the feeling of the House aright when we believed that it was the desire of the House, from the point that we have now reached, to await a time when we should have reasonable hope that the Redistribution Bill should be placed before the House. I cannot quite admit that private Members are so much to be condoled with on the present occasion; because, I may observe, that out of every six hours that the House has sat since we met on the 23rd of October, at least five of them have been occupied by private Members. Private Members had a full and clear fortnight on all subjects that they chose to introduce upon the Address. They foresaw, perhaps, that their chances would be narrow afterwards, and they took advantage, as they were entitled to do, of the opportunities then granted. But, undoubtedly, the time demanded by the Government during these present Sittings has not been exorbitant. With regard to my hon. Friend's argument, that this question might be advantageously discussed on Friday next, I cannot agree in the convenience of such a course; because the meaning of my hon. Friend would only be that the composition and structure of the Redistribution of Seats Bill were to be kept uncertain until after Friday. Otherwise, there would be no possible use in a discussion anterior to the introduction of the Bill. Now, I doubt very much if a large proportion of the 200—the army commanded by my hon. Friend, and of whom he is so worthy a Leader—would not revolt very seriously against the proposition that, for the sake of a discussion on Friday next, the Redistribution of Seats Bill is to be kept suspended —for, otherwise, there is no use in a discussion before it is introduced. It is true that there would be an advantage to those who hold strong opinions upon any one of the many points which may enter into the Redistribution Bill in having a full discussion of their views before that Bill was introduced; but, at the same time, that means that while all have rights and claims the granting of those rights would mean indefinite delay in the introduction of that Bill. With regard to the Question of the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill), I am afraid the only pledge which it is in my power to give is the pledge that we shall use every effort that we can to procure a speedy decision, and that when we have procured that decision, we shall lose no time in bringing the subject before the House of Commons. It will be for the House to consider when we come near the time—for we are not near that time yet; it seems pretty clear that we cannot have our Christmas holiday this week, or next week—but when we come nearer the time for adjourning over Christmas, then it will be for the Government, if they are in a position to do it, to give information to the House, or for the House to determine whether it shall regulate its Sittings or the period of its adjournment with reference to the possibility of getting such information. It would be premature for me to enter at present into the question. I can assure the noble Lord, because of the state of finance in Egypt, and because of our general duty on both the one ground and the other, not a moment will be lost in accelerating a decision so far as it rests with us.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he hoped the Government would give some information to the House with reference to the subjects to come before the proposed Conference on the affairs of Egypt. They desired to know whether it would be confined to the consideration of financial questions; or whether it would be competent for the Conference to discuss such questions as the Earl of Northbrook's proposed abolition of the Egyptian Army?

Mr. GLADSTONE was understood to say that there would not be a Conference, but a reference to the Powers.

Mr. ONSLOW observed that it would be practically the same thing. [Lord

EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, no!] He wished to ask another question with reference to the Redistribution Bill. According to the statement of the Prime Minister only two days would elapse between its introduction and the second reading. That he considered far too short an interval, which he thought should extend at least over 10 days, in order to give hon. Members and the country generally adequate opportunity for the consideration of this important subject.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT wished to say a few words in support of what fell from his hon. Friend (Sir John Lubbock). He did not do so, however, on the somewhat limited ground of defence of the system of proportional representation; but he did so on the broader ground of the rights of private Members. The position in which they were was this—that in consequence of the relations of amity which had lately been established between the two Front Benches, what would happen in this case was different from what had happened in almost every case that was brought before the House. Therefore, when this great measure of redistribution came before the House, the two Front Benches being allied, independent Members would be simply wasting their breath if they addressed the House in support of their particular views. It had hitherto been the safeguard of the independence of this House that there was a disagreement between the two Front Benches. Hitherto both Front Benches had heard discussions, and ultimately the House came to a conclusion; but the whole of that was reversed on the present occasion. The Government had taken into their council, for better or worse, a distinguished statesman, not even a Member of this House, not a Member of the Liberal Party, but the Leader of the Tory majority—he might almost say the master of the Tory Party in "another place." That noble Marquess had been taken, apparently, more or less—and he thought he might say more rather than less—into the councils of the Government. That was a state of things which brought about a very novel experience; and he put his Question to the Prime Minister that evening with the view of eliciting whether any Member could discuss his Question, when alone discussion could be of use, before the Bill agreed to by both Parties was laid on the Table. There were many matters upon which hon. Members' opinions were divided, and not divided strictly on the lines of Party feeling. There was not only the question of proportional representation, but there were the questions of equal electoral districts, of single-Member constituencies, of grouping of boroughs, and the representation of University seats. There was a multitude of other questions of such importance that one would have thought they would be discussed in Parliament before virtually a decision was come to; but when the Redistribution Bill was laid on the Table of the House virtually a decision would have been come to upon those important matters. He hoped, however, that that would not be so. He hoped and trusted that something might be said before the adjournment that would give them some security that independent action on matters of this character would be preserved. He thought some declaration of that sort from the Government was very much to be desired before they adjourned. He had the greatest confidence in the Head of the Government, and the Cabinet with which he was associated; but he was bound to say he had very much less confidence in them when he found them combining with the Marquess of Salisbury. They had been told again and again during the late Vacation that the Marquess of Salisbury was not to be trusted. They had, indeed, been told a great deal more than that. The Home Secretary, he thought, in an elaborate speech, compared the Marquess of Salisbury to Strafford. Well, Strafford was now in their midst. He had been taken into the councils of the Government; and he it was who was equally being consulted as to what were the important and main provisions of the Redistribution Bill. He (Mr. Elliot) looked upon that state of things, he was bound to say, with great suspicion. The Marquess of Salisbury was entitled to wield great power; but his place was in the House of Lords, in which it was his privilege or his duty to criticize, and to criticize as sharply as he could, the recommendations and actions of Her Majesty's Government. But if the Leader of the Tory majority was to be consulted by the Liberal Government of the day before this Bill was brought into the House of Commons, he could not help thinking a very different state of things was being brought about. He had the greatest respect for the ability and courage of the Marquess of Salisbury; but all he could say, to use common language, was, what business had the Marquess of Salisbury to settle the main features of a Bill which was to be brought before the House of Commons? That was a condition of things upon which he should like some light to be thrown. He should far rather have preferred that the old course had been followed—that the Redistribution Bill, as to which it seemed that Parties were, after all, not likely to have much difference about, should have been laid on the Table of the House of Commons when they had got rid of the Franchise Bill, and that, without being hampered with the restrictions, each Party should have been left free to take its own course. After all, the Liberal Party were in a majority in the House of Commons; and he did not like to see the Liberal majority throwing away its advantages in councils where eminent statesmen met together, where their proceedings were unknown, and where, at all events, they lost the advantages which they possessed in that House. He hoped, before they adjourned that evening, that they would have some assurance from Her Majesty's Government that the freedom of the House would be preserved—not merely that the two Front Benches were in a condition of friendship and amity towards each other. He knew that what he was saying now was, to a certain extent, unpalatable to the distinguished men on the two Front Benches; but, after all, those Benches, important as they were, were not all the House; and he was surprised to find that the arrangement that had been made had as yet drawn forth very little comment from those who heard the speeches made in the country during the Recess. He did not think that the Gentlemen to whom he alluded were at all wanting in strength of language when they addressed meetings in the country; but what he should like to see was a little more strenuousness in supporting in that House what they had said outside. If the Marquess of Salisbury was everything that he had been said to be outside, he (Mr. Elliot), for one, was not satisfied that the noble Marquess was a fit person to be consulted as to the provisions of the Redistribution Bill. He hoped before they adjourned some satisfaction would be given them as to the questions he had raised.

Mr. MARRIOTT said, before the Motion for Adjournment was put, he should like to express an opinion, which he thought was shared by many people both in and out of that House—namely, the bad effect the non-production of the Earl of Northbrook's Report would have in Egypt and on the Continent generally. When the Earl of Northbrook was in Egypt, the people there believed—he (Mr. Marriott) knew it to be a fact, it was published in the papers, and it was generally reported—that he had come out there to show how the indemnities for the Alexandria bombardment could be paid. Those people were now naturally very anxious about the matter; but the Prime Minister said the Report was not given because he was consulting foreign nations on the subject. He (Mr. Marriott) could only say that the 3,275 people, heads of families, who had had their property destroyed, and had been practically ruined, after waiting nearly three years, would have good reason to complain if they had to wait still longer. He, therefore, hoped that the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would, before the adjournment took place, give some indication as to when the Earl of Northbrook's Report was to be laid upon the Table.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, replying to the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), said, one of the most important and essential portions of the proposals of Her Majesty's Government at the Conference was the payment of the Alexandria indemnities; and if the proposals of Her Majesty's Government had been accepted those indemnities would have been settled. Of course, the settlement of those indemnities was a portion of any proposal as to the finances of Egypt; and he could assure the hon. and learned Member that the importance of the subject had not escaped the notice of Her Majesty's Government. With regard to the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. Elliot), who had mentioned a series of subjects as to which he hoped the freedom of Parliament would not be lost through the communications which were taking place at the present time, he (Sir Charles W.

Dilke) would not go through the whole list, but would take one example which he thought his hon. and learned Friend would admit to be a fair one—one in which his hon. and learned Friend was deeply interested, as also were the other Scotch Members—the subject of grouping of burghs in Scotland. It could not be for one moment supposed that the freedom of Parliament on such a subject could be lost through what had taken place. That was clearly a matter which must be open to the House, not only to discuss, but to decide upon. The hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) protested against taking the second reading of the Redistribution Bill two days after it was introduced. The hon. Member assumed that there would be a long debate on the Question of the second reading, and wished more time to be given; but he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) need hardly point out that the whole question of the merits of the Bill could be raised again on the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair; and, in all probability, a very considerable time would elapse between the second reading and the Committee stage, during which hon. Members and the country could make up their minds as to the course they would take in the debate on the Question that the Speaker leave the Chair. With regard to the second reading, that did not seem to him a matter on which there was a very great difference of opinion. Everybody in the House and in the country admitted that it was necessary that redistribution should be at once dealt with by Parliament; and the Question of the second reading of the Redistribution Bill was hardly so important as subsequent discussions which would arise in Committee of the Whole House. The Government themselves made the suggestion to the House that the second reading stage should be passed on rapidly with a view to the general convenience of the House. Hon. Members had been called together at this time at some inconvenience to themselves, and would be anxious, no doubt, many of them, to get back to the country. There was no great probability, he should think, of a Division against the second reading of the Bill on the merits as to whether there should or should not be a Redistribution Bill; and no doubt the House would gradually thin, and Members would go away. That was the reason why they thought it desirable to make rapid progress with the early stages of the Bill, and until further evidence reached the Government of a contrary feeling on the part of the House than had reached them, they should consider it was for the general convenience of the House that the early stages of the Bill should be rapidly passed.

MR. WOODALL: I am not at all disposed to deny that the proposal of the Prime Minister, for the Adjournment of the House for the remainder of the week, is consistent with the general convenience of hon. Members; but, inasmuch as I have obtained a very favourable place on the Paper for tomorrow, for the second reading of the Women's Suffrage Bill, and as I shall be deprived by this arrangement of the opportunity of taking the opinion of the House upon the measure of which I am in charge, it will hardly be expected that I am prepared to receive the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman with perfect equanimity. Very recently, in reply to a Question from an hon. Gentleman opposite, the Prime Minister was good enough to say that I had manifested my sincerity upon this question by having pressed forward on a former occasion the right of women householders to vote, even to the inconvenience of the Government and of the Liberal Party. I have no desire, now, to put either the one or the other to further inconvenience, by pressing my claim to bring forward the measure tomorrow. The Franchise Bill may now be supposed to be resting in tranquil security in "another place;" and we have been assured, under the most promising circumstances, that we shall have an early opportunity of discussing the Bill for the Redistribution of Seats. It does, however, appear to me to be extremely important that, before a complete and comprehensive scheme of Reform in connection with the Representation of the People is concluded, we should have, at any rate, an opportunity of discussing the important question of Women's Suffrage—the charge of which has been entrusted to me. It may, of course, be possible that when the question shall have been debated, the provision which I am anxious to introduce may be negatived; but, on the other hand, it may, as I hope, receive so large an amount of support that we may fairly and reasonably allow the claim put forward by women—that they should be afforded the opportunity of exercising the franchise concurrently with the other electors of the Three Kingdoms. The Prime Minister, a few months ago, declared his desire that this question should be submitted to, and determined by, the House as an open question—that it should be submitted on its own merits to the free, impartial, and dispassionate judgment of Parliament. I sincerely desire that the opportunity may be found for enabling the House to address itself to a question of so much importance in the manner suggested by the Prime Minister. A Bill, which has been most carefully drawn, is now in the hands of hon. Members. It is supported by a large number of hon. Members sitting on that (the Opposition) side of the House; and I think I have a right to claim for those who sit on this side that they have loyally accepted the decision arrived at in June, as to the fitness of the opportunity then selected for bringing forward the question, and that they have refrained from impeding the progress of the Franchise Bill while it has been passing through this House. I hope that this mild protest against the decision to which the House is about to come will be received as an evidence of my desire to propitiate the general feeling of the House, and to facilitate the carrying out of the proposals of the Government; but with a distinct understanding that it is my intention to bring forward this measure under more convenient circumstances. I sincerely trust that an opportunity will be given for discussing the question at as early a period as may be practicable.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, the Government must have seen from what had passed how necessary it was that a few days' adjournment should take place. He thought the House must feel that the right hon. Baronet made out a very fair plea, asking the House to deal specially with the Redistribution Bill, so as to proceed in accordance with the policy already indicated. It did seem to him that the second reading of the Bill might be taken on the general ground that the Redistribution Bill was desired on both sides of the House, and that questions of detail could be far more conveniently discussed on the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair. With regard to the observations on Egypt, he was bound to say it would be little less than scandalous if Parliament was allowed to separate without seeing the Report of the Earl of Northbrook, and without any information as to the finance of Egypt, for which not only the House, but the country and the civilized world, were looking. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) referred to the failure of the Conference; but why was it a failure? Why did Europe refuse to give the Government a mandate? He trusted that before Parliament separated some communication would be made on the subject.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he thought the action of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Elliot) was thoroughly justified by what had since fallen from the occupants of the Front Benches, who seemed to think that, an arrangement having been come to between those Benches, all opposition from below the Gangway on either side was to be deprecated. He rose to say a word on the subject, chiefly in order that the Prime Minister might not think that either inside or outside Parliament there were only a few who took the view of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Elliot). He was as much surprised as his hon. and learned Friend that there had been so few demonstrations of opinion with regard to the extraordinary compact or secret Treaty that had been entered into. He had looked in vain, however, for any protest from independent quarters of the House. Hon. Gentlemen from Ireland did not usually shrink from making a protest; but on this occasion they had been dumb. Then they used to have a small but very vigorous Party of independent Members opposite. That Party had perished through internal dissensions. They heard the other day the last shriek of liberty from the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst); and they could only conclude that the noble Lord the Leader of the Party (Lord Randolph Churchill) had gone over to the more respectable, but less independent, Bench adjoining. They were also disappointed with the quarter of the House in which he (Mr. Buchanan) sat. Those who generally took a lead in such matters were dumb. Ex-Ministers who generally sat there had not appeared, and the "corner" men were silent, so that it was left to his hon. and learned Friend, to whom they were exceedingly indebted, to briug this subject forward. Those who shared the views of his hon. and learned Friend did not wish to minimize the great benefit of getting the Franchise Bill through before Christmas. They also recognized that no one could possibly have adequately judged the situation in the way the Prime Minister could; and, therefore, so far as the right hon. Gentleman's judgment went in dealing with facts unknown to the House generally, they cheerfully bowed to the decision arrived at. They did not, however, think this opportunity should pass without calling attention to the peculiar features of the arrangement. The Prime Minister said he could give no precedent for the action taken by Her Majesty's Government on this occasion. Of course, they could not expect the Prime Minister to join in their fears as to the consequences which might ensue if other Leaders in future should take a similar course. His hon. and learned Friend said he objected to this course of action because of want of precedent, and the disadvantageous position in which Members would be put in criticizing the details of the Bill. He was grateful for the statement of the President of the Local Government Board. So far as he understood the right hon. Gentleman, he meant to say the question of the grouping of burghs was not to be one of the matters which was to be decided by arrangement between the two Front Benches. That would be left entirely to the judgment of the House, and the House would be free to express its opinion and propose Amendments as if no such arrangement had been entered into—that was to say, if Amendments were moved, the Government would not be able to say this was a matter which had been arranged with the Opposition, and, therefore, they must consider it a vital question. That was good as far as it went; but what his hon. and learned Friend desired was that, as far as possible, specific questions involving principles should be left to the judgment of the House.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that he did not propose to intervene long between the Government and the revolt of the Scotch "rump." It was clear that when the Redistribution Bill was introduced into that House the Government would have to stand or fall by it—if they were defeated upon it they must go out, or else they would break faith with the Leaders of the Opposition. With regard to the present position of Egyptian finance, the situation was grave enough; but the gravity of the situation had been greatly enhanced by the refusal of Her Majesty's Government to make any early statement to the House on the subject of the Earl of Northbrook's Report. Egypt had incurred a deficiency of £8,000,000, for which Her Majesty's Government were morally and practically responsible. As long ago as last July Her Majesty's Government had promised to make a statement upon the subject; but now they said that they were wholly unable to lay the Earl of Northbrook's Report before the House. He understood the truth to be that Ministers had practically rejected that Report, and that the Earl of Northbrook's Mission had consequently been added to the long list of failures in Egypt. The Government was now seeking to gain time. That was a state of things which that House had a right to resent; and it might lead them into a very dangerous and, possibly, very humiliating position in Egypt. Having, at the present moment, 16,000 troops making their way southward in Egypt, they might soon find themselves under notice to quit from the Powers. It would be a scandal if the Government were to allow that Sitting to be adjourned without their making some definite statement with regard to Egypt. The House ought to have an opportunity of discussing the representation of minorities by proportional voting before the second reading of the Redistribution Bill was entered upon. If hon. Members who were interested in proportional voting were in earnest, he would suggest to the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) to move, as an Amendment to the Prime Minister's Motion, that the House should only adjourn until Friday.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he had always felt that Her Majesty's Government would break faith with the House of Commons if they introduced their Bill for Redistribution before receiving a satisfactory pledge for the passing of the Franchise Bill. Until they arrived at that position he was not disposed to quarrel with the attitude they took up on the question. To turn to another matter, early in the evening he had put a Question to the Prime

Minister with regard to the peculiarity in the other House which allowed a Peer to become a permanent Civil servant without vacating his seat in the House of Lords; and it was obvious, from the right hon. Gentleman's reply, that he did not think the peculiarity could be defended. He (Mr. Arnold) now begged to give Notice that on the earliest possible day in the present Sitting, or the next Session of Parliament, he would move for a—

> "Select Committee to inquire into the number of Peers in Parliament; their qualifications and privileges as such; into the Constitution of the House of Lords, its powers, privileges, and immunities; also into the manner in which conferences are held with that House and communications made between the Lords and Commons, and in which Private Bills are referred to separate Committees of the two Houses of Parliament."

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, he did not think some of his hon. Friends made sufficient allowance for the position of the Government. What was their position last Monday when the Prime Minister made his memorable statement? There were only two courses open to the Prime Minister. The one was to fight the battle out with the House of Lords; and the other was to make some arrangement—he would not say compromise—by which the Franchise Bill would be carried. He honestly regretted that the Prime Minister had not elected to fight out the battle; because he believed that by so doing he was certain to have come off victorious, and would have done great good to the country and to himself. But the right hon. Gentleman decided not to take that course; and he (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) did not blame him for not doing so. Something had, however, to be done, and those who quarrelled with the Government did not seem to remember the proverb that "Necessity has no law." Necessity drove the Prime Minister to do what he had done; and the necessity, he regretted to say, was the House of Lords, which he hoped some day would be done away with. His hon. Friends, furthermore, did not always seem to remember the change that had come over the political situation. No doubt at the end of last Session the Government said they would not bring in a Redistribution Bill if it were in any way to imperil the Franchise Bill. The Government had stood to that ground. They had not receded from it. The Government found that the whole political situation was changed. They had found that the Marquess of Salisbury had become a Radical. As soon as it was found that the Marquess of Salisbury and his Friends were talking about electoral districts and so forth, the Prime Minister saw at once there would be no danger—that the bringing in of the Redistribution Bill now, instead of endangering the Franchise Bill, was the very way to get it carried. He, for one, thought the Government had done the right thing in this matter. He did not want to use any hard word; but it was a little feminine to complain of the Redistribution Bill because it came from the Tories. He was glad to take a good Bill from anybody. He was delighted to find that the Tories were becoming Radicals, and were going to give a Bill in accordance with the views of the Liberal Leaders. The Government were taking a wise course in moving the adjournment of the House. They could do no good sitting there that week. The Government, however, knew that they stood or fell by the scheme. If the Bill was one which was not acceptable to the Liberal Party below the Gangway, it would go hard with the Government. He imagined they were bound to bring in a Bill to satisfy their own side—it might satisfy the Tories as well; and if the Bill was a good one it would have the hearty support of the Radical Party.

Sir DONALD CURRIE wished to say a single word to prevent any misapprehension as to the views of the Scotch Members on this question. He gave his hearty support to the Government in the efforts they were now making to introduce a good Redistribution Bill; and he believed that their practical way of arriving at a solution of the difficulty would have the approval of the people of Scotland.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, that whatever it was necessary to do with reference to the Redistribution Bill found its justification in what was stated by the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson). It was an acknowledgment of the supremacy of the House of Lords. He trusted, and indeed believed, that this was the last occasion on which a man occupying the position of the present Prime Minister would find it necessary to pursue that course which he (Mr. Illingworth) admitted the right hon. Gentleman had been justified in adopting. He would go a step further, and say he did not believe that any other Prime Minister could possibly have taken the course which the right hon. Gentleman had taken at the stage which this controversy had reached without bringing home to his own Party a feeling of the deepest resentment on the part of the Liberals of this country. He admitted the country was justified in continuing its unkroken confidence in the present Prime Minister. It was true he could imagine that if the right hon. Gentleman had been a quarter of a century younger he would, like many men out-of-doors, have rather enjoyed a conflict than otherwise, and might have brought on the final conflict with the House of Lords, which would have put them either out of existence or into a very different position to that which they had occupied in the past. He was glad to say that some satisfaction had been given by the statement of the President of the Local Government Board upon the important question of grouping boroughs. He had been afraid, from qualifications and reservations made by him in speaking a week ago, that the right hon. Gentleman was lending some countenance to what all Liberals must regard as the heresy of severing the urban from the rural voters of the country. Nothing, in his judgment, would be more pernicious than that, besides recognizing a House controlled by land, property, and privilege, they should submit to so monstrous a demand as that the agricultural interest should be separated from the rest of the country, as though their interests were antagonistic. There were many important questions still unsettled on which they had not had full assurances from the Prime Minister. There was the very important question of the sub-division of seats. He confessed he would very much rather that the Prime Minister had taken his "cue" from the Liberal side of the House than from the other side, which, however, he was obliged to recognize on this occasion. There was, however, no misgiving on the part of the Radical Party as to the loyalty of the Prime Minister; and they believed that, in the unusual and extraordinary course he had taken, he was seeking to realize for the country at a very early period, not only the Franchise Bill, which the country had approved, but also a Redistribution Bill, which would adequately represent the feelings of the country. He hoped and believed that was the last occasion on which the shaping of a great public measure when the Liberal Party was in power would be in any way committed to their opponents in the other House.

MR. LABOUCHERE held that the strong feeling which prevailed in the country against the House of Lords would be increased by the fact that the Prime Minister, backed though he was by a great popular majority, had been compelled to accept recommendations from the Marquess of Salisbury as a condition of the passage of the Franchise Bill. For his own part, when the Redistribution Bill was introduced, he should put everything that was good in it down to the Prime Minister, and everything that was bad in it to the Marquess of Salisbury. Consequently he, and probably other Gentlemen, would not adopt the same attitude in regard to the measure that they had taken up with regard to the Franchise Bill—the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill—but would express their opinions freely as to each particular clause in the Bill; and, whether they got majorities or not, they would move clauses to make the Bill more Radical than it was.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—EXECUTION OF JOSEPH POOLE.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. O'BRIEN, who rose, amid considerable interruption, to call attention to the circumstances attending the execution of Joseph Poole for the murder of a man named Kenny beneath the railway arch at Seville Place, Dublin, on the night of the 4th of July, 1882, said, he was not surprised, judging from the reception he had met with, that English Members did not like to be so often reminded of the scandals which existed in the Irish administration of justice. They had only to blame themselves and Earl Spencer for persistently setting their faces against inquiry in any shape or form. The English Members might have the power of voting down the Irish Members; but they would not have the power of silencing them. He believed that nine-tenths of the Irish people were of opinion that there were guilty secrets connected with the administration, and that this was the reason that all inquiry was refused. He believed that if one-tenth of the charges were made against the English Department a thorough and searching investigation would have been made for the purpose of settling the question one way or other. It would appear, from the evidence which was advanced against Poole by the Crown, that the informer Lamie, who was the principal witness against Poole, had, in his original depositions, given information, not against Poole, but against three other men for conspiring to murder him. The case which had been made out by the Crown was that the murder was the result of a feud between rival sections of the Fenian organization — one called the Council Party and the other the Stephenite Party. The fact was, however, that both Poole and Kenny belonged to the Stephenite Party, and there never was the slightest evidence of enmity between them, but quite the contrary. The conduct of Poole throughout the entire proceedings was shown to be the very reverse of what an assassin would naturally be. It was shown that Poole was drinking in the most friendly manner with the deceased and his friends, and the suggestion that he should accompany Poole came from the deceased himself. Poole was also shown to have been quite unarmed, and there was not the slightest piece of evidence to show he had struck the deceased a blow. There was nothing whatever inconsistent with the theory that Poole ran away, because he was, or believed himself to be, the object of attack. What was more natural than that Kenny, when attacked in the dark, should cry out to the friend who had been with him? What more natural than that Poole, knowing that there was a plot on foot to kill himself, should take to his heels, having no firearms about him? The Crown had laid a good deal of stress on his not having given the alarm to the police, and his beating up Lamie in the middle of the night and proceeding to remove documents from his lodgings. But was that at all surprising? Poole was undoubtedly implicated in a secret society. He would probably prefer to take his chance of being hanged rather than give his confederates fresh grounds for suspicion and vengeance against him by having recourse to the police. He knew he would be identified as the last man seen in Kenny's company, and that he would be sure to be arrested. That being so, was it not rather a fact in his favour that he stood his ground himself, knowing that he had nothing to fear from the murder, but that he got the illegal documents out of the way, believing that they would bring quite another charge upon him—a charge of treason—a charge that he knew could be substantiated? But Lamie made another deposition which not merely did not commit, but triumphantly acquitted, Poole. The chain of suspicious circumstances, at all events, was all that the Crown were able to bring against him, and upon that state of the evidence the jury disagreed, a jury of the most select character, composed of the cream of a panel of 200 of the most trusty special jurors in Ireland, after 47 even of these jurors had been told by the Crown to stand by. Lamie was exactly the type of creature whom the Dublin jury in Fitzgerald's case the other day branded as unworthy of belief. He was, on his own confession, a professional informer. He stated—

> "I gave information before I was arrested. When I gave the information I did not know I would be arrested, and did not expect to be."

Therefore, he was a mercenary witness of the worst type. He admitted also that he was at the head of a plot for blowing up, with dynamite, a houseful of Crown witnesses at Ballybough. No doubt, if the whole truth were out, they would find that he was one of Detective Inspector French's professional battalion of testimony, and that he was engaged in organizing these murders out of the Secret Service Fund, like M'Dermott, who organized the dynamite conspiracy in Cork; Noonan, who was to have arranged the murder of Judge Barry, and the Policeman Woods, who set up as blacksmith and a secret conspirator in Tubbercurry. It was all part of one system—the same inner circle organized by Mr. French and Mr. Jenkinson. The public had as yet only got a vague glimpse of the business, and the Government was doing its best, by refusing inquiry, to keep it dark. It was perfectly possible that if all were known it would turn out that the Phœnix Park murders could be traced to the same agency; at any rate, that was the sort of a man on whose evidence Poole's life was taken. Lamie had made two depositions; one, as he had said, was made in the police office against the three men who were charged with conspiring to murder Poole, and that, of course, was made publicly. But on the previous day another statement had been taken secretly in Kilmainham Gaol by Mr. John Adye Curran, who was employed in carrying on these secret Star Chamber inquisitions. This statement, which was the foundation of Lamie's evidence the next day, was set out in full in the brief that was laid before the Crown Counsel. Taken in connection with the circumstances under which they found these two men together in Kenny's house that night, his statement seemed to him to demolish, to annihilate, the theory that Poole was either the murderer of Kenny or the decoy used by the murderers. Then they had the line distinctly drawn between Poole and the murderers. Neither Poole or Lamie could say who they were. All Lamie would say was that "it is likely he knew them afterwards." Was it credible that Poole could have arranged such a plot with men whom he did not even know? Was it credible that he would have gone on such an expedition without a revolver?

> "It was not Poole that murdered Kenny; he never struck a blow or fired a shot that night."

That statement was made, not in reference to any charge against Poole, but in reference to a charge against others of compassing the murder of Poole himself. It was, therefore, all the more likely to be reliable, as it could not have been swearing to order, such as there might have been afterwards when Poole was in the dock, and when the object was to convict him. But now came in the most extraordinary sequel of the law. Before the second trial it became a matter of great concern to these officials to patch up the evidence, if possible, with something fresh. What they wanted of all things was some light upon what happened under the railway arch—something that would clinch the fact of Poole's participation in the murder. He would now have to give the House some evidence of their efforts in this direction, and again he would remind hon. Members that he did not offer this evidence as conclusive; but, taken in connection with all the other accumulating proofs of the reckless and terrible methods in which the Crown officials organized convictions in Ireland, he said that nothing short of guilty apprehension of the result could account for the unwillingness of the Crown officials to submit these charges once for all to a searching and independent inquiry. In Poole's statement in the dock denying his guilt, reference was made to Lizzie Kearns, the sweetheart of Grundy, who was at the time in prison. Poole, of course, did not know what was happening in Clonmel Gaol, where Grundy was; but the moment Grundy's sentence expired, in September last, he made a statutory declaration corroborating in a remarkable way the attempt of the police to extract false evidence from this girl, and showed how Mr. Mallon, of the detective force, had visited him in gaol, and tried to force him to swear against Poole. To that extraordinary statement came a still more extraordinary reply from Mr. Mallon in the form of a communique to *The Evening Mail*, which he had never repudiated, and which bore all the marks of official inspiration, and in which the facts were practically admitted. It would be only weakening the effect of the facts he had laid before the House to comment upon them until they knew what explanation the Crown could offer of them, if they could offer any. He had told them of what a flimsy well of suspicion the Crown case was formed. The Crown knew and confessed that Poole was himself under sentence of death, and that several attempts were made to murder him. They accused him of murdering Kenny, because he was found in his company in Kenny's own house, visible to all the world, and because Kenny, of his own motion, volunteered to accompany him a bit of the way home. The Crown suppressed the critical and vital statements of their own informer—that Poole was unarmed that night; that he never fired a shot or struck a blow at Kenny; and that he did not even know who the men were who rushed at them under the railway arch. Even with these statements concealed from them a Prevention of Crime Act jury refused to convict upon the evidence. They had the Crown detectives and the Crown Solicitor tempting the convicted prisoner in Clonmel

Gaol to supply the missing link for their bringing him up to Dublin between the first and second trials, dangling his liberty and a fortune with his sweetheart before his eyes, and making the desperate effort to get a conviction by hook or crook. A conviction they got, after packing a second jury in a manner so shameless that when they contrasted their challenges in that case with their absence of challenges in the Cornwall case, he wondered the Law Officers of the Crown did not blush for shame when they assured that House that there was no such thing as jury-packing in Ireland. Poole was hanged. To the hour of his death he protested his absolute innocence of the murder. The chaplain of the prison and the good Sister of Charity, an English lady, who attended him every day after his sentence, were as convinced as they were of their own existence that he was hanged in the wrong—that he was judicially murdered; and unless these horrible suspicions, amounting almost to certainties, were tested by honest and open investigation, he believed that man's blood would be upon those who organized his murder, and upon those who might make themselves assenting parties to it. What took Mallon into a convict prison at all touting for evidence? Would the Solicitor General for Ireland honestly tell the House that night whether or not it was to be an understood maxim of Government in Ireland that convicted prisoners and convicted murderers were to be tempted to swear themselves out of penal servitude whenever the Crown were in want of evidence to hound down a political opponent? Let him answer that candidly, and let the House approve of it, if they liked, by an honest vote; but if that was not his position let him explain on what principle his detectives went around to the convict prisons to fish out Delaney, the murderer, and Tubridy, the moonlighter, or upon what principle Mallon had a secret interview in the gaol, and Mr. George Bolton a secret interview in the cell, with a convicted prisoner, with the view of making him a witness against Poole at the vital moment when the jury had just refused to convict on the evidence as it stood.

Mr. DEASY commented on the empty appearance of the House, and particularly of the Benches on the Ministerial side.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. DEASY, continuing, said, it was a matter of great difficulty for him to understand how the jury in this case could have returned a verdict against Poole on the evidence which had been submitted to them. He hoped they would have some explanation of the way this trial had been managed from the present Chief Secretary, because he appeared to have taken Mr. Bolton specially under his protection. In the first trial 25 jurors had been challenged, and in the second 47, and they were all of the same religious persuasion — namely, Roman Catholics. He did not know what explanation would be given of that, or of the fact that in the trial of Cornwall not one juror was challenged. It was a striking and significant fact that when Mr. Mallon had failed the services of Mr. Bolton were called into requisition; and he saw that unfortunate man Grundy, who had been brought up specially from Clonmel, and was tempted with a bribe of £500 to give the necessary evidence, and that in addition to the money reward he would be in a position to marry his sweetheart. The Irish people would insist on bringing these matters before the House so long as justice was administered in Ireland in the way it was at present administered. It was useless for the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland to say, as he supposed he would say in reply, that the granting an inquiry would tend to destroy public confidence in the administration of justice in Ireland. He therefore hoped that the present Chief Secretary would himself offer some explanation of the matter.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, the hon. Member for Mallow had dealt with two matters of an entirely different character. He had asked the House to review the trial of Joseph Poole; and, secondly, he had brought forward an alleged attempt to induce a person named Grundy to give evidence upon that trial; but, as that alleged attempt did not succeed, it could not be said to have affected the trial. In being asked to review the evidence upon which Poole was found guilty, the House was in a very different position from that of the jury who heard the evidence, and came to the conclusion that he was the murderer of Kenny. The hon. Member had referred to the constitution of the jury, and said that on the first trial 47 persons were ordered to stand by; but the exact number was 32, including Protestants as well as Catholics. He should be sorry to think that either Catholics or Protestants would not be capable of giving a just verdict in the case of the murder of a dock labourer. He would now give an outline of the evidence for the Crown. That evidence showed that this man Kenny was murdered under a railway arch about half-past 12 o'clock at night. He received four pistol-shots, and eight stabs of a chisel. It was not necessary in point of law, nor was there any evidence, to show that Poole either shot or stabbed the man. But the evidence did show that close on 12 o'clock on the night in question Poole went with the murdered man to the house of the latter—that he lured him out; that he accompanied him; and that a short time afterwards the man was murdered. The suggestion on the part of the prisoner was that Poole was the man whom it was intended to murder; and would anyone suppose that four shots were fired and eight stabs of a chisel given to the wrong man after he had cried out "Joe, Joe?" They had the startling fact that at half-past 12 o'clock at night there were lying in wait several men, and that beyond doubt those men were waiting for someone. Was it not obvious that they were waiting for the man they murdered. Every argument which had been presented that night by the hon. Member was addressed to the jury by Poole's counsel, with, at all events, as much force as the hon. Member had employed. No one could for a moment doubt that Poole was the murderer of Kenny. Either Poole or Kenny was the person whom it was intended to murder; and the jury were not very wrong in coming to the conclusion that it was not the man who was appealed to to save the other. It was perfectly true that one of the witnesses, Mrs. Kelly, with whom Kenny lodged, stated that Kenny was ready to go with Poole. [Mr. O'BRIEN: And so did his wife.] That was one of the important points laid before the jury. The evidence showed that Poole was the last man seen in the murdered man's company. The next witness was a man named Lamie, the brother-in-law of Poole, and it was suggested that he wilfully gave false evidence to hang his own brother-in-law. This man proved that they were members of the same Fenian circle, and, further, that before the murder Poole told him that Kenny had betrayed the secrets of the society and was to be shot. Anyone who knew anything of the unfortunate history of Ireland at the time must know that that was one of the reasons why many a man lost his life. Lamie also proved that on the night of the murder Poole came to him and told him that Kenny was dead, and described the manner in which the deed had been committed by shots and stabs. Then Poole told him that he wanted to go to his lodgings to remove some papers. Hon. Members said that the reason of that was because he was a member of a secret society. But was it the act of an innocent man? It was admitted by the hon. Member for Mallow that they both went to remove the papers. Upon evidence being given that Lamie and Poole went to the house of a man named Francis Grundy and breakfasted there, and that Lamie, Poole, and Grundy the same day visited the treasurer of the circle of which they were Members and received some money from him, the second jury came to the conclusion that Poole was not an innocent man; that he was not the man intended to be murdered; and that he was the person who lured Kenny to the place where, beyond all doubt, some men were waiting to commit the crime. He contended that the man intended to be murdered was the man who was murdered. With regard to the question as to whether the man Grundy was waited upon by any person when in prison, he might say that it could not have affected the evidence upon which the jury arrived at their verdict, because Grundy was not examined. Kenny, the murdered man, was buried on the 6th of July, 1882. On that day, after the funeral, three men, one of whom was Grundy, went to the house of the widow, who had given evidence at the inquest the day before, which went to implicate some of the men under arrest, and threatened that if she gave any information on the subject she would be laid beside her husband. For that cowardly attempt to intimidate the woman—

[Several Irish MEMBERS: Hear, hear!]—he was glad to hear hon. Members approve that definition—for that cowardly attempt to intimidate the widow Kenny, Grundy and the two other men were convicted on the 19th of August. After the conviction of these men Lamie gave evidence to the effect that he visited Grundy's house in company with Poole, between 5 and 6 o'clock on the morning in question. Having given that evidence, the Attorney General of the day, Mr. Johnson, came to the conclusion that Lamie was a tainted witness, and that his evidence should, in the interests of justice, be inquired into in the interval between the two trials. That direction having been given, Mr. Bolton was bound to obey it. Grundy was brought up to Kilmainham, and was there seen by Mr. Bolton for a few minutes, who asked him whether Lamie and Poole visited his house as Lamie had said. The prisoner replied that he refused to give any information, and the interview ended at once, and he was sent back to Clonmel Gaol. It had never been suggested that Grundy had taken any part in the murder, and it was impossible that he should be asked to give false evidence. What was wanted was that Mr. Bolton should test the evidence given by Lamie, and ascertain whether he was telling the truth. Grundy had stated that three persons, Mr. Mallon, Mr. Simmonds, and Mr. Bolton, asked him to give false evidence in order to prove that Poole committed the murder under the arch. It was impossible that Grundy could have been asked to give such evidence, which wholly unnecessary, and which was never a part of the evidence of the prosecution. Mr. Mallon had no connection whatever with the trial of Poole. He was then engaged in procuring evidence about the terrible Phœnix Park murders, and, thinking Grundy might throw some light upon them, Mr. Mallon saw him in gaol; but Mr. Mallon did not refer to Poole's case, and the only person who did refer to it was Grundy himself, who made a complaint that he, an innocent man, had been convicted wrongly for intimidating a witness, and that he had nothing to do with Kenny's murder. He told Mr. Mallon to ask Lizzie Kearns about it. Mr. Mallon did ask Lizzie Kearns, and went back to Grundy and told him he was satisfied he had no hand, act, or part in the murder of Kenny. There was no doubt that Mr. Mallon, who was undoubtedly instrumental in bringing to justice some of the greatest malefactors in Ireland, was unpopular with some persons. He had been concerned in the Phœnix Park murder investigation. He denied that Mr. Mallon had published a statement in the newspapers—some person had taken the liberty of interviewing him, and had put a number of comments of his own upon the case. He thought it was very regrettable that such a course should be taken. Mr. Bolton also, the moment that this declaration was printed, had made a statement to the same effect. Did the House suppose that a man of the character of Grundy was to be believed against the statements of these gentlemen, and was the House now to sit in judgment on the verdict of a jury given a year ago? No one who valued evidence in the slightest degree could suppose that Grundy was a man whose statement, brought forward in the circumstances in which it had been, could have the slightest credit. All the arguments which had been advanced that night were put forward by the able counsel who defended the prisoner.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that he knew nothing of the facts of the case, but had listened with the greatest interest to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland; and he was quite sure that the case on the other side had been most ably put before the House. But he had also listened to it with the greatest possible pain, because he thought that it was his duty to protest against criminal cases being argued in that House as if before a jury. The House of Commons was not a Court of Criminal Appeal, and nothing would have induced him to speak on this case had he not felt it his duty to make a protest in the strongest possible terms against its being made one. There were two ways in which persons who objected to the decision of a Judge and a jury might have the matter set right. In the first place, they might go to such Court of Appeal as the law provided; and, in the second place, if the law had not provided a sufficient appeal, they might appeal to the Crown, to the Lord Lieutenant in Ireland, or to the Secretary of State in England. But when a case had been properly tried and heard before the appointed tribunal, there was only one Constitutional way in which to attac the Judge in that House, and that was by an Address to the Crown to remove him from the Bench if his conduct was complained of. That was a point of the Constitution of this country which could not be too strongly enforced; and he would recommend the observation to the notice of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan). In the first place, it threw the responsibility on the Judge; and the House ought not to interfere with any Judge, unless upon the Motion of a person who was ready to come forward in that way. That was why he had said that he had listened with pain to the speech which he had heard; and he had also heard with great regret that the hon. Member for Louth, earlier in the evening, had given Notice that he would call attention to a recent judgment of Mr. Justice Manisty. If the hon. Gentleman had anything to say against that Judge let him bring forward a Motion to remove him from the Bench. Another way in which the House of Commons could legitimately interfere was when the Advisers of the Crown had failed in their duty. That was a direct attack upon the Lord Lieutenant, or the Secretary of State, as the case might be. If they had advised the Crown wrongly, let the Advisers of the Crown be attacked by Motion before the House; but to bring the matter forward upon a mere Motion for Adjournment was of no use at all. Those, he contended, were the only two functions in which the House could properly deal in criminal cases; and those who departed from this principle were invading the first principles of the Constitution, and were invading also the liberty of the subject. When religious or political questions came to the front, and feelings ran high upon such questions, the greatest possible safeguard they could have from the tyranny of a majority of the House was an absolute dependence upon a Judge and a jury. That was a liberty which every other country in the world had sought to gain, and which no other country had attained. He appealed to hon. Members not to attack a Judge except in the only Constitutional way—that was to say, unless they were prepared to attack him by Motion. If they were not, what was the use of all these arguments? They were brought forward at a time when no vote could be taken upon them. The Question before the House was its adjournment, and no decision could be taken upon the question that had now been raised. The House of Commons could never, by any possibility, be made a Court of Appeal in criminal cases; if it was, farewell to the liberty of the subject. If any remedy for such cases was applied, let it be in the form of a Court of Criminal Appeal. That was not now the law; whether it would be was not for him now to discuss. But he would appeal to hon. Members below the Gangway, if they wished to stand up for the liberties of their country, to do so by striving their best for the maintenance of trial by jury, by seeing that proper Judges were appointed, that juries were properly struck, and let them help, if they thought fit, in legislating for a Court of Criminal Appeal. If not, it was in their power to get redress; but it was not for them to come forward and, by the un-Constitutional attempts they had made use of, ask the House of Commons to review a decision given in a Court of Law. If a Judge was to be attacked, he ought to be attacked directly in a proper Constitutional manner.

Mr. SEXTON said, that while there could be no exception taken as to the soundness of the general views he had put forward, he (Mr. Sexton) must confess that he was at a loss to understand the line of argument pursued by the previous speaker (Sir R. Assheton Cross). His (Mr. Sexton's) reply to it was that, as to their not being able to arrive at any decision upon the matter, they could—that was, all who thought Joseph Poole had been unjustly hanged—vote against the adjournment. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had, at the outset, confessed, with almost child-like simplicity and frankness, his ignorance of the case. This was a singular qualification for one who opposed the Motion. If he was always as ready to accept the speech of the Representatives of the Crown, he (Mr. Sexton) could assure him that the Crown officials would be very glad indeed to get his name upon the Crimes Act panel in Dublin. With regard to the right hon. Gentleman's statement that the House of Commons could not be made a Court of Criminal Appeal, he (Mr. Sexton) would join issue with him upon that point. He would remind him of a recent case, that of Bryan Kilmartin, whose case he (Mr. Sexton) had brought under the attention of the House. Bryan Kilmartin was in Chatham Convict Prison, sentenced to confinement for life; and yet, after debate in that House, the Crown was compelled to institute a fresh inquiry into the case which, as it resulted in proving the poor man's innocence, they allowed him to walk out of prison a free man. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, in his speech, had pleaded the lapse of time since the conviction of Poole. He (Mr. Sexton) would ask, were the claims of justice to be denied because of the lapse of time? If that was the case, what was to be said of the action of the Crown with reference to Edmund Galley, who was sent into penal servitude by an English Judge? Forty years had passed before the Government of England took a single step to do him justice. In the face of these facts, could the hon. and learned Gentleman urge the lapse of one year as a reason why silence should be maintained upon the subject, as to whether Joseph Poole was justly or unjustly hanged? The hon. and learned Gentleman had contended that there was no evidence in his favour. The very nature of the case prevented there being any such evidence. Poole and the murdered man Kenny were personal friends and members of the same circle in political conspiracy. The members of another secret circle in Dublin formed a plot to murder Joseph Poole, and he only escaped by a fortunate chance. Kenny was, however, pursued and killed by the same circle. Referring to the circumstances of the murder, he said that Poole and Kenny, having been drinking at various public-houses, passed under a dark archway at half-past 11, on their way to Kenny's house. Had it been Poole's object to murder Kenny, he could then have effected it without difficulty. On the contrary, he accompanied Kenny to his house, and went into the presence of his wife. He thus exposed himself to attention and suspicion as being the last man in the murdered man's company. Poole then left to go home, and Kenny insisted on going a part of his way with him. The evidence showed that there was not a single effort made by Poole to lure Kenny out. When again under the dark archway, a rush was made upon them by a number of men armed with knives and revolvers; Kenny was struck down, and Poole ran away. One witness, Lamie, in his first deposition, made before suspicion was directed to anyone, swore that Poole had no arms upon him that night, and that he neither struck a blow, nor fired a shot. If Poole had left the archway with the consciousness that he had been guilty of this murder, he would have taken himself off altogether, instead of merely endeavouring to get rid of papers that implicated him in a political offence. In fact, all the arguments, inferences, and probabilities involved throughout the Poole case pointed to one irresistible conclusion, and that was the unquestionable innocence of Poole. At the time of his trial, however, a cry had arisen for blood in England, and many officials in Ireland were desirous of obtaining money and fame by their conduct of such cases. He strongly condemned the system by which agents of police, like Mr. Mallon, or such men as George Bolton, should crawl into the cells of convicted prisoners, who were helpless and at their mercy, and endeavour to induce them to swear away the liberties of persons outside. As days went by the Irish Administration appeared to be depriving themselves of any right to take a moral standard at all. The agent of the police had told the sweetheart of Grundy that if she could get the latter to swear that Poole had committed the murder, her sweetheart would be released, and they would receive money enough to get married upon. Was that the fair way of obtaining evidence against an accused person? The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland would have them believe that the visit to Clonmel by the police to Grundy was in order, forsooth, to see if he could discredit the evidence of their own witnesses. But was it to be said that such a proceeding was to be tolerated as that a bribe of £500 was to be offered by an agent of the Crown for false evidence; that the greatest and most terrible inducements were held out to a man and to a woman to swear up to the mark, and that, when all this failed, Catholic jurors should be indiscriminately ordered to stand aside? Mr. George Bolton, who had made the effort to induce this unfortunate man Grundy to give evidence, was that same

George Bolton whose character was so well known in the House, whose doings were so notorious, who had received from Judge Barry the most scathing indictment that ever any public official had been subjected to—that same George Bolton who, for weeks, occupied himself trying to get Thomas Nolan to swear against his father, a man who, notwithstanding all even George Bolton could do, was ultimately admitted to be innocent. ["Oh, oh!"] Was he incapable of conduct such as this? The well-spring and fountain of the miserable Tubbercurry prosecution also was Crown corruption. He asked a few days ago, whether it was true if that man who masqueraded as a blacksmith in the forge at Tubbercurry was the policeman Woods; whether the Crown had supplied that man with money, enabled him to rent a forge, and used him as a means of seducing thoughtless young men in the district into illegal enterprizes? He was assured that the policeman masqueraded as a blacksmith, and swore in youths into illegal societies; and they all knew that a number of firearms were found by the police concealed in that forge, placed there, no doubt, by the policeman himself; but they could get no satisfactory answer from the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite on the point; but he would give due notice that a straightforward answer on the point would be insisted on. The new Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had given an equivocal answer, the sort of answer which he was now learning how to make, and in which, if he continued in his Office, he would soon become a proficient. The right hon. Gentleman replied that, indeed, the Public Service prevented his giving any answer. Did the Public Service require that policemen and police agents should go down and induce young men to illegal acts, and then make them suffer? This man Woods, otherwise Bartley, was still in the police service as a detective. Of course, it was only reasonable that Mr. George Bolton and his colleagues should deny these allegations; but they could not forget that the charges that had already been proved against that gentleman were too numerous to render doubt admissible. He (Mr. Sexton) was convinced that there were men in the Public Service in Ireland who, when they once set their hearts on a conviction, whether for a capital or for a minor offence, would pause at nothing short of achievement. The case of Poole was but another instance of the horrible effects of the system whereby innocent men were done to death in Ireland; and the refusal of the Government to grant inquiry was but another proof of the craven fear of exposure, and ruin, and public execration which haunted the minds of certain Crown officials in Ireland.

MR. LEAMY said, the question before the House was one of the very greatest importance; and he wished the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland would give the discussion his attention. He (Mr. Leamy) wished to know whether the evidence of Lamie, taken at the secret inquiry, and which appeared in the Crown brief, was furnished to the prisoner's counsel? That was a point which ought to be cleared up. The account of the interview between Mr. Mallon and the correspondent of *The Evening Mail* had never been contradicted—that Mr. Mallon stated that the guilty persons had long since gone away; that it had been elicited that Kenny was to be assassinated before he met Poole at all, and other statements. Significant and even startling as were the matters in that interview, Mallon had never contradicted the accuracy of the report which was written by the representative of a paper which was a firm and consistent supporter of the Executive so long as the latter attacked the people. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland had defended Mr. Bolton, and not only that, but an English gentleman was sent over to Ireland to act as Chief Secretary, and found that he had to support a man whom the whole of the country believed to be a blackguard. He (Mr. Leamy) was convinced no honest man in Ireland would believe a word from George Bolton. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland himself, he was certain, did not believe him. The Lord Lieutenant knew he was a scoundrel.

MR. CALLAN: *Arcades ambo.* ["Order, order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: It appears to me, from what I heard, that the hon. Member for Louth has made use of an expression which is not in Order.

MR. CALLAN: I said tantamount to this—that the Lord Lieutenant and

George Bolton were both Crown officials.

Mr. SPEAKER: It was an irregular expression, and I must ask the hon. Member to withdraw it.

Mr. CALLAN: I have nothing to withdraw. I merely, as regarded Mr. Bolton and the Lord Lieutenant, used the expression *Arcades ambo*, meaning that they were both Crown officials.

Mr. LEAMY, resuming, said, that if the law was to have a proper effect in any country, the people must believe that it was properly administered. In Ireland, however, the people could not have any faith in the administration of justice. They were not now seeking to review this particular trial, but to have an inquiry instituted into the mode in which the Criminal Law was administered in Ireland. By refusing such an inquiry the Government convinced the people of Ireland that from that House no justice would come.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, that there was much to be said in favour of the course pursued by hon. Gentlemen from Ireland; for he (Mr. Newdegate) was one of those who did not think that Ireland was well governed. But while he was in favour of justice being done to Ireland, he was also in favour of justice being done to the House. He thought, therefore, that hon. Members should conform to the customs of the House, and should not bring forward matters which required confirmation by evidence without affording the House an opportunity of obtaining evidence to test the truth of the allegations that were made. The House had great reason to complain of these proceedings. While he was ready to admit that Ireland had not been well governed for over 50 years, he must warn hon. Members that if they continued to submit to them it would lose the respect of Protestants as well as of Catholics. If the House did not insist on fair opportunities of testing the conduct of Judicial Courts in Ireland it would afford ground for discontent to the people of that country. What were the means? That the House should refuse to entertain any allegations against the Courts without due Notice. Nobody could read the pages of Questions answered daily without seeing that they involved not only the Administration of Ireland, but also the conduct of the Courts of Law. In the United States now nothing was more marked than the determination of Congress that it would deliver the Supreme Court and all the Courts from the interference of Congress. The speeches that had been made induced him to appeal to the Government to attend to the advice of the right hon. Gentleman the ex-Home Secretary, and to insist that in neither House of Parliament should the proceedings of the Courts of Law be reviewed, except with full Notice and in a regular and formal manner.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that, in opposition to the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Newdegate), he maintained that it was one of the functions of the House of Commons to impeach, and, if necessary, to remove an obnoxious Judge from the Bench. The belief of the people in Ireland was that the Government refused inquiry in these cases because they were conscious that everything had not been straightforward in the conduct of them.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that Queen's County, which he had the honour to represent, would not only compare with any county in Ireland in regard to the peaceable demeanour and orderly character of its inhabitants, but it also favourably contrasted with any single county in England in every respect — moral, social, and political. There existed there absolutely no trace of any disorder or crime which the Law Officers of the Crown could put their finger on as a matter of reasonable complaint. Yet, in the quietest possible portion of that county the Government had chosen to put on the people an extra police force, as if the population were exceptionally turbulent. They had saddled the people with that most invidious, harassing, and unjust of taxes —the Police Tax; and they had enforced it in the most unfeeling and insulting manner. In two different districts of the county a large number of persons had been called upon to pay that odious and unjustifiable tax, and the people, he was glad to say, had resisted it. Those magistrates, who really knew the circumstances of the county, having lived in it four years, were as indignant about that iniquitous impost as the people who were brought before them for non-payment of it, and had expressed the strongest condemnation of it; in some instances, devising every excuse in their power to avoid passing sentences, which they knew to be unjust, against poor men, from whom sums of 1*s.* 6*d.*, or, in some cases, 1½*d.*, were sought to be recovered by legal process. The Government were unable to obtain from the Resident Justices of the Peace of those parts of the county anything to justify their stupid, infatuated, and brutal conduct, which was driving the people into antagonism to the Administration of Ireland, and making them feel more than ever they did that it was something alien to them. The Government, in fact, were obliged to fall back on the whisperings of a single Resident Magistrate and a single police officer. Before they got Home Rule, no doubt, they would have to fight; but if they really wanted something to stimulate the people in favour of that cause, its advocates could not wish for anything better than the wanton and tyrannical action of the Irish Executive in that matter. He wished to know whether the Government intended to continue this impost; and whether it was the intention of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to cause inquiry to be made as to the levying of this tax in the Queen's County?

Mr. KENNY said, he rose to call attention to the position of Mr. Clifford Lloyd as a Resident Magistrate of Ireland. In connection with the matter, he wished to point out that that gentleman obtained leave of absence for the purpose of serving the Egyptian Government, and that, while he was placed at the head of the Police Department in Cairo, he still retained his normal position as a Resident Magistrate of Ireland. Although the then Chief Secretary for Ireland had been pressed again and again to define Mr. Lloyd's position the point had been evaded. Mr. Clifford Lloyd returned to this country some time ago from Egypt—returned, he might say, in absolute disgrace, because he could not get on with the officials in Egypt. In fact, he had left Egypt because the officials who served the Khedive refused to continue in office if he was maintained in his position. He had returned to London, and had been reinstated as a Resident Magistrate of Ireland, and placed in receipt of pay and allowances as such, although he had been absent from the country for 15 months. This was a subject, he thought, which required an explanation from the Chief Secretary for Ireland. As regarded the present position of the extra police tax, which in the County Clare had been raised—owing to the former action of Mr. Clifford Lloyd—to 1*s.* 7*d.* per head of the population, whereas in England the entire cost of the Police Force was only 2*s.* 6*d.* per head of the population, he thought they required some explanation from the Irish Law Officers, especially as to the manner in which it was adjusted; because it seemed to him that it was exacted in a manner most likely to give offence. Certain classes of persons were exempted from it on account of their social position, or on account of their influence with the Lord Lieutenant; and the whole pressure of it was brought to bear upon those who could least afford to bear it.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, I do not wish to occupy the House very long; but it will be expected of me that I should answer two or three questions which have been addressed to me. With regard to what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman who last spoke (Mr. Kenny), in reference to Mr. Clifford Lloyd, I have only to say that I have nothing to add to what I have already stated in answer to Questions. Mr. Clifford Lloyd was allowed to leave for Egypt, but without pay from the British Government. His Egyptian connection lasted until the 1st of September of this year, when he reverted to his former position of Resident Magistrate. Since then, down to the present time, he has been on leave with pay. If I at any time used the expression, which I do not think I did, for I am usually very careful in these matters, "with pay and allowances," I am not sure that I was justified in so doing. [Mr. Kenny: It appeared in the newspapers.] I cannot hold myself responsible for what appears in the newspapers. I am more acquainted with the regulations of ordinary magistrates than with those which affect Resident Magistrates; but my impression is, that Mr. Clifford Lloyd does not receive anything like the full allowances of a Resident Magistrate, although he receives the pay. He was granted leave for three months, which will expire at the end of the present month. The hon. Member asks me to give an assurance that Mr. Clifford Lloyd, at the termination of his leave of absence, will not be sent back to Ireland; but I can give no such assurance. I can give no answer "Aye" or "No" to the inquiry, as the Government have not yet decided what to do with him. As I have already said, his leave will naturally expire at the end of this month; but there is no reason why it should not be continued a little longer, if necessary, in order to give the Government time to decide as to his future position. With regard to extra police, the cost of which forms a burden on the shoulders of the inhabitants of Queen's County, and of which the hon. Member for that county (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) complained with a warmth that I can perfectly appreciate and understand, seeing that he was speaking on behalf of his constituents, I wish to say this—and I am sorry he is not present to hear my answer to the question he so pointedly addressed to me—no one would be more pleased than myself, no one would be more pleased than the Irish Executive would be, if this police tax could be modified or taken off. The hon. Member said there was no need for these extra police in Queen's County, and that the Government knew it. That was a very strong thing to say; and the hon. Member, of course, can have no real ground for saying it, because he does not know the information we possess. The fact is, we should be most happy to remove the tax at the first moment possible; but even if it became more and more apparent that it was possible, it would be impossible to take any sudden or rapid step in the matter.

Mr. PARNELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman able to tell us the Statute under which these police are sent to the Queen's County?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Under the Prevention of Crimes Act. With regard to the particular place to which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) referred, in answer to the Question he put to me the other day, I said—not what he imagines I said, that there were no actual offences committed in the district, but that there was no actual outrage, by which I meant no open crime or disorder. There has, however, been a great deal of what may be technically called outrage—namely, intimidation. In many parts of the Queen's County there is, we have reason to believe, a very open and persistent and stern system of intimidation going on; and if there were nothing worse than that in many parts of the county, it would be necessary to maintain the measures which have been adopted. I cannot follow the hon. Member into the question of particular districts; but, had he been here, I should have been glad to assure him that the fullest information is constantly sought by the Government in regard to the state of localities which are subjected to the presence of extra police, and that I will endeavour, and the Government will endeavour, to obtain fresh and even fuller reports with regard to them, in order that our action may be guided by the most accurate information we can get. The hon. Member mentioned the small sums certain small occupiers are called upon to pay —1½*d.*, and so forth. No doubt, it does sound rather ridiculous to be bringing people up before the Courts to enforce the payment of such small sums; but then their holdings are small, and it must be remembered that the small charge only covers a small space of time, and that if the period for which the tax was due were larger, a larger sum would be demanded. The 1½*d.* is only the proportion which it falls to the lot of these people to pay. But the grievance, if it exists, exists not in the smallness of the sum that is demanded, but in the fact of the tax having to be paid at all. These small taxes are irksome and unpleasant, no doubt; but a larger sum would be still more irksome and unpleasant. I should be glad if the people could be freed from it altogether. If the hon. Member had done me the honour of remaining in his place to hear me, I should have been glad to have assured him that I will, certainly, do all that I can—and I can say for Earl Spencer that he is unceasing in his endeavours to do the same thing—to obtain the very fullest information from the most reliable authorities as to the condition of the districts charged with this tax, and that, so soon as it is found that they can be relieved from the incubus, we shall be most happy to remove it. I think I have now alluded to all the subjects referred to by hon. Members, except the allegation that in one area certain places have been picked out for the imposition of the tax in preference to others. As I understand it, the exemption in the case in question was merely the exemption of the particular township in which a certain man lived.

Mr. KENNY: The whole parish in which he lived.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: That may be so. The object is to levy the tax as much as possible upon the particular localities that are supposed to be harbouring those concerned in the perpetration of crime, or to be connected with them. But, as to general cases of this kind which may take place through Ireland, I can assure the hon. Member that it has been by no desire of the Government that any exemption has been made in favour of well-to-do people; and where it has been found necessary to impose the tax upon poor districts it is an evil we not only deplore, but would do all in our power to prevent.

Mr. PARNELL said, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in reference to the imposition of the extra police tax on a section of the Queen's County, was very instructive, though very unsatisfactory; because, as he (Mr. Parnell) thought he should be able to show the House, it denoted a retrograde movement on the part of the Irish Executive in the matter of police. Shortly before the end of last Session a debate took place in the House on the subject of extra police in Ireland; and they then heard from the then Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant exactly the same declarations as those they had heard upon the present occasion from the present Chief Secretary for Ireland with regard to his desire to remove the extra police tax from the Irish counties. During the course of the debate last Session it was also shown that by far the larger proportion of the extra payments for police in Ireland were, at that time, being levied under the Act of *Will.* IV., and that the levies under the Crimes Act had shrunk to an almost infinitesimal proportion. Well, then, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman to-day, showing, as it had shown, that a county like the Queen's County—which at all times in the recent history of Ireland had been an extremely quiet one, and one extremely free from crime — had been chosen for retrograde, action on the part of the Irish Executive—retrograde, inasmuch as levying for extra police under the Crimes Act had been almost abandoned last Session by the late Chief Secretary for Ireland—was and ought to be disappointing to Irish Members and to the House. He (Mr. Parnell) submitted that the right hon. Gentleman, in respect of the charge which the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had made, had shown that he had no shadow of defence. He had been asked to say where there was the least shadow of crime and outrage in Queen's County which had necessitated this levy, but had not been able to do so; and there were no details as to other Irish counties. Might hon. Members fairly assume, or not fairly assume, that the treatment Queen's County—which, at the end of last Session, was exempt from this levy under the Crimes Act—had received was a sample of the treatment which had been meted out during the Recess to other Irish counties? They could not proceed on any assumption of the kind; but they were without information from all parts of Ireland save Queen's County. What they had heard from the hon. Member for that county augured badly for the prospect of the fulfilment of the other promises that the late Chief Secretary for Ireland had made to the Irish Members in one of the last debates of last Session—the very last, he (Mr. Parnell) thought, before the right hon. Gentleman's virtual retirement. If they found that, so far from the counties being relieved from this crushing impost, it had been put upon one of the most quiet districts—a district in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had not been able to find a single case of agrarian outrage—and it could not be to the credit of the right hon. Gentleman that this exceptional tax, which had been, practically, abandoned by the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, should be put upon this particular district—if they found that the impost had been inflicted in this way, it augured badly for the alleviation in respect of the tax under the operation of the Act of *Will.* IV., which had, practically, been promised by the late Chief Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland said there was a great deal of intimidation in parts of the Queen's County, which justified the tax; but he did not tell them what the intimidation was, or who it had been practised by. Had the right hon. Gentleman not turned over the pages of the Crimes Act; did he not know that the Legislature had armed that enactment with the most ample powers for the suppression of intimidation, or even alleged intimidation, by individuals? Could he justify to his own conscience—could he hope, or suppose for a moment, that the House of Commons would justify his contention that it was right—assuming, for the sake of argument, that there had been intimidation—instead of proceeding against the guilty persons under the abundant provisions of the Crimes Act, to levy a tax upon the whole district in punishment for the offence? Should 99 innocent persons suffer in their pockets for the offence of a single individual, in a case where the Executive, admittedly, had the power to proceed against that individual under the Intimidation Clause of the Crimes Act? Why, was it not that provision of the Crimes Act which abundantly enabled the Irish Executive to strike the guilty, and even the innocent if they desired, for intimidation, which enabled them to imprison the hon. Gentleman the Member for Westmeath (Mr. Harrington), and let him lie on a plank bed for four months, because he told the labourers that they had rights under the law as well as the tenant farmers? Why was not this provision used against the persons whom the right hon. Gentleman wished them to believe guilty of intimidation, and why were the poor peasantry in the Queen's County punished by this tax? He had no answer to the question, except that it was the superabundant stupidity and weak malignity which had distinguished the operations of the Irish Executive since May, 1882, when Lord Frederick Cavendish was cruelly and unhappily struck down in the prime of his life, which had pushed them into this in addition to all their other stupid and bungling acts. And now he (Mr. Parnell) had a word or two to say in regard to the case of Joe Poole; and he was glad that the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), by his Motion, had afforded him an opportunity of testifying his belief in regard to the case. He felt proud to bear testimony to the memory of Poole—to the fact of the high heroism with which he had, after being condemned to death for a murder committed in furtherance of a plot for his own destruction, been magnanimous enough to refuse to purchase safety from the cruel death of hanging by bearing false testimony against persons equally as innocent as himself. He (Mr. Parnell) believed he was not making any mis-statement—in fact, he was conscious that he was not making a mis-statement—when he said that after sentence was pronounced Poole might have purchased safety from the gallows by accepting the suggestions and offers of the Crown officials to bear testimony against persons who were as innocent as he was. Poole refused these offers, and went to his death. No higher heroism had ever been shown, either in the history of Ireland or in the history of any other country, than had been exhibited by Poole. And now as to his (Mr. Parnell's) reasons for considering that Poole was innocent of this crime. Poole's case had attracted his attention from the very first, the circumstances connected with it being so unusual and so extraordinary. In the first place, the unfortunate man was arrested under the Act of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) on suspicion of having been concerned in the murder, but was discharged. He was arrested a second time on suspicion under the ordinary law, and was discharged; and then a third time he was apprehended; and though between his first and his second arrests and his second and third arrests there were intervals of several months, he never made the slightest attempt to leave the country. This, in itself, would be a very sufficient reason for him (Mr. Parnell) to believe that there must be very strong doubt as to Poole's guilt in the matter. That a man accused of a crime of this kind—a terrible, and abominable, and cold-blooded crime—a man against whom there was such a *primâ facie* case as to enable him to be arrested twice, should on neither occasion attempt to fly the country, was sufficient to justify the strongest belief in his innocence. They were entitled to start with that strong presumption; but, apart from that presumption, which it was open for anyone who had had an opportunity of reading the newspapers to arrive at, they had further light thrown on the question of Poole's guilt by the evidence the Crown extracted in the course of the different judicial proceedings which took place afterwards under the Crimes Act in regard to other cases. It was sworn that there existed in Dublin two secret Associations which were in rivalry with each other. They were said to be the Council Party and the Stephenite Party. Poole and Kenny—the man for whose murder Poole was hanged—were both sworn by witnesses for the Crown to have been members of the Stephenite Party. It was also sworn that in connection with the Stephenite Party there was no Vigilance Association — namely, as it appeared from the evidence, an Association for the purpose of punishing traitors or recreant members. It was the case for the Crown that Poole had decoyed Kenny to his murder as a consequence of a decree of the Vigilance Association of the Stephenite Party. It was sworn that there was a Vigilance Association connected with the Council Party, and that that Association had formed a plot to murder Poole, and to do away with Kenny also. These two men were to be murdered because they had left the Council Party and joined the other secret Association—the Stephenite Party. But, more than that, so impressed at one time were the Crown with the strength of the evidence in this direction, that they actually arrested more than one man and charged them with conspiracy to murder several persons whom it was alleged had belonged to the Council Party. This went on for some time. Poole was twice arrested, and twice released; but not the slightest attempt was made by him to leave the country. He simply returned to his occupation, which was that of a tailor—an humble occupation, but still an honourable and respectable one. After a time the Crown got other evidence—the evidence of a man named Lamie, who was induced—under whose influence they could not now tell—to go a little further in the direction of implicating Poole; and to such an extent did Lamie go that the Crown felt themselves in a position to indict Poole for the murder of Kenny. Well, what was the real case against Poole for the murder of Kenny? It was simply that he had accompanied Kenny to his home on the night of the murder, and that Kenny, as a sort of afterthought, had followed Poole out of the house; that Poole had wished Kenny good-night, and was going away alone, when Kenny followed, offering to see him a portion of the way home; that Poole said, "No, you need not come out, I can get home very well by myself;" but that Kenny insisted on going with him, and was murdered within 100 yards or 200 yards of his own door. Well, he (Mr. Parnell) would ask anyone whether it was likely, if Poole had been the decoyer of Kenny, he would have taken steps to induce him to go out with him from his (Kenny's) own house, after the two had gone there together, so bringing the murdered man in a position to be murdered by the party who were lying in wait for him? And, before this, he would ask whether it was not likely that Poole, if he had been cognizant of the presence of this party lying in wait, would not have led Kenny into the ambush before going with him to his house? Would the murderer have taken his victim home, have wished him good-night, and then have attempted to dissuade him from accompanying him back into the street where, according to the theory of the Crown, he wished to bring him? It was obvious, it was manifest, that the action of Poole in this particular was not the action of an assassin, or of a man who was accessory to a murder. But there was a great deal more than this. From the evidence of Lamie it was evident that he was a sort of hanger-on of the two secret organizations; that probably both of them—and ultimately, no doubt, with good reason—suspected him, and that he only got into the outer secrets of either organization. From the evidence of this man given in the depositions, it was evident that there was a conspiracy on foot, of which Lamie had some inkling, to take away the life of Kenny as well as the life of Poole on the part of the Council Party. It was, therefore, absurd to suppose that this conspiracy could have been suddenly changed from a conspiracy by the Council Party into a conspiracy by the Stephenite Party for the destruction of Kenny's life. But, however that might be, the fact remained that of all the slender evidence upon which men had been convicted and sentenced to death, or sentenced to penal servitude, or sentenced to imprisonment, during the last four years of the infamous misgovernment of Ireland by England, the evidence upon which Poole was sentenced would stand out the most conspicuous example. He (Mr. Parnell) was convinced that if Joe Poole came to be tried now, after the debate on the

Maamtrasna murders, so far from being found guilty, even by the jury who did find that verdict, they would unanimously acquit him. What were the circumstances at the time of Poole's trial? Why, it was represented that there was a terrible conspiracy in Dublin to take away the lives of the Castle officials. It was supposed that Poole was in that conspiracy; but at that time a considerable volume of the evidence which had been taken privately on behalf of the Crown was not in the possession of those who defended the prisoner, and the House would be able to judge whether that evidence should not have been in the possession of the solicitor for the defence. So far as they could judge from the evidence which had come into their hands, and which now saw light for the first time, they (the Irish Members) felt convinced that, so far from Poole having had anything to do with the murder of Kenny, he was actually Kenny's friend on the night in question, and only saved his own life by flight from Kenny's side, when Kenny was attacked. As a matter of fact, Kenny fell a victim to a plot which was intended for the destruction of Poole. These were matters which, as the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) had said, ought to be investigated. It could not be maintained that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), in bringing this matter before the House to-night, had any intention—in fact, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) would, no doubt, be one of the first to admit that he had no intention—of taking the Government by surprise. The hon. and learned Gentleman knew that this subject was going to be brought forward. He had had ample notice of it—notice of it from night to night for several weeks. It had appeared on the Notice Paper of the House, and the hon. and learned Gentleman had had ample time to make himself acquainted with all the facts of the case.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, that, as it was stated that this matter appeared on the Notice Paper, he wished to remark that it did not appear on the Paper for that night. He had ascertained that fact. No doubt the hon. Member for the City of Cork would forgive him for the interruption.

Mr. PARNELL said, the hon. Gentleman's statement was perfectly correct. The Notice had been on the Paper for several nights; but it did not appear on the Paper that night. He (Mr. Parnell) was observing, when the hon. Member rose to correct him, that the hon. and learned Gentleman had had Notice that the question was to brought on; therefore the right hon. Gentleman, so far as he was concerned, and the Government, so far as they were concerned, were not taken by surprise. They could not plead that they had not had the necessary time for preparing themselves with information. No doubt, the subject should be brought forward after full and formal Notice to the House; and he trusted his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) would give such Notice—Notice of his intention to bring forward a Motion either during the present Sitting, or during the adjourned Session, if it should be an adjourned Session, or in the future coming Session, if it should be a future coming Session. Such a Notice would give not only the Government, but his (Mr. Parnell's) hon. Friends and himself, an opportunity of going more fully into the case, and of making its merits more apparent to the House than they had been able to do on the present occasion. He believed it was a question which, without impugning the conduct of the Judge who tried the case—Mr. Justice Murphy—would show, when thoroughly gone into, that the law had been unduly strained against Poole. He believed it could be shown that Poole did not get a fair trial, inasmuch as 48 jurors of the special jury panel were made to stand aside by the Crown. [An hon. Member: No; 32.] An hon. Gentleman told him 32—the difference was not very great. He was convinced that they would be able to show the House that there had been a great miscarriage of justice in this case, and that an innocent man had been sacrificed for a crime which he had never committed.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he did not rise for the purpose of unnecessarily detaining the House. No doubt, Poole's case had already been amply stated by the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), and still more lucidly, if he might say so, by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell); but he (Mr. W. Redmond) wished merely to raise his voice against the execution of this man. He knew a great many people in Dublin and other parts of Ireland who were intimately acquainted with Poole; and, from the advantage he had had of discussing the case with these people, he had not the slightest doubt that Poole had died a perfectly innocent man. Of course, it would be considered tiresome by English Members to have Members representing Irish constituencies bringing cases like this under the notice of Parliament time after time. It might be said that cases of this kind were hardly such as should be settled in the House, and that there were more important affairs awaiting discussion. But it must be remembered that the Irish Members had no opportunity, except that which was afforded to them in that House, of explaining what they considered to be a miscarriage of justice in Ireland. They had no opportunity, except in the House, of showing up cases such as that of Poole. He invited the attention of English Members to the fact that this case of Poole was not by any means a single case of its kind. It must be borne in mind during this discussion that it was not so very long since it was the duty of the Irish Members in the House to call in question the action of the Government in Ireland in connection with the Maamtrasna case, and that even prior to that they had called attention to the case of Kilmartin. Kilmartin had been released, and no doubt it was the discussion which had taken place in the House which had had the effect of bringing about that release. Unfortunately, the discussion on the Maamtrasna case had not had a similar result; but the fact that time after time the Irish Members were in a postion to bring cases of this kind under the notice of Parliament ought to be quite sufficient, if for nothing more, at least to attract the attention of English Members to the way in which affairs were carried on in Ireland. He was not present when the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) replied to the hon. Member for Mallow; but he had not the slightest doubt as to the nature of the hon. and learned Gentleman's reply of which he had been told. It was not unnatural that Gentlemen connected with the Executive in Ireland should do their best to make it appear that the law was equitably administered in that country—it was only natural that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the Solicitor General for Ireland, and the Lord Lieutenant should use their best efforts in that direction. It was only too invariably the practice of the Government to defend the Irish Executive in the House. The Executive being only fallible must occasionally be wrong; and, that being so, it would tend far more to the inspiring in the minds of the people of confidence in the Executive if Her Majesty's Ministers occasionally admitted they were wrong. It was a notorious fact, however, that, no matter how strong a case was brought against them, Members of the Government—as they had done in the case of Kilmartin, whose release they were compelled, ultimately, to order—stood up and manfully did battle for their side of the question. The late Chief Secretary for Ireland had repudiated the idea of the innocence of Kilmartin, and had practically told the Irish Members that they were to blame for bringing the case before the House, and that they would not release the man. That illustrated the point he wished to impress upon English Members—namely, that no matter whether the case of the Irish Members were good or bad, or whether the case of the Irish Executive were good or bad, Government officials always took up the defensive in the House. Would it not have been a great deal better, in the case of Kilmartin, if the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan) had stood up in his place and honestly declared that, from representations he had received from the Irish Members, he believed Kilmartin was innocent, that the Executive had erred, and that the man would be released? If the right hon. Gentleman adopted that course, he would have given great satisfaction to the House; and, still more, considerable satisfaction to the people of Ireland. Instead of doing that, however, the right hon. Gentleman assumed a defiant attitude, and took it for granted that every case brought before the House by the Irish Members—every complaint urged by them—must be either untrue or unfounded; and this position was invariably taken up, notwithstanding that the right hon. Gentleman had, occasionally, been obliged to eat the leek. He (Mr. William Redmond) did not wish to go into the Poole case, as that had already been sufficiently dealt with; but he wished to have it on record that he had given it as the opinion of the people he represented, that Joe Poole was a perfectly innocent man. He wished to draw the attention of the House to the fact that, at the time when Poole was tried and executed, and at the time the people who were arrested for the Maamtrasna outrage were tried, the Executive and the country were in a state of excitement and agitation. The agrarian agitation was at its height. The Government, with a spirit which, he supposed, was commendable in every Government, were anxious to put down agrarian crime; but, in their great anxiety to put down agrarian crime, they hurriedly took it for granted that certain outrages were of an agrarian character, when such was not the case. The country had now settled down; there was not the same agitation, and the Government were not so much afraid of agrarian crime. Now that quieter times had come round, the country was freed from excitement, and Government officials acted with more calmness, and in a more level-headed way. In the case of the Tubbercurry prisoners recently there was a fair trial, and the men were acquitted, because there was no evidence to connect them with the outrage; but he had not the slightest doubt that if the men had been arrested at the time Poole was arrested, and at the time the prisoners were arrested in the Maamtrasna case, they would have been now lying in their graves, having been executed, or would have been suffering penal servitude. He had no doubt that Joe Poole, and some of the prisoners in the Maamtrasna case, were as innocent as was Kilmartin. It was useless endeavouring to show the English Members and the English people how the people of Ireland looked on these matters. If English Members would only go to Ireland, would only travel over the country, and hear the sentiments of the people with regard to the government of Dublin Castle, they would come back to the House believing that the Irish Members had much more right to occupy time with the discussion of cases of this kind than they had ever given them credit for. It was to be regretted that the Government could not be brought to book for this murder of Poole. The man was perfectly innocent of the crime for which he was hanged; but the Irish Members could do nothing more than endeavour, by every means in their power, to bring the case before the public. That was their only remedy, and he trusted it was one they would always make use of.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, he merely rose to make a protest on behalf of his constituents in the County of Waterford against the tax which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had that evening informed him had been levied upon that county. He had no hesitation in saying that a tenth part of the ordinary police employed in Ireland would be sufficient for the preservation of law and order, if the force were not required for the purpose of propping up iniquitous laws. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that in Waterford—and he knew a great deal of the county—there was no serious crime at that moment. If he had time he could give abundant proof of this. The greatest crime which appeared to him to exist in this matter on the part of his constituents was the fact that they too tamely submitted to the imposition. They might now take their cue from the answer he (Mr. Power) had received from the right hon. Gentleman that evening. Every day the opinion was gaining ground in Ireland that there was little to be got from the British Government unless the Irish people made their voices heard in no uncertain manner. He only wished to make a protest against the imposition of this tax upon his county.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 57; Noes 19: Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 21.)

House adjourned at a quarter
after Twelve o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 25th November, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading —Committee negatived — Third Reading* — Income Tax * (11), and *passed.*
Third Reading—Justices' Jurisdiction * (2); Law of Evidence Amendment * (3), and *passed.*

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES — THE WAR OFFICE AND ADMIRALTY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON said, that, in consequence of the answer given by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Sudeley) to the Question of his noble Friend (the Earl of Wemyss) yesterday on this subject, he wished to ask him whether the Government would not take means to delay any further steps with respect to the new Public Offices until they knew exactly what land there was at their disposal? He understood that it was the intention of the Government, or of a private Company, to carry out further improvements in Parliament Street, and to pull down the various buildings there. Would it not be much better, therefore, to postpone any further steps connected with those Offices until they knew what ground they would have at their disposal, and had got a general plan of the whole of the Public Offices which might be required? Before their Lordships adjourned he trusted that the noble Lord would be able to give their Lordships some kind of assurance on that subject.

LORD SUDELEY said, he could not answer the Question without Notice. He could assure the noble Lord, however, that he was under a misapprehension in thinking that a private Company proposed to take any of the ground on which the new Public Offices were to be erected. What the private Company proposed to do in the way of improving Parliament Street would not interfere in the slightest degree with the new Offices.

INCOME TAX BILL.

Read 2ª (according to order); Committee *negatived;* Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with;* Bill read 3ª, and *passed.*

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 27th November, 1884.

Their Lordships met for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 28th November, 1884.

Their Lordships met for the despatch of Judicial Business only.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 1st December, 1884.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading* —Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act Amendment* (8).
Select Committee—Infants,* *nominated.*
Committee — Representation of the People (5), *discharged.*
Royal Assent—Income Tax [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 1.]

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) — CONVENT NATIONAL SCHOOLS — GRANTS IN AID.

LORD FITZGERALD said, he had to ask the Lord President a Question of some importance, of which he had given him private Notice—namely, Whether any action had been taken in reference to the recommendation of the Commissioners of National Education, made in 1879 and in subsequent years, that the remuneration of the teachers of the Irish Convent National Schools should be augmented?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL): The question of payments to the Convent Schools is now under the consideration of the Government. But certain Rules which restricted the grants to Convent Schools have lately been considered by the National Board of Education, who, with the full approval of the Government, have made the following changes in their Code:—(1). Rescinded a Rule which prohibited grants to more than one school in connection with the same convent; (2), rescinded a Rule which excluded a nun from being a teacher in an industrial department of a National School; (3), rescinded a Rule which excluded monks and nuns not only from building grants, but also from the teacherships of 2,200 Vested Schools.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—(No. 5.)

(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that he thought it would be better, perhaps, to adhere exactly to the arrangement originally made, that the Committee stage should be taken on Thursday, when the Redistribution Bill was read a second time in the other House. There was also another reason. They understood, when they separated, that there would be no contentious matter introduced that evening. He believed a noble Friend behind him (Lord Denman) was desirous to raise the question of Woman's Suffrage. He was not prepared to support his noble Friend; but, as that was contentious matter, he thought it would be better to adjourn the Committee stage till Thursday.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he thought that they might, perhaps, have disposed of the question of Woman's Suffrage that night; but as it was contentious it could be dealt with when they were in Committee on Thursday. He would not resist the appeal of the noble Marquess to postpone the Committee till that day; and if no Amendments were then made they might fix the third reading for Friday next.

THE MARQUESS of SALISBURY said, there would be no objection to that course if the Redistribution Bill were read a second time in the other House on Thursday. If there were any resistance to passing that Bill in the other House their Lordships might have to consider what course they would pursue.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he could not see why there was any necessity for such extreme haste. They ought to know what was going to be done in the other House upon the question of redistribution before they allowed this Bill to pass from their hands. The question was one of very serious importance, for supposing that there was a breakdown, and their Lordships had passed this Bill and sent it back to the House of Commons, amended or unamended, the effect might be that this Bill would be in operation and applied to the existing constituencies, instead of what both sides had agreed to—namely, that a Redistribution of Seats Bill should come into operation at the same time as the franchise. There was no doubt of the readiness of the House to pass this Bill; but it was reasonable that they should know what course the other House would take as to the Redistribution Bill before giving up all control whatever over it. There was no need for being in haste. There was plenty of time.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he did not wish to be supposed to agree with the noble Earl. He did not apprehend the danger which the noble Earl feared—that the Franchise Bill would come into operation without a Redistribution Bill. He did not object to the postponement of the present stage of the Bill until Thursday.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he wished to say a word with respect to the statement of the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees (the Earl of Redesdale), who seemed to apprehend that the Franchise Bill would come into operation without the Redistribution Bill, and apply to the existing constituencies. That seemed to him (the Marquess of Salisbury) to be absolutely impossible. The Government had given a pledge to resign if the Redistribution Bill did not pass. Of course, their resignation would be followed by consequences in the other House which they all understood.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that he had carefully read the clauses of the Bill, and he found that there were no less than 13 matters which, as it seemed to him, ought to be altered, or, at least, made plainer than they were at present. It might be said that the right thing to do would be to give Notice of Amendments; but he was in this difficulty—that if he gave Notice of a particular Amendment in order to clear up an ambiguity in the Bill, he might be giving Notice of something contrary to the intention of the Government, which he had no desire to do; still, there were points of difficulty which should be cleared up. For instance, there was the question of what was called the service franchise. He (Lord Bramwell) could not tell whether that was meant to include any number of men, or whether it should apply to one only. Again, the household and lodger franchises were to be given if the qualifying premises were situated in a county. Whoever drew that clause had forgot that all boroughs were situate in counties; so that, as the Bill stood, it might be contended that a lodger or householder in a borough would be entitled to vote for the county, which surely could not be intended. He had written out his difficulties, and sent a copy of them to the noble and learned Earl (the Lord Chancellor), the noble and learned Earl (Earl Cairns), and the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury). If he could get any information from their Lordships as to how those doubts should be removed he should be glad.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had received the Paper referred to by his noble and learned Friend with some regret, because nothing was less desirable than that verbal criticism should be applied to the clauses of the Bill without adequate necessity. So far as the points raised by his noble and learned Friend could be regarded as raising any questions of substance, he could assure him that they had been fully considered, and a satisfactory explanation of them could be given. He did not apprehend that the slightest difficulty would arise in interpreting the Bill as it stood.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that that was precisely what he did apprehend. An interpretation might be put on the Bill in that House; but the Bill might come before others who were as incapable of interpreting it as he was. He did not want to indulge in verbal criticism; but the clauses should be made clear to all, and not be discreditable to the House which passed them.

EARL GRANVILLE remarked, that nothing could be fairer than that the noble and learned Lord should raise the objections which occurred to his very acute mind as being of importance; but the points in question could be considered in Committee. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) had said that the Government had bound themselves to resign if the Redistribution Bill failed to pass. They had bound themselves to make the Redistribution Bill a vital question; but there was another alternative to resigning.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that as the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) had alluded to him, he might state that he had been assured that his Amendments were being carefully considered by the Government. He thought it would be better, however, to defer any discussion of them till Thursday.

Order *discharged;* and House to be put into Committee on *Thursday* next.

AUSTRALIA—CONFEDERATION OF THE COLONIES.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce during the present Session a Bill to enable the Australasian Colonies to carry out the scheme of federation lately agreed to by the Intercolonial Conference in Australia?

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I am glad that the Question which has been put to me by my noble Friend gives me an opportunity, which I very much desire to have, of explaining how this matter really stands. I have seen suggestions in various quarters that the Government have not made up their minds about this Australian Bill; that they are hesitating whether to proceed with it; and that that is the cause of the delay in bringing it in. For that statement there is no shadow of foundation. We are pledged to bring in the Bill, and we have not the least wish to withdraw from our pledge; and I am sanguine enough to believe that it will meet with very little opposition either here or "elsewhere." It is, in fact, the carrying into effect of the policy which, on the part of the Colonial Office, I suggested last year; and I am, therefore, the last person likely to be indifferent to its success. The reasons which have prevented me from bringing it in during this Autumn Session have been various. There was the inevitable uncertainty until within the last few days as to the duration of our Sittings, and the Business that would come before us; and on examining the draft of the Bill we have found various points of detail on which Amendments seem desirable; and before introducing these Amendments we have thought it well to consult the Governments of the various Colonies. We shall have their answer early in the spring, and practically no time will be lost. It will be an additional advantage if the Legislatures of New South Wales and New Zealand should so far reconsider their present view as to be willing to join; but as the Bill does not create any compulsory union, but only empowers Colonies to act together for certain purposes, if they choose to unite, unanimity among the Colonies is not necessary.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 1*st December*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—New Members Sworn—William Sproston Caine, esquire, *for* Scarborough; Thomas Sutherland, esquire, *for* Greenock.

Public Bills—*Ordered — First Reading*—Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution [40]; Suspension of Evictions (Scotland)* [41]; Industrial and Reformatory Schools (Ireland) Loans* [42]; Peasant Proprietary and Acquisition of Land by Occupiers* [43].

Committee—Report—Consolidated Fund* (No. 1).

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DUNGARVAN UNION — REFUSAL TO STRIKE A RATE.

Mr. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the Board of Guardians of the Dungarvan Union have proposed to retire rather than strike the rate submitted by the clerk as necessary to meet the year's expenditure; whether it is a fact that the gross valuation of one of the divisions of the Union, Mount Stuart, is £300, and that the cost of maintaining a single pauper for one year would entail on this division a rating of 9*d*. in the pound; and, whether, having regard to facts such as these, he would consider the propriety of introducing next year a Union Rating Bill?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: The Guardians did at first object to strike the required rate; but they have since made it. The Electoral Division mentioned is valued at £322, and the rating for the maintenance of a pauper would be 7½*d*. on the valuation. As a matter of fact, however, the latest official Returns show that during a period of 12 months only one pauper chargeable to this division was relieved in the workhouse, and that for only a portion of the year. The circumstances of the division, would, therefore, not appear to strengthen the case for Union rating, but the reverse.

Mr. GRAY observed that the right hon. Gentleman had not replied whether it was in contemplation, in accordance with the promise held out by the right hon. Gentleman's Predecessor, to introduce a Union Rating Bill.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he could not at present reply more fully to the Question than he had done.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND) — "PARR *v.* SCHOOL BOARD OF SALEN, ISLAND OF MULL"—USE OF SCHOOL ROOM FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to the case of Parr *v.* the School Board of Salen, in Mull, in which the complainer applied for an interdict to prohibit the use of the Board School at that place for public meetings; and, if he can explain how the cost of this unopposed application amounted to £21 16*s*. 1*d*.?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I have seen the account of expenses in this case, which has been audited by the auditor (Taxing Office) of the Court of Session, and no observations occur to me upon it. If the hon. Member desires to see the account, and learn what the various charges are for, I should be glad to show it to him.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked, If the Lord Advocate could say whether the School Board, or the individual, was liable for these charges—that was to say, the ratepayers, or the persons who are made the nominal defenders?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said, he was afraid he must ask the hon. Member to give Notice of the Question. The answer would depend on the terms of the judgment under which decree was given.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—APPLICATION TO CASES ARISING FROM PARTY RIOTS IN THE NORTH OF IRELAND.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to recent disturbances, assaults, and damage to property in the county of Tyrone, Whether the Irish Government will fulfil the pledge given in this House by the late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant—namely, that cases arising out of Party feelings and Party conflicts in the North of Ireland would be heard, in the first instance, by Courts of Stipendiary Magistrates, and not by the local Justices of the Peace?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Party cases now pending will be tried before two Resident Magistrates at a Special Petty Sessions Court under the Prevention of Crime Act; and the Government will take care that where such cases arise in future a similar course will be taken where the interests of justice demand it.

MR. SEXTON asked whether the principle laid down by the right hon. Gentleman would be extended to Clogher and Stewartstown, were cases were also pending?

[No reply.]

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS) — DONEGAL SUB-COMMISSION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Messrs. Burke, Mahony, and Gray, of the Donegal Sub-Commission, gave judgment, on the 27th March last, in 84 cases, on the property of Captain Hill, reducing the rents by 38 per cent; whether, in consequence of pressure from the landlords concerned, Mr. Gray was removed to Cork soon after the judgments in question, and Mr. Sproule appointed in his stead; whether, about the same time, the Sub-Commission was made single, with the result that the legal member, Mr. Burke, himself formerly a land agent, went out inspecting farms; whether, soon after these changes, the Sub-Commission, composed of Messrs. Burke, Mahony, and Sproule, gave judgment in 188 cases from the same estate (that of Captain Hill) dealt with in March, and the applications in which had been lodged at the same time, and whether the reduction given was only 25 per cent, or 13 per cent less than in March; whether Mr. Sproule, in 42 cases, desired a smaller reduction, whilst Mr. Mahony, in 54 cases, held that it should be greater; whether Mr. Sproule was continued in office, while Mr. Mahony, although he had been appointed in the first group of Sub-Commissioners in November 1881, and men appointed more recently were still retained on the staff, was discharged from office; whether Mr. Mahony's place on the Donegal Sub-Commission was filled by the appointment of Mr. Comyn; whether, in dealing with the Duke of Abercorn's estate in Tyrone, Mr. Comyn had opposed any reduction of the rents, but Mr. Mahony had declared reductions should be given, and Mr. Mahony's view was upheld by the majority of the Sub-Commission, and confirmed on appeal; whether, in consequence of the removal of the Sub-Commissioners who gave judgment favourable to tenants, the occupiers of Gweedore and Cloghaneely have ceased to use the Court; and, whether, in view of the facts set forth, the Donegal Sub-Commission will be now reorganised?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It will, perhaps, be most convenient if I deal with the paragraphs of this Question *seriatim.* I am informed by the Land Commission as follows:—(1.) Reductions were made as stated. (2.) This is incorrect. Mr. Gray was not transferred on account of pressure from any person; and Mr. Sproule had been a member of the Sub-Commission prior to Mr. Gray's transfer. (3.) If Mr. Bourke, the Legal Commissioner, went out with his colleagues inspecting farms, he was within his right, it being optional with a Legal Sub-Commissioner to do so or not. (4.) The reductions made by the reconstituted Sub-Commission amounted to 26·5 per cent. (5.) Amongst these cases Mr. Sproule dissented from the judgment of his colleagues in 33—Mr. Mahony in 46. (6.) Mr. Sproule was re-appointed after the 31st of July; Mr. Mahony was not. Comparative length of service gave no claim for continuance in this temporary office. (7.) This is correct. (8.) In nine cases of appeal from the Duke of Abercorn's estate, the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners were upheld in four, and the judicial rents reduced in five. I cannot say what the personal views of the Sub-Commissioners were. (9.) I am not aware of any ground for this statement. During the last six months 197 applications to have fair rents fixed have been received from County Donegal, and 59 have been withdrawn by consent. (10.) There is no intention of re-organizing the Sub-Commission.

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS (IRELAND) ACT—BALTINGLASS UNION.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, as President of the Local Government Board, he is aware the Board have finally declined to take any action in reference to the conduct of Mr. Dagg, clerk of the Baltinglass Union, and George Driver, rate collector, although it was admitted that popular voters were deprived of the franchise by their alleged "mistakes," while voters of opposite politics were improperly retained on the register by "mistakes" of an opposite character; whether he is aware the Local Government deny responsibility in the matter, saying that—

> "The clerk of the union and collector of poor rate do not perform their duties in connection with the Parliamentary Voters Act (13 and 14 Vic. c. 68 and 69) under their direction, and that the 67th and 109th sections of that Act prescribe the manner in which they may be punished for neglect or other breach of duty under the Act;"

and, whether, in furtherance of the course of justice, he will lay the Correspondence and Minutes of Evidence taken at the investigation held at Baltinglass last September, including the full Report of the Local Government Board Inspector, upon the Table?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The position taken by the Local Government Board is that stated. The clerk and collector do not perform their duties in connection with the Parliamentary Voters Act under that Board, and the inquiry at Baltinglass was undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining whether they had done anything to render them unworthy of confidence as public officers. The opinion arrived at was that they had not. The evidence adduced at the inquiry is already before the Board of Guardians, and I understand that the hon. Member has been fully informed of the substance of the Inspector's Report. This being so, there hardly appears to be any necessity to lay the Papers on the Table.

COMPULSORY VACCINATION—CONVICTION OF MRS. ANN JARVIS, EASTBOURNE.

Mr. HOPWOOD asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, Whether it be the fact that Mrs. Ann Jarvis, the widow of a soldier, was, in January last, fined at the Eastbourne Petty Sessions for the non-vaccination of two children, and ordered to pay £1 15*s*., including costs; whether she excused herself, on the ground of the belief of her late husband and herself, that one of their children had been formerly destroyed by vaccination; whether he is aware that such a belief was declared by the ex-President of the Local Government Board, Mr. J. G. Dodson, to be a sufficient excuse; and, whether Mrs. Jarvis, having been, since January, married to another man named Meredith, was, in default of payment, on the 22nd instant, taken by constables to Lewes Prison, without demand upon her husband, and while he was away at work, and leaving several young children uncared for?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: We have made inquiry as to this case, and from the information with which we have been furnished it appears that when Mrs. Jarvis was actually on the way to the medical officer for the purpose of having her children vaccinated she was met by a resident in Eastbourne who has acted as honorary Secretary of the local Anti-Compulsory Vaccination League, and that he persuaded her not to go, and promised that if she was fined he would pay the fine. In consequence, proceedings were taken against her, and she was ordered to pay 35*s*., including costs. We are assured that Mrs. Jarvis did not excuse herself on the ground that one of her children had been "destroyed" by vaccination. As regards the statement of the late President of the Board, we assume that a reply given in the House on the 28th of November, 1882, is referred to. The reply was to the effect that it was no legal defence to a summons under the Vaccination Acts for parents of children attacked with erysipelatous disease after vaccination to urge their fear of similar risk to their other children. He was not prepared to assent to the view that, because one child may have suffered owing to *mala praxis*, or some accidental circumstance, all the other children should be deprived of the protection which vaccination affords. At the same time, it was open to the Justices in any such case to impose a nominal fine, or decline to make an order for the vaccination of the child; and he should hope that if any such case occurred it would be considerately and tenderly dealt with. Distress warrants were issued on the 6th of October, Mrs. Jarvis having married in the meantime; but as the police found no sufficient goods whereon to levy, an order of commitment was made on the 21st of November. During the interval the Superintendent of Police had one or more interviews with the husband as to the payment of the amount; but his reply was that he supposed the resident in Eastbourne above referred to would pay, as he had promised to do so. When Mrs. Jarvis was apprehended she was taken to the police station, pending the departure of the train to Lewes. Her husband was sent for; but he did not arrive until after she had left. We are informed that, according to her own statement, her children were well taken care of while she was in prison.

PUBLIC PARKS (METROPOLIS)—HIGHGATE WOODS.

MR. BRYCE asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the attention of the Metropolitan Board of Works has been called to the importance of securing the woods to the north of Highgate as a public park for the benefit of the inhabitants of London; and, whether he can hold out hopes that a proper scheme for acquiring these woods will be favourably considered by the Board with a view to their taking a part in giving effect to it?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: In reply to my hon. Friend, I beg to inform him that the Metropolitan Board of Works is fully alive to the importance of preserving open spaces in the Metropolis and its neighbourhood; but Highgate Woods are out of the Board's jurisdiction, and would require to be dealt with under the powers of a special Act of Parliament. With regard to the latter part of the Question, I can only undertake to say that any scheme that may be submitted to the Board shall be most carefully considered, with a full sense of the importance of the object in view.

ARMY (INDIA)—FURLOUGH RULES.

COLONEL MILNE-HOME asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If his attention has been drawn to a paragraph in *The Homeward Mail* of the 21st October 1884, which states that "Indian Furlough Rules are under the consideration of the Government of India;" and, if he is in a position to say when, should the above statement be correct, the revised Rules are likely to come into operation?

MR. J. K. CROSS: A communication has already been received by the Secretary of State from the Government of India regarding the Indian Furlough Rules. It is now under his consideration. The question is one of serious importance, and cannot be settled without very careful inquiry, involving, possibly, further references to India. I am unable to say, therefore, when a final decision will be come to; but there will be no avoidable delay in dealing with the subject.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM—THE HEALTH EXHIBITION GROUND.

SIR HARRY VERNEY asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether the ground on the western side of the building lately occupied by the Health Exhibition, where boards are put up, offering the ground for sale, can be secured for the public, the late Chief of the Natural History Museum having said that, in the course of a generation, all that ground would be required for the extension of the Museum?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said that the Government were already in possession of 14 acres of land immediately adjoining the Natural History Museum; and, under these circumstances, this seemed sufficient for any possible extension.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — WATERFORD BOARD OF GUARDIANS — CASE OF —— WELSH, A CHILD.

MR. MOORE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a statement made at the Waterford Board of Guardians by the Deputy

Vice Chairman and Mayor of Waterford, that a female child named Walsh, aged fourteen years, having been hired as a servant by a woman named Reddy, was suddenly discharged by her mistress, and turned out of the house on the road during the night time; and, whether that statement is true; and, if so, whether any steps have been taken to bring the woman Reddy to justice?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I am informed that the facts are not as stated. The girl Walsh was placed at service with Mrs. Reddy by the Guardians of the Union. Her mistress, finding after several weeks' trial that she would not suit her, paid her her wages due, and proposed to take her back to the workhouse. The girl refused to re-enter the workhouse, and said she would go to her sister, who lived in the town. This she did, leaving her employer's house at 11 o'clock in the morning.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—MAILS TO TIPPERARY AND CLONMEL.

MR. MOORE asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can yet state what arrangements have been made for the conveyance of the mails to Tipperary and Clonmel, in connection with the new accelerated service?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, it was intended to place Tipperary in connection with the day mail from Dublin to Cork; but with regard to Clonmel the negotiations with the Railway Company had not yet been concluded.

IRELAND — COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION—DISMISSAL OF MR. J. G. FITZGERALD, DISTRICT INSPECTOR.

MR. LEAMY (for Mr. R. POWER) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether in the Letter of the 29th January 1879, from the Office of National Education, removing Mr. Fitzgerald from the post of District Inspector, which he had filled for nearly twenty-five years, this paragraph occurs:—

> "In your Journal referred to (for the week ending 16th November 1878) you state that on the 12th of November you travelled by post car from Waterford to Kilculliheen and Ferrybank National Schools and back, incurring thereby an expenditure of 5*s*. 6*d*.;"

whether this assertion is entirely contrary to the actual facts, no mention whatsoever having been made in the Journal referred to of the Ferrybank National Schools; whether, according to the Chief Secretary's statement in the House on the 10th of this month, the Ferrybank National Schools only came into existence on the 26th February 1879, more than three weeks subsequently; and, whether, if it is not admitted that the quotation from the letter of dismissal contains a statement not in accordance with the facts, the Journal referred to will be laid upon the Table of the House?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Fitzgerald made the charge for travelling expenses, which the Commissioners decided to be improper, in respect of an official visit to two schools—Kilculliheen and Ferrybank—both of which were mentioned in his Journal. In the Commissioners' letter, both were, by a clerical error, referred to as National Schools — only one of them, as a matter of fact, occupying that position at the time. This circumstance in no way affects the merits of the case against Mr. Fitzgerald.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION COURT —"R. JOHNSTON *v.* PATRICK MOORE AND MARY MACTAFANEY" — THE JUDGMENT, &c.

MR. TOTTENHAM (for Mr. ION HAMILTON) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, copies of the Shorthand Writer's Report of the evidence taken before the Irish Land Commission, with the judgment of Judge O'Hagan, and other documents, in two cases which came before the Court for re-hearing, in which R. Johnston was landlord, and Patrick Moore and Mary MacTafaney were tenants?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There can be no objection to the course suggested; but as the documents referred to have already been laid on the Table of the House of Lords and circulated, and are thus accessible to the public, it appears to be unnecessary to reprint them for the House of Commons.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—NAAS BOARD OF GUARDIANS—DR. HAYES.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that the Naas Board of Guardians have permitted Dr. Hayes, the Medical Officer of the Rathmore Dispensary District, to continue to hold that office after it had been proved at a Local Government Board investigation, on oath, that Dr. Hayes, when he was Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in Rathmore, had made about twenty-one double entries in the register of vaccination; and, on the discovery of the fact by his successor in office, Michael Melia, had paid Melia a bribe of £2 to procure his silence, and had not made confession till Melia asked a further bribe; whether Melia has been dismissed by the Registrar General for acceptance of the bribe; and, what course will be taken in regard to his confederate?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The evidence adduced at the inquiry showed that out of 979 entries of successful vaccinations made by Dr. Hayes in the course of 20 years, 21 appeared to be duplicates. Of these, eight had from time to time been discovered by Dr. Hayes himself and marked as errors. The system under which the material for these entries is collected is such as to lead to great liability to error; and it is not believed that the duplicate entries were intentional, or made with fraudulent purpose. When Melia, Dr. Hayes's successor in office as Registrar, discovered some of the duplicates and drew his attention to them, Dr. Hayes asked him to call at his house in order that they might go over the Register together. Melia declined on the ground that his time was of value to him, and Dr. Hayes then said he would compensate him for his time and also give him money for refreshment. It was in these circumstances that he gave Melia a cheque for £2. In doing this Dr. Hayes acted most unwisely and improperly; and it is greatly to be regretted that he did not adopt at once the course which he subsequently did when Melia wrote to him accusing him of fraud—namely, lay the matter before the Guardians and seek investigation. Melia was dismissed by the Registrar General, because, according to his own evidence at the inquiry, he accepted what he regarded as a bribe to conceal an irregularity from the proper authorities. Dr. Hayes has been 32 years an officer of the Union, and the Board of Guardians continue to have confidence in him, and in these circumstances the Local Government Board do not think it necessary to take any further action in the matter.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—TRAINING COLLEGES FOR NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why persons trained in the new Training Colleges for National Teachers for Ireland, and who have attained Second Class, by due compliance with regulations, before entering for the course of training, are not permitted, at the expiration of that course, to compete for admission to the grade of First Class Teachers; whether he is aware that Second Class Teachers who go into the Colleges are in some cases obliged to go for examination in Third Class papers, and thus compete for admission to a lower class than that which they had reached before they entered the College; and, whether the practice will be altered so as to enable those who use the Training Colleges to go forward from the classification they had reached at the period of their entry?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that persons circumstanced as described in the first paragraph of the Question are eligible, on the termination of their course of training, for examination as candidates for the first class, if recommended by the authorities of the Training Colleges. The facts are not, I am informed, as stated in the second paragraph of the Question. In these circumstances, there does not appear to be any necessity for the change of practice suggested by the hon. Member.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE MADRAS STAFF CORPS—PROMOTION.

MR. GUY DAWNAY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether any steps have yet been taken, or are about to be taken, to remove the disadvantages with regard to promotion, under which, by recent Regulations, Subalterns in the Madras Staff Corps are at present placed, as compared with Subalterns in Her Majesty's Service?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The Madras Staff Corps Subalterns are promoted under the same Rules as the Subalterns of the other Staff Corps. I am not aware of any recent issue of Regulations which affect the actual or relative position of these officers in regard to promotion. It is uncertain what period can be assumed to be the normal rate of promotion of officers of the Line; but the position of the Staff Corps Subalterns is practically identical with that of the Subalterns of Royal Engineers—the only body of officers in Her Majesty's Service which, like the Staff Corps, is promoted after fixed service in the grades of Subaltern and Captain.

IMPERIAL DEFENCES—THE FORTIFICATIONS AT ADEN.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, with reference to the proposed arrangement under which India is to pay half the cost of additional fortifications at Aden, Whether, considering that besides the whole British trade with the far East that of all the Australian Colonies is served by the maintenance of that outpost, these Colonies will be invited to make some substantial contribution in mitigation of the proportion proposed to be placed on the Indian Revenues?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I have no reason to believe that the Government of India is dissatisfied with the proportion of the cost of the additional fortifications at Aden, which it will have to bear; and I think that my hon. and gallant Friend will see that any question of inviting the Colonies to contribute belongs to the Colonial Department.

EGYPT (ARMY OF OCCUPATION)—PAY OF BRITISH GENERALS.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Secretary of State for War, What is the amount of pay and allowance received by Generals Stephenson and Wood, and by the members of their respective Staffs; and, whether it would be possible, in the interest of the embarrassed Egyptian Treasury, to dispense with the service of one or both Generals and their Staffs; also, whether it is true that there are at present three Commanders-in-Chief in Egypt; and, whether this system of organization is maintained with a view of military efficiency?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There is only one Commander-in-Chief in Egypt—Lord Wolseley. Sir Frederick Stephenson commands the troops in Lower Egypt, and Sir Evelyn Wood, whose permanent command is that of the Egyptian Army, has at present been appointed a Major General on the Staff of the Nile Expedition in command of the line of communications; and the Egyptian Exchequer has so far been relieved of the charge for his pay and allowances. The Military Staff at present in Egypt is, no doubt, very large, in consequence, chiefly, of the Nile Expedition; but it does not constitute a burden on the Egyptian Exchequer. As a more permanent arrangement, I doubt whether it would be possible to dispense with the services of a Lieutenant General in command of the British troops, and a General Officer in command of the Egyptian Army; but the question of Egyptian military expenditure has, of course, formed part of the Earl of Northbrook's inquiry. A Return could be given, if moved for by the hon. Member, of the pay and allowances received by the British and Egyptian Generals and their Staffs before the period when the Nile Expedition was commenced.

DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICE —MR. COLLEDGE, LATE BRITISH CONSUL AT KERTCH.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Mr. Colledge, British Consul at Kertch, Russia, has been re-arrested on a charge of piracy?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government possesses no information with regard to Mr. Colledge, who is no longer in the service of the Foreign Office.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—GALWAY PETTY SESSIONS—SERJEANT KEHOL.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the report, in *The Galway Observer*, of the proceedings in the Galway Petty Sessions, on the 3rd instant; whether he is aware that Sergeant Philip Kehol, Royal Irish Constabulary, was convicted before the magistrates, at the suit of Mr. Peter

Cunningham, on a charge of having used threatening language calculated to incite to a breach of the peace; whether it is the fact that this same Sergeant Kehol was recently put on trial before a Constabulary Court of Inquiry, by order of the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary, on the following charge: making a false official statement about the arrest of a man named Eugene Lennon, a deserter from Her Majesty's Navy, endeavouring by such false statement to obtain the sum of twelve shillings as a reward; if so, what decision did the Inspector General arrive at in the Report of the Court upon the case; and, what course, in viewing the conduct of Sergeant Kehol in these two cases, is it the intention of the Government to take in his case?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have not seen the newspaper report to which the hon. Member refers; but I have ascertained, on inquiry, that the sergeant was charged with using language calculated to incite to a breach of the peace, and that the decision of the magistrates was that the case was a most trivial one, and that the ends of justice would be fully satisfied by an admonition. Sergeant Kehol is a man of 23 years' service, and of good character; and the Inspector General, to whom the case was reported, did not consider it necessary to do anything more than caution him. Five years ago a complaint was made against this sergeant that he claimed unfairly a share of a reward of £1 for the arrest of a deserter. An inquiry was ordered, but was never held, as the necessary witnesses could not be found.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. JAMES POE, DISTRICT REGISTRAR OF THE COURT OF PROBATE, KILKENNY.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If James Poe, Solicitor, is District Registrar of the Court of Probate at Kilkenny; if he also holds the office of Clerk of the Crown and Peace for Kilkenny City and County; if persons making personal applications for probate and administration, and particularly under Section 33 of 44 Vic. c. 12, are entitled to receive these grants on payment of the Crown Fees; if Mr. Poe treats the applicants as clients, and charges solicitor's fees; and, if he finds such a practice exists, would he ensure its discontinuance in future?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. James Poe is District Registrar of the Court of Probate at Kilkenny. He is also Clerk of the Crown for the City and County of Kilkenny, but not Clerk of the Peace. I am informed that persons making personal application for probate and administration invariably get these grants from the District Registry at Kilkenny on payment of the Crown fees. It is not the fact that Mr. Poe treats them as clients, or charges solicitor's fees.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE MAILS TO KINSALE.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY (for Mr. DEASY) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the changes in the postal arrangements of Kinsale, suggested to the Post Office Authorities by the Kinsale Town Commissioners, will be made?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, a Memorial from the Town Council of Kinsale had been received, and was now under consideration. If the hon. Member would put a Question to him in a few days, he would endeavour to give him an answer.

IRELAND—THE CORPORATION OF LIMERICK—EXTRA POLICE TAX.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. DAWSON) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, considering the many local and other questions of detail involved in the Limerick extra Police Tax, the Lord Lieutenant will comply with the request of the Corporation to appoint a Commission to inquire into the merits of the case in Limerick?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot add anything to what I stated in reply to a former Question on this subject—namely, that the Government could not entertain the application for a public inquiry.

MR. SEXTON: Is it true that the Lord Lieutenant has been informed by his Legal Advisers that he has no legal power to recover this tax now?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is no truth in the statement, as far as I am aware.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—SUPPLIES OF TEACHING APPARATUS.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Kenny) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If free stock was given to National Schools in Ireland until about the year 1860, and if it consisted of maps, black boards, tablets, charts, and other requisites for teaching purposes; for what reason these were discontinued, and if there is any objection to renew such grants; for what reason schools vested in the Commissioners are placed in a better position with regard to grants for building and repairing than ordinary vested schools; and, if it is proposed to take any steps to place them on an equality?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Free grants of requisites are given in the case of all new schools, and also in cases where school houses are enlarged, or otherwise structurally improved. The owners of the school fabric are in all cases bound to keep it in repair. In the case of non-vested schools the Trustees are the owners, and in the case of vested schools the Commissioners of National Education are the owners.

EGYPT—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When Mr. Clifford Lloyd took office in Egypt; what was his salary at his first engagement; whether his salary was increased during his stay in Egypt; for what reason the increase, if any, was made; and, whether it was clearly understood when Mr. Clifford Lloyd left Egypt that he was leaving for good?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Mr. Clifford Lloyd was appointed Inspector General of Reforms in Egypt on the 15th of September, 1883, with a salary at the rate of £2,000 (Egyptian) a-year. It was increased to £2,500 (Egyptian), as he was afterwards given the Executive Office of Under Secretary for the Home Department, which added greatly to his duties and responsibilities. It had not been officially decided when Mr. Clifford Lloyd left Egypt that he was leaving for good.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD, R.M.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, At what date Mr. Clifford Lloyd obtained leave of absence from his post as Resident Magistrate in Ireland; for what period leave was granted in the first instance; when the leave was renewed; and, whether it is usual to grant indefinite leave of absence to members of the Civil Service?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: The facts as to the leave of absence granted to Mr. Clifford Lloyd to enable him to accept service in Egypt have been several times stated in the House. He was given leave for six months, without pay, dating from September 15, 1883. At the end of that period he was still employed in Egypt, and he was granted a further period of six months' leave, as before, without pay. Before this second six months had quite expired—namely, on the 1st of September, 1884—Mr. Clifford Lloyd's connection with the Egyptian Government had altogether ceased, and he reverted to his original position as a Resident Magistrate; but was granted leave of absence, with pay, for three months, to which period an additional month has been added. He has not at any time been on indefinite leave of absence.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—RIOT AT CLOGHER, CO. TYRONE.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that, on the 12th of November, the town of Clogher, county Tyrone, was left without police protection; whether the County Inspector is not aware that the presence of a police force is especially necessary on that day, owing to the occurrence of the Hiring Fair in the neighbouring village of Augher; whether, owing to the complete absence of the police, a party of Orangemen took possession of the village, and murderously assaulted some of the Catholic inhabitants; whether a Mr. Hynes was so severely beaten that his life was for a time in danger; whether Mr. Hynes complained to the Constabulary, and asked them to institute proceedings against his assailants, who are well-known members of the Orange Society; whether the Orange magistrates of the district refuse to instruct the Constabulary to prosecute their brother Orangemen; and, whether the Government will send down a Resident

Magistrate to inquire into the state of the Clogher district?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: On the occasion mentioned, four out of the five police stationed at Clogher were sent to Augher—a mile and a-half distant—that being the place where the occurrence of the hiring fair rendered their presence desirable. No such disturbances or murderous assaults as are mentioned in the Question took place. A man named Hynes complained that he had been assaulted; but as the occurrence was of a trivial character and he knew his alleged assailants, the magistrates considered it a case in which he should be left to summons them if he thought fit. I am informed that, as a matter of fact, the magistrates who made this decision are not Orangemen, as stated in the Question. I give this information as it has been supplied to me, though I would not have thought myself bound to make inquiry on this point. I see nothing in these occurrences to necessitate an inquiry into the state of the Clogher district.

MR. O'KELLY: May I ask whether these gentlemen ceased to be Orangemen in July last? The right hon. Gentleman has not said whether he will send down a Resident Magistrate to try these cases when they come up, and not leave them in the hands of the local magistrates.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Member speaks of "these cases." I have already said there is no case.

MR. O'KELLY: Did not the right hon. Gentleman state that a prosecution has been directed?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: On the contrary, I said that a man named Hynes, on whom a trivial assault had been committed, had been left to take proceedings himself.

MR. O'KELLY: Did not the right hon. Gentleman state, in reply to a Question I put in this House, that summonses had already been issued?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think I can have stated that.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ASSAULT ON JOHN MACKEY, CLOGHER, CO. TYRONE.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that an old labouring man named John Mackey, while returning from his work, was attacked by a party of Orangemen at Killyfaddy, near Clogher, on the night of the 13th of November; whether the assailants lit matches to scan Mr. Mackey's face, and, having satisfied themselves of his personality, beat him so cruelly that he had to be carried to his home in Clogher; whether his life is in danger from the attack of which he is the victim; whether any arrests have been made in connection with this outrage; and, whether, as Clogher is a proclaimed district, the provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act will be put in force to discover the authors of this outrage, and the direction of the investigations committed to a magistrate who is not a member of the Orange Society?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot at present add anything to my former answer with respect to this case. The summonses which I referred to as pending are still pending, and will be heard on the 9th of this month.

ARMY—MILITARY PRISON AT GOSPORT—SHOT DRILL AND OAKUM PICKING.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been directed to the fact that at Gosport Military Prison the labour of the prisoners is almost entirely confined to shot drill and picking oakum, and the conduct of the prisoners there compares unfavourably with that of military prisoners elsewhere, and to the further fact that, according to the Report of the Governor of Brixton Prison, the substitution there of various industries for the monotonous employment of oakum picking has been attended with most satisfactory results; and, whether he will secure the same treatment for the Gosport prisoners?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I quite agree as to the advantage of providing profitable industrial labour for the prisoners in military prisons generally, and the commencement made at Brixton has been part of a general scheme. The difficulty, however, is to find suitable occupation appropriate to the several localities; and at present it has not been found practicable to employ industrially the prisoners at Gosport. I am still in communication with the Inspector General of Military Prisons on the subject.

AFRICA (SOUTH-WEST COAST)—ANGRA PEQUENA.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government can give any information to the House with regard to the German Settlement of Angra Pequena, the area of the territory annexed, and its borders, especially towards Bechuanaland; what steps have been taken to protect the rights of British subjects in the Islands annexed to the Cape Colony in 1867; and, what steps are being taken to ensure the fulfilment of promises made to the Native Damara Chief, and others, by the British Commissioners in 1877-8?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Protectorate proclaimed by the German Empire is from the Orange River up to the 18th degree S. latitude, excepting Walfisch Bay and British territory surrounding, and for 20 geographical miles inland; the area roughly would be about 16,600 square miles. The distance from the 20 mile limit above-named to Kuruman, in Bechuanaland, would be about 500 miles across the Kalahari Desert. As to the Islands referred to, which are Guano Islands, we have obtained assurances from the German Government that the birds on the Islands and the guano deposits should not be disturbed. I may also add, in connection with these matters, that a Mixed Commission has been named to inquire and report upon the respective claims of British and German subjects of the mainland. As to the third Question, I apprehend that the right hon. Gentleman refers to the action of the Colonial Government in the sending of Mr. Palgrave as a Resident to Damaraland. I would refer the right hon. Gentleman to a despatch of the Earl of Kimberley's of the 13th of December, 1880, in which he pointed out that by so doing the Colonial Government had exceeded its authority, the High Commissioner alone being empowered to deal with the Native tribes and territory beyond the borders. He further went on to say that—

> "Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the Orange River should be maintained as the North-Western limit of the Cape Colony; and they will give no countenance to schemes for the extension of British jurisdiction over great Namaqualand and Damaraland."

In the meantime, however, the Colonial Government, on the outbreak of war between the Namaquas and the Damaras, withdrew their Resident, stating that it had always been decided from the very first that no attempt to employ any other kind of force but moral force should be made. Since then we have regarded our relations with the Damaras as practically at an end.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Has that despatch been published?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes.

IMPERIAL DEFENCES—THE CLYDE.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (for Mr. Cochran-Patrick) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any steps have yet been taken for improving the defences of the Clyde?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I have already stated that the Statement on this subject will be made to-morrow in connection with the Statement which will be made on Naval Affairs.

IRELAND—CITY OF DUBLIN—THE MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES.

Mr. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will consider the propriety of introducing, next year, a Bill to extend the Municipal Boundaries of the City of Dublin, as recommended by the Royal Commission which recently investigated the matter; and, whether it is his intention to introduce a Bill to amend the Collection of Rates Act (Dublin)?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Member is aware that the subject of the proposed extension of the Municipal Boundaries of the City of Dublin is one presenting much difficulty, and that the Government have not hitherto been able to hold out any prospect of legislation in that direction. With regard to the second matter referred to, we have no intention of receding from the undertaking already given, and hope that a favourable opportunity may be found during the Session for the proposed measure.

IRELAND—THE PARLIAMENT HOUSES, DUBLIN—LEASE TO THE GOVERNOR AND COMPANY OF THE BANK OF IRELAND.

Mr. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the lease made between the Government and the Governor and Company of the Bank of Ireland of the houses lately occupied by the Lords and Commons of Ireland?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Bank premises were purchased by the Bank on the 27th of August, 1803. The interest purchased was a leasehold interest; but the Bank, in 1845, purchased the fee from the representatives of the lessor. The title deeds are in the possession of the Bank authorities, and not under the control of the Irish Government.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether, in view of the course of events in Ireland, the Government will see the advisability of arranging with the Governors of the Bank of Ireland for the surrender of the lease?

[No reply.]

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE 4TH ROYAL IRISH FUSILIERS (LATE CAVAN MILITIA).

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Why two vacancies for Captains in 4th Royal Irish Fusiliers (late Cavan Militia) have not yet been filled up, although the vacancies have existed for a year past, and although the two senior lieutenants have qualified for same; and, if they are considered to be not fit for promotion, why are they allowed to remain in the regiment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The recommendation of subalterns for promotion in a Militia battalion rests with the Commanding Officer; and in the case referred to the Commanding Officer has given satisfactory reasons for postponing his recommendation. It is expected, however, that the vacancies will be almost immediately filled up.

EGYPT—STATE OF AFFAIRS—BRIGANDAGE.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the following statements made by *The Times* Correspondent at Alexandria, on the 24th November:—

> "Very serious cases of brigandage continue to occur in the interior. It is certain that many outrages and robberies are concealed from fear of the reprisals which are promptly taken. That authority which, though sometimes brutally, still effectually, maintained order, has been removed, nothing being substituted for it. The police now possess no authority. The new Courts, even if incorrupt, are too dilatory and cumbersome to meet the want in question, with the result that crime is not only undetected, but that, if detected, it goes unpunished. We require a European police, with an English magistrate;"

whether these statements are accurate; and, what measures Her Majesty's Ministers propose to take, in order to give beneficial effect to the expenditure of £9,000,000 of British money in Egypt, and to give good administration and justice to that country?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have read the statements referred to by the hon. Member; but, as I stated on the 24th ultimo, in reply to a Question by him on the same subject, Her Majesty's Government have received no recent Report regarding brigandage in Egypt. They have no reason to credit the statement that the police possess no authority; but I have already stated that a Special Commission has been appointed to deal with the matter in the localities affected, and I have every reason to believe that it is acting with efficiency.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE NATIONAL LEAGUE—INTIMIDATION.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that there were parties who were not acting in accordance with the principles and doctrines of the National League called up before the Committees of branches of that Association at Timahoe and other places in Queen's County, when the Rev. Mr. Phelan, P.P., and Messrs. Bugin and Ryan, C.C.'s, were the presiding Members; were these parties interrogated by those gentlemen and others as to their connection and dealings with landlords and persons in charge of farms from which persons had been evicted, and made to promise, through fear, that they would cease to have anything to do or say with them for the future; if such Courts have been held, have the facts been reported and brought under the notice of the Government or their Law Officers; and, if so, have any proceedings been instituted against the offending parties;

and, is it the fact that the Rev. Mr. Ryan at Timahoe had been previously moved by his Bishop from the county Carlow to his present parish, on representations made by the authorities as to his acts and conduct in connection with certain landlords in that county?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is believed that persons who had acted in a way obnoxious to the National League have been summoned before branches or Committees of that body at Timahoe and elsewhere, and that one at least of the clergymen named in the Question has presided on such occasions, when the persons summoned were interrogated and subjected to intimidation, and forced to give promises of the kind indicated by the hon. Member. Reports to this effect have been made to the Government, and accounts of these proceedings have been published in local newspapers, which are the organs of the National League. The matter is being carefully considered by the Government, with the advice of the Law Officers. I believe that the statement in the last paragraph of the hon. Member's Question is correct, excepting that Mr. Ryan's removal was not due to any official representation by the authorities.

MR. ONSLOW asked, was the right hon. Member aware that this intimidation had been going on for some months, and that, even at the present time, these Courts were being held; and that no intimation had been given to the Catholic priests mentioned that their action was illegal, and came under the terms of the Prevention of Crime Act?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, before the Question was answered he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether any of the information with reference to this alleged intimidation had come from any of the persons alleged to have been so intimidated?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The information was derived from various sources, and I have myself seen reports in local newspapers bearing out all I have said.

MR. ONSLOW: Has any intimation been given to these Catholic priests that they are acting in violation of the law?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The matter is, as I have already stated, under consideration.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Has any information or complaint come from any persons alleged to be intimidated?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not consider myself called upon to answer that Question.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE VAGRANCY ACT—KANTURK WORKHOUSE (CASHMAN).

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY (for Mr. DEASY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that a man named Cashman was sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour, under the Vagrancy Act, for having applied for one night's shelter in the Kanturk Workhouse; whether he had ever before made a similar application; whether the Local Government Board will remonstrate with the Board of Guardians for having ordered Cashman to be prosecuted; and, whether the Government will consider the propriety of obtaining his immediate release?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The prisoner is a strong young man, well able to work; but he is a recognized tramp. He was convicted under that section of the Vagrancy Act which makes it an offence to go from one Union to another for the purpose of obtaining relief. This is what Cashman was doing. His case seems just such a one as the law is intended to meet; and the Local Government Board think it desirable, with the view of preventing vagrancy, that Guardians should put it in force in proper cases. There does not appear to be any ground for remitting the sentence.

POOR ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—MARYBOROUGH—ARMY STAFF SERGEANTS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that several staff sergeants not yet discharged from the Army are living in Maryborough in rateable houses the valuation of which exceeds four pounds, and voting in respect of such occupation at the Poor Law Elections; whether sergeants and privates of the Constabulary living in similar houses are not allowed votes at the same elections; and, whether the Government propose to continue the present difference of treatment?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed that at the last election for Poor Law Guardians in Maryborough several members of the Militia Staff were allowed to vote. The Returning Officer states that he always issues voting papers to policemen who occupy houses valued over £4; but the papers are always returned unfilled.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—RATHDRUM BOARD OF GUARDIANS—DR. HALPIN, MEDICAL OFFICER.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, as President of the Local Government Board, he is aware of the charge brought by Peter Gibson, Arklow, against the medical officer of the district, Dr. Halpin; whether the charge is that Dr. Halpin, when called to attend Gibson's wife in her confinement, stayed but a short time, and went away, leaving an inexperienced person in attendance; whether he had to be sent for again, and whether the child's life was lost through the delay; whether, at an inquiry held by the dispensary committee, of which Lord Carysfort and his agent, Mr. Taylor, are members, a resolution was passed by a majority of two votes acquitting Dr. Halpin of blame; whether, on that occasion, Lord Carysfort, as chairman, gave two votes, and whether it has not been decided that he acted illegally in so doing; and, whether he will grant a full inquiry into all the circumstances of the case, or else lay the notes taken by the shorthand writer at the inquiry of the Dispensary Committee, the Correspondence between the Committee and the Rathdrum Board of Guardians, and any Correspondence that has taken place with the Local Government Board, upon the Table?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The charge preferred by Peter Gibson against Dr. Halpin was as stated; and the Committee of Management of the Arklow Dispensary District, to whom he is responsible for the due performance of his duties, inquired into the matter at a special meeting held for the purpose on the 21st of August last. The complaint and Dr. Halpin's explanation were considered, several witnesses were examined, and a resolution was carried to the effect that the Committee did not think that there had been any culpable neglect on the part of Dr. Halpin. The hon. Member has been misinformed as to the Chairman, Lord Carysfort, having given two votes on this resolution. There were 12 members present, including the Chairman, and the resolution was carried by a majority of 7 to 5. There does not appear to be any necessity for further inquiry, or for the production of the Correspondence.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—BALLYMENA BENCH OF MAGISTRATES.

MR. MOORE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there are on the Ballymena Bench of Magistrates eight Protestant, three Presbyterian, and not one single Catholic magistrate; and, whether two of the magistrates are brothers, and have five of their cousins magistrates in the same Petty Sessions District?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts as to the constitution of the Ballymena Bench are correctly stated. It is true that two of the magistrates are brothers; but they never sit on the Bench together. There is some cousinship between some of the magistrates; but this circumstance in no-wise prevents them from acting impartially and honestly. The Lord Chancellor informs me that he is in communication with the Lieutenant of the county of Antrim as to the placing of a Roman Catholic gentleman on the Ballymena Bench.

CONSERVATIVES AND GENERAL GORDON.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is correctly reported to have used these words—

> "There were Conservatives who would be glad to hear of General Gordon's death, and a Conservative Member had said to him that he was afraid that Gordon was safe?"

He wished to ask the hon. Gentleman whether he was prepared deliberately to repeat those statements in the House, and to substantiate so atrocious a charge against Conservative Members of this House?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I have not seen a report of my speech at Scarborough; and, as the hon. Member's letter of this morning is the first communication which has drawn my attention to it, I have not had an opportunity of obtaining a copy of the report. But, taking the words as set out in the hon. Member's letter, I have no hesitation in saying that I am absolutely certain that I never said that—

> "There were Conservatives who would be glad to hear of General Gordon's death;"

in fact, I never used the word "death" at all. The remainder of the passage set out in the hon. Member's letter—namely, that I said that a Member of Parliament remarked to me that he was afraid that General Gordon was safe—is, as far as those words are concerned, pretty accurately reported. I was speaking at the scene of the famous Scarborough telegram, and was alluding to it. But if the hon. Baronet had been present, he would have seen, by my tone and manner, that I conveyed to my audience that I understood my interlocutor to have spoken in a political, and not in a personal sense, and that it was not to be taken too literally; and my audience, by their laughter, showed that they quite understood the matter.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER: Am I right in supposing that the hon. Gentleman does not impute to any hon. Member on the Opposition side of the House any wish for General Gordon's death?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Certainly.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understood the hon. Gentleman to repudiate any such interpretation.

MOTIONS.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In the absence of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone), who, I hope, will be in his place in a very few minutes, I will, in order to save the time of the House, make the Motion which stands in his name, in, however, a somewhat altered form. It is considered, I believe, that in the event of any protracted discussion on the introduction of the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill, it would be very convenient that the Statement on Naval Affairs which has been promised should not come on at an uncertain period of the evening; but that it should be brought on to-morrow. I will, therefore, move the Resolution which stands in my right hon. Friend's name, with the omission of the last paragraph.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for leave to bring in a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, REDISTRIBUTION, BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Mr. Speaker, it will, I doubt not, be in the recollection of the House that a fortnight ago I was allowed to make an intimation on the part of the Government the effect of which was that, if it were found possible for us to receive, in either of two ways to which I pointed, adequate assurance that the Franchise Bill would pass forthwith, it was far from being alien to our disposition to submit at once to the consideration of the House a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats, and to prosecute that Bill with all reasonable and convenient despatch. The House was pleased, by adjourning on Monday last, to give us the opportunity, which we should not otherwise so fully have enjoyed, of learning whether such assurance could be had, and whether I should be in a position to present to the House on the day which has now arrived a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats. I am glad to find myself in that position, and I am particularly glad to recognize the circumstances under which I approach the execution of a task that can hardly be at present either difficult or disagreeable. Sir, I am one of those who, when Party issues are raised, have not thought it my duty to abstain on all occasions from speaking in plain and strong language. But, although that is so, I am not ashamed to say that it is to me an occasion of singular satisfaction that I am enabled to reflect that, after a great controversy which has agitated and divided the country, we seem now happily to have attained a point which marks the approach of its termination; and, further, that I am able to present to the House a measure on a political question of great importance and of wide scope with a sanguine hope that it will be found to fulfil the anticipations which on some occasions I have ventured to form—that the subject-matter of a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats was not likely to raise serious difficulties or great Party issues as between the several sections of this House. I hope, Sir, that in what I have to say it will not be necessary for me to utter a single word that can excite Party feelings or apprehensions, or in any way even to recall the memory of former struggles. I will dispense with all general arguments on the subject of the redistribution of Parliamentary seats. That there ought to be legislation upon that subject at the earliest possible date, and that it ought to be of a wide and effective character, is a foregone conclusion in the minds of all, or nearly all, whom I have the honour to address. If that is so, it is not necessary for me to do more than remind the House in two words that the basis of the argument for the redistribution of seats rests upon the gross anomalies still remaining in our representative system. The first of these anomalies is the narrow and defective representation of the counties—a method of representation that was not ill-suited to the case as long as the county franchise was narrow while the borough franchise was wide, but which would obviously become monstrous and even intolerable if the franchise in the counties was to be made as wide—and it will be quite as wide—as that of the boroughs. Another anomaly is the defective representation accorded to our large towns, which suffer under an inequality more remarkable than even the counties, and without the same reason to be alleged in its defence. We shall seek to deal with these anomalies in a manner agreeable to the spirit of English legislation, not absolutely to efface all inequality from our representative system in respect to electoral areas—not to aim at the application of a single hard mathematical rule, but to give due weight to the various, and in some senses conflicting, considerations that bear upon the question from different points, and to attain that kind of practical result by a change sufficiently wide, yet not reckless in its character, and which is agreeable to the traditions and the practice of Parliament. The Bill, which I have now the honour to present to the House, is governed, like the Act of 1832, as the House will readily perceive, upon what I may again term a Schedule A and a Schedule B. The present representation of the country gives to the counties one Member through the United Kingdom for 78,000 persons, and to the boroughs one Member for 41,200 persons. That ratio of borough representation is rendered even more unequal when we come to divide the towns into large towns and small towns. As a rule, the ratio is one Member for 54,200 persons over the whole country. I would urge hon. Members to carry that figure in their minds, because it will enable them to form a pretty fair judgment as to the extent of the operations of disfranchisement and enfranchisement that we contemplate and propose. When I speak of the disfranchisement of boroughs, I feel that the term is rather harsh; I feel that it is more harsh probably than the case requires, for, after all, the meaning is that the boroughs with their household suffrage will merge into the counties with their household suffrage, or into divisions and districts of counties of which these boroughs will, in many cases, probably in most cases, form the centres, and these divisions will probably take their names, and with great propriety, from the boroughs. The Schedule A will show the total loss of separate representation, and the Schedule B will signify the reduction of separate representation from two Members to one. Our Schedule A is framed upon the principle that towns with a population up to 15,000 shall pass into a county division or district, to which, as I have said, if our proposition be adopted, the town may give the name wherever it can properly be done. I may as well add that, besides the towns with a population not exceeding 15,000, there are a small number of rural and hundred boroughs—on which I need not dwell particularly—which we propose likewise to allow to become portions of the county representation. I believe the House will agree with me that on all grounds their constitution as separate boroughs is not an arrangement the continuance of which is desirable. There are also two boroughs which, on other grounds, we are obliged to include in the same arrangement. I mean the boroughs of Sandwich and Macclesfield, which, unhappily, in the elections of 1880, were marked by occurrences that rendered it undesirable that they should continue to have a separate existence as boroughs. So much for Schedule A. Schedule B is framed upon the principle that towns with a population up to 50,000 shall continue to be represented, but shall have no more than one Member each. To these there are to be added two counties, which, as we think, on the principle on which our measure is framed, should receive somewhat similar treatment. The county of Rutland, with a population which does not very greatly exceed 20,000, has now two Members, and we propose to reduce the representation to one Member. The county of Hereford, of which the population a little exceeds 100,000, has three Members; and we propose to reduce the number to two, acting in the spirit and according to the analogy that governs Schedule B in general in the reduction of the representation now accorded to certain towns. These towns, I think, will range from a population of 50,000 as the lower limit up to a population of 105,000 as the upper limit. I am speaking in round figures. There are one or two cases where towns have been within a few hundreds of a limit, and we have considered them as touching it; but the House will have in its hands to-morrow morning—irrespective of any questions that may be asked to-night—the printed Bill, so that hon. Members will have an opportunity of studying the authentic details. Above 165,000 we are enabled to commence the process of enfranchisement by augmentation of the numbers now possessed by towns to be represented in this House. So much, then, for Schedule A and Schedule B. The effect of these two Schedules will be to liberate no fewer than 160 seats; and to these are to be added for the present purpose—I do not close the account —the extinguished seats, which are six in number, two in Ireland, and four in England; these it will be proposed to revive. For the purpose of enabling the House to judge of the scope of this measure I may mention that the Act of 1832, by its Schedules A and B, liberated, for the purpose of redistribution, 143 seats; and the number is now 160. These seats, I need not say, are to be devoted to the redress and the reduction of anomalous arrangements, and are to be divided between the under-represented counties and the under-represented towns of the country. The boroughs, of course, will receive a large number—that is, the most populous boroughs, and the Metropolis in particular—and the counties will receive a still larger number. From our plan, if adopted, the counties will receive 96 seats over and above what they possess at present. Of that 96, 64 will be given to counties in England. The boroughs will receive 74 seats, and new boroughs which will be taken out of the counties will receive eight seats. I may mention the amount of increment which some of the larger towns will receive. The Metropolis it is proposed, in a great degree, to recast. The boroughs in the Metropolis are generally well suited for being so dealt with; being Parliamentary boroughs only, and not being also established municipalities, they have no common historic life attaching to them. In the neighbourhood of the Metropolis it is proposed to create seven boroughs, which would have among them eight Members, and which would be taken out of the home counties for the purpose of being added to the borough representation. These boroughs are in the Metropolis for the purposes of local government, and they will be reckoned as in the Metropolis for the purposes of Parliamentary representation. The addition to the whole of the Members of the Metropolis, including these new boroughs, would be 37. The addition in the case of Liverpool will be six Members, which, added to the three now possessed, will make a total of nine. The addition in the case of Glasgow will be four Members, which, added to the three it now possesses, will make a total of seven. The House is probably aware that the case of Glasgow, with reference to its suburban districts, is rather peculiar. There are many parts of those suburban districts which, although parts of Glasgow for many purposes, are not ambitious — at least, they have not hitherto been ambitious—to be included in the municipality. Birmingham will receive a similar addition of four to its present number of three, making in all seven Members. Manchester will receive three, making six; Leeds will receive two, making five; and Sheffield, which has now only two, will receive three, also making five. But I will not pursue the list further. There are considerable additions to the boroughs, and the additions to the counties in certain cases are very large. Yorkshire, it is proposed, will receive no fewer than 16; Lancashire would receive 15; Middlesex in England, and Cork in Ireland, would receive five each; Durham in England, and Lanarkshire in Scotland, would receive four each; and that addition of four to Lanarkshire will serve to explain the apparent smallness of the numbers added to Glasgow when compared with the numbers given to Liverpool, the population of the two cities not being very different. So much for Schedule A and Schedule B, as I have called them, for the sake of the historic clearness of the idea derived from the Act of 1832. I now come to the question of the principle upon which redistribution is to take place. There are two conceivable modes that may be resorted to for the purpose of distributing these seats over the country. We may look to the division of the country into Kingdoms; and some propose to take the population of the Three Kingdoms—some would even also take the population of Wales as a separate division—and divide the total number of Members, and then sub-divide them within each Kingdom or division. A mode of proceeding such as that would be very well adapted to a case were you going to establish electoral districts pure and simple, because you would then proceed in your sub-division to constitute these electoral districts with absolute equality, and the result would be that the numerical principle would be applied throughout with perfect equity. But we are not proceeding on that principle. Although our measure of disfranchisement, or, at all events, of reduced representation, is so large, yet there is room left for very considerable regard to the ancient divisions of counties, and to the possession by municipal communities of the old historic Parliamentary representation. But these communities are unequally distributed over the whole country, and we have felt it difficult to say that we will take for our main guide the population of the several great divisions of the country, because we feel that in that case we should be asked—"Why, if you divide on that principle between the Three Kingdoms, do you not sub-divide on the same principle in those Kingdoms themselves, and thus obtain a perfectly equal application of the arithmetical principle on which you proceed?" Sir, there is another method of proceeding which appears to us to be more just in itself, better suited to the feelings of the country, and more satisfactory in its results; and that is, as, after all, we are legislating for a United Kingdom, to apply to the electoral areas of the country one and the same rule throughout, from John O'Groats' House to Land's End, and the same in Ireland, so that the disfranchisement, so-called, of any town, and the enfranchisement of any town or county, shall everywhere be determined by the same consideration. I say substantially the same. The cases of counties are not exactly the same as those of boroughs, because in England, for example, although the county of Rutland is so very small in relation to the rest, yet there is nothing corresponding to the large number of boroughs from a population of 15,000 and upwards until you get far beyond the average of ratio. But as far as possible the rule is uniform for counties and boroughs alike in the United Kingdom; and, as far as regards each description, every county in Ireland will be treated on the same principle as every county in Scotland, and every county in Scotland on the same principle as every county in England. The same with boroughs; and that uniform dealing with the electoral areas as units we believe to be the safe and most just principle of distribution. The House will ask, what is the result? The result will be, according to our proposal—I do not know whether the House detected a slight discrepancy in my figures—the result of that rule will be that if our proposal is adopted England will obtain six seats more than it now possesses. These six seats will represent the difference between 652, the present number of the House, and 658, the old number. Wales will have exactly the number that it now has. [*Opposition cry of* "Oh!"] Ireland—I am very sorry that that cry obliges me to lengthen my speech by a parenthesis. I really was in hopes that I should have got through without a single "Oh!" of any kind. But I wish to point out that Wales never has been dealt with separately, or upon any separate principle, in any Reform Bill. The distinction between England and Wales, except in a recital in an Act of Parliament for the purpose of indicating their unity, is totally unknown to our Constitution. If I understand that interjection, the meaning is that, on account of various political sins which it has committed, Wales is to be specially cut off, and subjected for the first time to exceptional treatment. But if Wales is to be cut off, because it is certainly true that Wales, if you choose to make an integer of it, will have a somewhat more favourable representation than some other parts of the United Kingdom, there are also some other great districts of England which will likewise have a more favourable representation, and a more favourable representation even than Wales. I believe that under our proposal, if you take the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Wilts, Somerset, and Dorset, which I think together have a population exceeding that of Wales, and are, therefore, quite as much entitled to separate notice, it will be found that these counties, from the manner in which their ancient areas happened to be distributed, will have a share of representation under the Bill somewhat better than the average, and even better than that of Wales. In point of fact, that exclamation, of which I am not complaining, and only referred to for the sake of greater clearness, if it means anything, means electoral districts and nothing but electoral districts; for unless you have electoral districts I defy the wit of man so to arrange the electoral areas that you may not pick out bits of England and say this bit is a little more represented than that bit, and so on. There is, however, as far as I have yet got, a great unsatisfied claim on the part of Scotland; and we propose to meet that claim by asking the House to enact, or, if Gentlemen like, to submit to an increase of its own numbers by 12 seats. That is not a very large demand, and we are inclined to found it upon these two principles—first of all, that it saves the raising of any invidious question between one part of the country and another; and, secondly, that it enables us to apply with unvarying uniformity the principle of uniform treatment as regards enfranchisement and disfranchisement to all portions of the country without any distinction or difference whatever. There yet remains one important question on which alone it is necessary for me to trouble the House for a few minutes. I have said that we propose to adopt a rule under which the electoral areas will be dealt with as units, and with an unvarying equality of principle of treatment; but I have not yet explained to the House what we propose that these electoral areas should be.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: You have not mentioned Ireland.

MR. GLADSTONE: I beg pardon, I think I stated it. [*Cries of* "No!"] I stated that Wales would remain unchanged, and that Ireland would remain unchanged. [*Cries of* "No!"] I believe that what happened was this—I know the word "Ireland" passed from my mouth, and in the meantime I heard the interjection "Oh!" I will recite them again. England obtains an addition of six Members. Wales will remain as it is, Ireland will remain as it is, and Scotland will obtain an increment of 12; and it appears to me that that increment of 12, if we consider Scotland an integral part of the Kingdom, is fairly adapted to the demand. Now, Sir, the question of what are to be the electoral areas is undoubtedly one of very considerable difficulty. I may as well mention that, not denying the difficulty, perfectly conscious that there are objections to be taken to any imaginable mode of dividing the electoral areas, we have arrived at the conclusion that, upon the whole, the best and fairest method of dividing them would be to adopt, not absolutely as an uniform, but as a general and prevailing rule, the system of what is known as one-Member districts. The one-Member district, as far as England is concerned, is almost a novelty, because in a system of representation that counts and reckons more than six centuries of life, what began at the Reform Bill may be considered almost a novelty. In Scotland and Ireland, although the one-Member system is known there, the representation is hardly a reality. The recommendations of this system I think are these—that it is very economical, it is very simple, and it goes a very long way towards that which many Gentlemen have much at heart—namely, what is roughly termed representation of minorities. It may be termed the representation of minorities; it may be termed the representation of separate interests and pursuits; but, give it what name you like, there is no doubt that by means of one-Member districts you will obtain a very large diversity of representation. Undoubtedly that large diversity is a capital object in a good electoral system. I know there are Gentlemen on both sides of this House—some respected Friends and valued supporters of the Government—who wish to go further, and who wish to introduce in forms more directly addressed to their purpose what is termed the representation of minorities. Well, Sir, we have considered that question much; but the first observation I would respectfully make is that those who are so anxious for representation of minorities, those who agree so heartily in valuing the end, are by no means equally agreed as to the means, and that it is very difficult indeed to know upon what lines we can propose any scheme directly addressed to the representation of minorities without its being open to the gravest objections—objection in the first place that it was artificial; objection in the second place that it was not known to our usages and our history; objection in the third place that after all that particular scheme only commanded the assent of a handful, whereas everybody else was inclined to fall foul of it and attack it. Sir, we do not see our way to the introduction of what I do not like to call a new-fangled, but a novel and artificial system of that kind. I have said we propose one-Member districts as a general and prevailing rule, and by that proposition I entirely abide. We propose, however, certain exceptions. The first and most distinguished exception is that of the City of London. The City of London, I am afraid, all circumstances considered, cannot equitably be exempted from some change. Its population is a population of 50,000. With a population of 50,000 odd its electorate is remarkably large, and its largeness of electorate, combined with its history, marks its out for some exemption from the application of the rigid rule of population; yet it will hardly, when the rest of the Metropolis is proposed to be divided into one-Member districts, warrant us in asking the House to continue to it its very largely disproportionate representation which it now possesses with no less than four Members. We propose, however, that two Members shall be the amount of representation accorded to the City. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and Ministerial cheers.*] I hear certain cheers from a quarter from which I may own I am always glad to hear them; but I think on the present occasion—and from our portion of the House—they may seem not to be quite impartial. It is quite true that of late the City has been the stronghold of the Party opposite; but these things change from time to time. If Gentlemen will go back no very great number of years, I think that for more than half of my political life the City was the stronghold of the Liberal Party. That which has been may be, and therefore I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to believe that we are not so entirely divested of hope with regard to the City as to have been moved by any vindictive sentiments in making a proposal which I think will be felt to be in itself not an immoderate one. Another and more extensive—I will not say more important—exception to the rule of one-Member districts is to be found in the case of those towns, not in the Metropolis, but outside, which now exist as Parliamentary boroughs having dual representation, and which is not to be increased or diminished. As I have said, towns below 50,000 are to be diminished to one Member, and towns above 165,000 are to be increased by one Member. Towns between these limits having, and continuing to have, two Members, we propose shall not be required to be divided. There is undoubtedly, in many towns, a unity of municipal life, which, except for some great object, it is not desirable to violate or to impair by severance; and I think there are something like over 50 seats which would be affected by this exception, if it were approved by the House. I do not say that there may not be any other exceptions which might not be devised in the course of those discussions which we shall have amply enough on the details of this Bill; but I propound it as a principle of this measure that the system of one-Member districts is, according to our view, to be the general and prevailing rule. Sir, there is only one other important point; but I need not enter into details with regard to it. I mean the question of boundaries. There will be much work to be done with regard to boundaries under this Bill. The constitution of a large number of new electoral districts will leave a great deal to be done; but that to which the attention of the House will no doubt be principally directed will be the question of the boundaries of the larger towns. These boundaries will be carefully considered, and I think I had better not attempt any minute description which, after all, would fail of its purpose. The best thing I can say is that a Commission has been appointed for the purpose. The division of the boroughs and the fixing of the county districts will be under a Commission, which has been appointed; and perhaps I might not do ill—since, after all, confidence in the Commission is a very important matter—if I ventured to read the names of the Commissioners to the House. For England the names are Sir John Lambert, Mr. Pelham, barrister-at-law, Sir Francis Sandford, Mr. Joseph John Henley, the son of a former well-known Member of this House, Colonel Owen Jones, and Major Hector Tulloch. This Boundary Commission is already at work, and, being at work, it is reckoned that its labours will occupy, perhaps, about two months. There must be a considerable Recess, after our autumn labours, before the House re-assembles. There are the intermediate stages of the Bill to be gone through; and we have no doubt that in Committee on the Bill, or by a re-committal of the Bill for that purpose, there will be no difficulty in inserting the results of the labours of the Commission, so that they may be brought under the direct judgment of the House. These, Sir, are the only points on which I think it necessary to detain the House; but I will say one word more as to the procedure. On Monday last, when I intimated the probability of my being in a position to bring in this Bill to-day, I also said we would submit to the House the question of its being read a second time on Thursday. I did that upon the supposition that the Bill could be in the hands of Members to-morrow morning, and I am encouraged to assure Members that that will be the case. Well, Sir, viewing the nature of the Bill, and its not involving any great and broad matters, as I trust, of Party contention, I thought the House might be inclined to proceed with its second reading with a rapidity greater than usual, especially because it is impossible for us to assure the House that there would be other Business immediately demanding its attention, which would require it to sit beyond the present week. Therefore, as at present advised, we are disposed to ask the House to give the Bill a second reading on Thursday next. But in doing that I must admit that the time is unusually short; and I bear in mind very particularly that it will be in the power of the House, if it thinks fit, to reserve to itself another opportunity, with longer time and far better and less embarrassed means, of discussing the whole subject after it has been well weighed in the country—I mean upon the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair. In a matter like this the duty of the Government is to consult singly and solely the convenience of the House, and that is what we have entirely in view. But our opinion is that the convenience of the House and the necessities of the case would be best met if we were to read the Bill a second time at the early date which I have mentioned; and if we were to reserve the debate upon the Speaker's leaving the Chair, which might be as extended as hon. Gentlemen choose, until after the adjournment of the House over Christmas. That, of course, is a matter to be considered. I have stated the best conclusion at which we have arrived; but, as I have said, we have no desire but to consult the convenience of the House as that may be judged of by the House itself. I am not about to endeavour to solicit from the House on this occasion the expression of any opinion on the Bill. The disposition of the House will, I think, evidently be to inform itself as to the Bill by holding the Bill in its hand; and I am inclined to think that the House will be disposed to give leave to-night for the introduction of the Bill, so that hon. Gentlemen may see it to-morrow morning. Sir, on our part I will only say that we have been guided in framing it by a desire to act in the spirit of those assurances which, on various occasions, we have given. We have expressed our profound satisfaction in what was first a surmise, but what has gradually become a belief, that there is no broad or vital difference of opinion on this subject between the several sections of the House. The discussion, when it comes—and probably in the necessities of the case it may be an extended discussion—will, we believe, be a discussion rather of a practical, than of a polemical, character. We have striven to keep in view all those considerations which equity, which practical needs, which the regard for usage, and the general spirit of English legislation commended to our notice; and we confidently trust the Bill will be found, if it is on one side large, and therefore giving some promise of duration—for without being large it could give no such promise—if it is on one side large, it will, from the other point of view, not less important, be found to be equitable and considerate, neither regardless of history and prescription, and ancient arrangements and ancient rights, nor, on the other hand, disposed to respect those ancient arrangements and ancient rights up to a point which would allow them to preclude the attainment of the great purpose of a widely popular and national representation.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats at Parliamentary Elections; and for other purposes relative thereto."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, under ordinary circumstances it would have been my duty to make some observations on the statement of the right hon. Gentleman; but, for reasons which I think the House will well understand, I do not deem it necessary at the present moment to enter largely into the question. I will only suggest to the right hon. Gentleman whether it would be in his power to communicate to the House the nature of the instructions which have been given to the Boundary Commissioners. That is a point upon which a great deal of anxiety will no doubt exist, because a great deal will depend upon the manner in which these gentlemen conduct their duties.

MR. GLADSTONE: Certainly; the instructions will be presented at the earliest moment.

DR. CAMERON: Possibly the right hon. Gentleman may be able to remedy an omission in his speech. He mentioned the names of the Commissioners for England, but said nothing about the Boundary Commissioners for Scotland.

An hon. MEMBER: And for Ireland.

MR. GLADSTONE: I hope very shortly that we shall be able to state the names of the Commissioners for Scotland; but we have not been absolutely able to close the question. I may say we have no doubt at all what shall be the arrangement for Ireland; and the arrangement for Ireland is, that the work shall be entrusted to the Irish branch of the Ordnance Survey Department.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he desired to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman with regard to what had fallen from him with reference to future procedure. Under ordinary circumstances, in relation to a Bill of this supreme importance, he thought the House would agree that it would not have been unreasonable if hon. Members had asked to have ample time for the study of the Bill before the second reading was taken. Under the circumstances, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not be disposed to adhere to the intention to take the second reading on Thursday next. Even if the Bill were in the possession of hon. Members to-morrow they would not have two whole days to consider it. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed himself anxious to consult the convenience of the House; but the House had duties to consider as well as convenience; and he could not believe that there would be any disposition on the part of the House of Commons generally, as it were, to rush this measure through. Under the circumstances, he hoped Her Majesty's Government would not insist on proceeding to the second reading on Thursday next.

MR. BUCHANAN wished to know whether the increase in the number of Scotch Representatives was one of the essential principles of the Bill; and whether it would be treated by the Government as a vital question?

MR. CLARE READ asked whether those divisions of counties which would still continue to return two Members would be treated in the same way as boroughs which returned two Members, or whether those constituencies would be divided?

SIR JOHN HAY said, he wished to enter his protest against the very small increase in the number of Members apportioned to Scotland. If the number of Members for Ireland was to be continued at 103, and for Wales at 30, Scotland would be entitled to an increased representation of 21 Members, instead of 12. The Welsh Members were increased, under the last two Reform Bills, from 26 to 30, and since the Union the Irish Members from 100 to 105—which number had been reduced by the disfranchisement of Sligo and Cashel to 103. If there were to be 103 for Ireland, Scotland, on the same principle, would demand 82 or 83. He would advise English Members to look out for themselves, because the six additional Members to be added to England were not a sufficient number if they were to have 103 for Ireland, and 30 for Wales, continued. If it were the pleasure of the House to increase the whole number of its Members from 658 to 670 in order to give 12 new Members to Scotland, he trusted the House would do justice to Scotland by increasing its representation by 11 more than was proposed by the Bill.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he would join in the appeal made by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) against taking the second reading so early as Thursday next. The Prime Minister had himself said that this Bill was more drastic than that of 1832, and proceeded on a much wider and broader system of Reform. He hoped the Government would not take the second reading of the Bill, at all events, until Monday next.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he was inclined to agree with the contention of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay). He thought Scotland was entitled to a larger representation than was proposed. At the same time, if the general principles mentioned by the Prime Minister, which he should like some explanation of, were to be applied to the Three Kingdoms, then he felt they must submit, even though Scotland suffered. It was a curious thing, however, that the full number of Members should be retained for Ireland and Wales, and that Scotland should not receive the full number.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he did not concur in the views expressed by the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow). He thought it would be much better to proceed to the second reading at once, considering that they were now in December, and that the House desired to adjourn over Christmas. He thought the Government were quite right in proposing to take the second reading on Thursday, which would allow the debate to be continued on Friday or Monday.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked if the number of Members of the House was to be increased by 18?

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether the Boundary Commissioners would be instructed to deal with boroughs not otherwise affected by the Bill?

Mr. BRYCE asked whether it was intended, in increasing the representation of London by 37 Members, that the Members for seven of the new boroughs were to be taken out of the counties; and whether those boroughs, with the existing Metropolitan constituencies, except the City of London, were to have one Member only?

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE said, that in his judgment, considering the circumstances of the birth of the Bill were exceptional, they would require rather more than less time than usual to be taken for the consideration of the Bill. As the Bill, it was hoped, would settle this question for many years to come, it seemed to him something like endeavouring to hustle the measure through the House to take the second reading on Thursday. He therefore hoped that stage would be taken at a later date. He expressed his gratification at one statement of the Prime Minsiter—namely, that the proceedings of the Boundary Commissioners were to come under the careful scrutiny of the House.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, he understood that Members were to be distributed near London and the neighbourhood of the populous districts in Lancashire and Yorkshire upon the ground of population. He wished to ask what Return was taken as the basis of redistribution?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Census of 1881.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, that Census was rather misleading, because in the neighbourhood of the Metropolis, as well as of the large towns in the country, there had been a very great change. He wished to know whether the Government had taken into consideration the very great increase of population which, during the past two or three years, had occurred in the neighbourhood of London and some of the large towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire?

Mr. RAIKES inquired whether there was any intention to give the Boundary Commissioners power to reconsider the arrangements of what were called district boroughs? Everyone who had studied this question was aware that no greater anomaly existed on the face of the earth than the constitution of many of the Scotch district boroughs. He wished to ask whether the Government were to give the Boundary Commissioners powers to recommend the re-arrangement of these districts of burghs by forming new groups, and also whether the same course would be taken with regard to Welsh district boroughs? England and Wales had, according to the Prime Minister's statement, been treated on the same basis; but at the present time, in North Wales, there was not a single town which contained 15,000 people. He did not say that in order now to raise the question of curtailing the representation of Wales; but he thought it would be desirable that the House should know what were to be the powers of the Commissioners, and whether they were to be allowed to recommend any measures for the readjustment of district boroughs by forming new groups.

MR. GLADSTONE: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the questions which have been put to me. This is not the proper moment for deciding the question of the second reading; but I may say, as far as I can gather the general sense of the House on the question of procedure—I think the general sense—[An hon. MEMBER: Evident sense.]—the general, if not the evident, desire of the House is to read the Bill a second time on Thursday, and I think the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) has been a true expositor of the feeling of the House. The hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) has asked me the question whether the increase of the number of Members for Scotland is vital. It is not, I think, the custom of the House to require at the period of the introduction of a Bill statements as to the parts of it that are vital; but I will go so far as to say this—that I have always looked upon the increase of Scotch Members resulting from the application of a uniform, and, therefore, just, rule, as a part of any fair scheme of redistribution. Then the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Clare Read) referred to two-Membered counties. I have already stated that the only exception to be made in reference to the one-Membered rule would be in boroughs. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay) objects to the proposed allotment of Members between the different portions of the United Kingdom, and proposes to show that it is inequitable. If the right hon. and gallant Gentleman should make a very effective argument on the subject, it would, as far as inclination may be allowed to interfere in these matters, receive every attention. But this allotment, as the House will find on examining the Bill, is the result of the application of a uniform, and, therefore, a just, rule to all the areas of the country. At present we do not see our way—however agreeable it might be to us to come to a result still more favourable—to deviate from what we propose. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) asks what was the general principle upon which the allotment of Members was conducted. I thought I had stated it. The general principle is the applying of a uniform rule of enfranchisement and disfranchisement to every county and every borough in the Three Kingdoms. As to a question about the boundaries of existing boroughs, that is a matter which will be dealt with in the Bill, and will not be included in the powers of the Commissioners. The Metropolis, it is understood, we should propose to divide into one-Member districts, with the exception of the City of London; and we propose to follow the Census for 1881, not because we think it is perfectly satisfactory, nor because we have not considered the subject—for, on the contrary, we have considered it strictly—but because, on the whole, we think it the best rule that we can adopt. Then there was an important question put with regard to grouping boroughs, and as to whether it will be open to the Commissioners to make recommendations for what I may call the re-grouping of the boroughs. No, Sir; we think that is too large, too delicate, and too important a question—not merely a statistical one—for us to entrust to the Commissioners; and we propose that the whole subject of the grouping or re-grouping of Scotch or English boroughs shall remain for the consideration of the House. I think that these are all the questions which I am called upon to answer.

MR. H. H. FOWLER asked whether the terms of the Boundary Commission would allow the Commissioners to appoint Sub-Commissioners; and, if so, what control would the Government have over them? The names of the Commissioners had been read to the House, and the House had confidence in them; but if the Sub-Commissioners were to be selected by them, the selection might be an unfortunate one. He desired, therefore, to ask whether Sub-Commissioners were to be appointed at all; and, if so, whether they were to consist of officers in the service of the Crown, as in Ireland, or whether they were to be appointed *pro hâc vice?*

Mr. CALLAN said, he wished to supplement the question of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). In Ireland the Boundary Commission was to be entrusted to the Valuation Office, which had not the confidence of the Irish Members. He desired, therefore, to know what control the Government would have over the decisions of the Irish Valuation Office, and whether they intended to appoint Sub-Commissioners for Ireland; and what control the Government intended to exercise over them? He wished, as a Member of the Irish Party, to express his regret that the system of one-Membered constituencies would force him to the sad necessity of tearing himself away from half of his beloved constituency. At the same time, he rejoiced that the change would give him the opportunity of returning to his old love, who, he hoped, would send to the new Parliament Representatives purified from all Whig and corrupt influences. He thanked the Prime Minister for the self-sacrifice he had shown in extinguishing the Whig and Liberal representation of Ireland. Hereafter it would be more difficult to find a Whig or a Liberal there than it was for Diogenes to discover an honest man.

Mr. WARTON pointed out that the Universities had not been mentioned. Were the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin to continue to have two Members each, or were they to be divided? Further, he did not see how, if the 12 additional Members were all to be given to Scotland, England could have six additional Members, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman. He should like to know, also, whether Ireland would have 105 Members or 103?

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, that to decide on taking the second reading of this Bill, which involved a totally new principle of redistribution, on Thursday was a very summary proceeding, and involved the supposition that none of them might find it necessary to communicate with those whom they represented. He had himself thrown no impediment in the way of a settlement; but he must take that opportunity of saying, on behalf of the constituencies which were to be summarily dealt with by sub-division, that their Representatives ought to be allowed time to inform themselves of the feelings of their constituents.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had waited to see whether any other Member would rise to put a question. In reply to the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), he had to say that two of the Commissioners were persons in the habit of making those inquiries—he meant Mr. Pelham, and Major Tulloch, of the Royal Engineers. Both these gentlemen had made various inquiries in former years. If the Government should find it necessary to appoint other gentlemen to assist the Commissioners men of the same class would be appointed; but none would be chosen except persons used to perform such duties. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Callan) spoke of the Valuation Office as being chosen for the work in Ireland; but it was not the Valuation Office, but the Ordnance Survey, that had been named by the Prime Minister. The inquiry in England would be largely conducted by gentlemen who were on the Ordnance Survey in England, and who had drawn up useful maps on the subject. Similarly, in Ireland, the inquiries would be made by an official of the Ordnance Survey of Ireland. An officer of the Royal Engineers, Sir Charles Wilson, who was engaged in Egyptian affairs, and was on leave of absence, was at the head of that Office; and he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) did not remember at the moment the name of the official who was next under him. In answer to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), he had to say that the Universities would not be divided. It was very difficult to divide a University. He did not know how so incorporeal a body could be divided. Certainly it was not proposed. The hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) complained of Thursday being too soon to admit of Members consulting their constituents. But all that was proposed to be done on Thursday was to ask the House to affirm the principle of the Bill. The principle, so far as it would be affirmed, was that a

Redistribution Bill was necessary, rather than the methods on which the redistribution depended. After the explanation of the Prime Minister, any difference of opinion on the latter question might, he thought, be expressed on the Question that the Speaker do leave the Chair, after the Recess. Hon. Members would, therefore, have ample time to consult their constituents.

Colonel KING-HARMAN inquired what seats were to be transferred from Ireland to England?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE replied, the six seats, including those formerly belonging to Sligo and Cashel, which had been vacant for many years.

Mr. GRAY asked how many seats would be allotted to Dublin?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Four to the City.

Mr. PICTON wished to know whether the Government had considered the desirability, in view of the inconvenience of increasing the number of Members of the House, of taking Members from those anomalous constituencies the Universities? He wished to ask the Prime Minister whether the subject had been considered adequately by the Government, for he thought it was likely the House would be asked to consider it before the Bill had been passed?

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH inquired when the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners would be laid before the House?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the instructions were signed on Saturday by the Home Secretary; but they only existed in the form of a letter from himself to the Home Secretary. There was no reason why the letter forming instructions should not be laid upon the Table at once.

Mr. SEXTON asked how many Members Belfast would have?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Belfast will be one of the boroughs receiving an extension of borough boundaries. It will receive two new Members, making four in all, with the extended boundary.

Mr. J. LOWTHER wished to ask whether the President of the Local Government Board was in a position now to communicate to the House the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE stated that the instructions would be in the Vote Office to-morrow evening, and would be circulated the next morning.

Mr. GLADSTONE: By the indulgence of the House I may be allowed to answer the question put by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton). Undoubtedly, the Government have considered the whole question to which he refers—in fact, they have considered all the points that affected the question of Redistribution; and the result of that consideration is the Bill. It is certainly not intended to take away any Members from the Universities.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, and Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 40.]

SUSPENSION OF EVICTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macfarlane, Bill to suspend the power of eviction from holdings with a rental of less than thirty pounds a year within the area embraced in the Report of the Royal Commission on the condition of the Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, except for non-payment of rent, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Dick-Peddie, Mr. Henderson, Sir George Campbell, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Barclay, and Mr. Bryce.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 41.]

INDUSTRIAL AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS (IRELAND) LOANS BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Colthurst, Bill to afford facilities for the erection, enlargement, improvement, and purchase of buildings for Industrial and Reformatory Schools for Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Colthurst, Mr. William Shaw, Mr. Patrick Martin, Colonel Nolan, and Mr. Moore.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 42.]

PEASANT PROPRIETARY AND ACQUISITION OF LAND BY OCCUPIERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jesse Collings, Bill to facilitate the creation of a Peasant Proprietary, and the acquisition of Land by Occupiers, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. George Palmer, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Broadhurst.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 43.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 2*nd December*, 1884.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILL—*Committee—Report*—Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act Amendment * (8).

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK rose, pursuant to Notice, to move for Returns respecting the ships built and building for Her Majesty's Navy during the last four years; and to make a Statement, said: My Lords, I beg to thank the noble Viscount (Viscount Sidmouth), who has a Motion on the Paper relating to the Navy, for giving me precedence on this occasion. As regards the Statement which I have to make, the natural question which would occur to your Lordships is, why it should be necessary, at this time of year and in this Autumn Session of Parliament, to make any Statement respecting the condition of the Navy. Such Statements are naturally made when the Estimates are laid before Parliament. The announcement that a Statement respecting the Navy would be made in the course of the Autumn Session was given when I happened to be away from England; but I can have no hesitation in saying that it has been the outcome of the general public interest which has been expressed upon questions relating to the Navy which have arisen in the course of the Recess. I am sure that it is right that the Government should take an opportunity, as Parliament is now sitting, to lay before the two Houses what their view on the subject is, and what proposals they have to make in anticipation of the ordinary Estimates of the year. Now, I should like to say what is absolutely the fact—that no one connected with the Admiralty — neither myself, nor Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, the late Secretary to the Admiralty, nor Sir Thomas Brassey, who has worthily succeeded him—ever expressed the least dislike of all the public discussions which have taken place in regard to the state of the Navy. In fact, anyone who is connected with, and responsible for, the condition of the Navy is bound to attend to all public discussions on this subject; and we, and every one of your Lordships, must admit that it is a question above all others which vitally concerns the interest of everyone in this country, and one on which public discussion is right and useful. But, my Lords, I think it is somewhat unfortunate that that discussion has hitherto been conducted naturally and necessarily without any expression of opinion from those who are most responsible for the affairs of the Navy, who must have most knowledge on the subject, and who, I venture to think, are as vitally interested in the condition of the Navy as anyone else in the country can possibly be. My Lords, that is a necessity which could not be avoided. It would have, of course, been quite out of the question that I myself, or any Member of the Board of Admiralty, or any Secretary to the Admiralty, should have entered into the discussion of the public Press as to the state of the Navy. It is in their place in Parliament where those who are responsible for the affairs of the Navy must give utterance to what they have to say on this subject, and nowhere else. I may add that I am exceedingly glad that almost the earliest opportunity that could be taken has been afforded to us to make a Statement on the subject. I would premise one word more—namely, that in speaking on behalf of Her Majesty's Government I can assure your Lordships and all interested in this question throughout the country that we are determined, as far as in us lies, to maintain the naval supremacy of this country in such a manner as we think most advisable for that purpose. I must say, further, that I hope that in the observations which I shall make to-night nobody will be able to say that I have made this question in any way a Party or political question. It certainly would be hard if, just at the time when the Leaders of the two great Parties have, in my opinion, most fortunately and for the advantage of the interests of the country come to an agreement on a most difficult and complicated political question, that with respect to a question which ought never to be held to be a political one at all—namely, the condition of the Navy—we should discuss it in any other way, or with any other object or motive, except to get at the truth, and to come to that conclusion which is most conducive to the interest of the country apart from any Party or personal considerations. Having said that much, I think your Lordships will not quarrel with me if I occupy a very short time in making a Statement, without entering into any elaborate figures, as to the policy of the present Board of Admiralty in respect to shipbuilding during the last four years; because I think that in all discussions we have seen, very naturally, perhaps, that there has been an omission to recognize what the policy of the Board of Admiralty has been, and how much it has done to carry out that policy. In the first place, with regard to the most important element of the naval strength of the country—namely, armour-plated ships—that policy has been stated more than once in both Houses of Parliament. It was stated, for example, very distinctly by my right hon. Friend Mr. Trevelyan, when Secretary to the Admiralty, in the House of Commons in the month of April, 1882. He then explained, in a discussion which took place on the strength of the Navies of England and France, that it was, in the view of the Board of Admiralty, necessary very considerably to increase the rate of construction of armour-plated ships, and that we might have taken one of two courses. In 1880, when the present Board of Admiralty was formed, we might have taken the course of asking the House of Commons for a large Vote for an immediate increase of armour-plated tonnage; but we deliberately declined to take that course. We deliberately preferred to take what we thought was the wiser course of making the increase that we considered necessary gradually and steadily, and not all at one time by a very large expenditure of public money. In carrying out that policy we have deliberately increased the expenditure on the Navy very considerably in the last four years; and we have also, during that time, very largely increased the rate of construction of the armour-plated ships. We increased that rate of construction from something under 8,000 tons per annum to more than 12,000 tons per annum; and that increase, as your Lordships can well understand, has necessarily been accompanied by a considerably increased charge to the public. For those ships year by year become more expensive in their construction. Now, that charge, on the whole, may be put down at not very far from £1,000,000 sterling. If we compare the expenditure of the year 1884-5 with that of the year 1880-1, the first year when the present Board of Admiralty came into Office, that expenditure is divided, in the first place, into the Votes in the Navy Estimates from which the funds are found for the construction of ships. The increase on those Votes is from £3,124,000 in the year 1880-1 to £3,891,000 in the year 1884-5. But there is another expense which is not provided for in the Navy Estimates, but which is equally essential to the construction of ships—namely, the supply of guns for the Navy, for which provision is made in the Army Estimates. The expenditure upon guns, &c., for the Navy has been increased from £300,000 in 1880 to £500,000 in 1884-5, making, on the whole, an increased expenditure upon the construction of ships in the last, as compared with the first, of the four years, of not much under £1,000,000 sterling. My Lords, in carrying out that increase we have been guided by certain general principles. One of those principles has been that we should not be induced, by the existence in the Navies of other nations of armour-clad ships of a gigantic size, to lay down for this country very large ships. We thought, on the whole, that for England it would be better to confine the class of ships that we build to ships of what, in the present day, are considered to be of moderate size. When we come to talk, however, of ships of moderate size, that moderate size means ships of about 10,000 tons, and costing not very far from £750,000 each. We would not embark in the policy which has been adopted, for example, by the Italian Government, of laying down ships of 2,000 and 3,000 tons larger than the class I have mentioned. Another of the principles which we have adopted in our policy of construction has been that we should take money enough to press forward as quickly as possible the ships which we have begun to construct. I have seen adverse criticisms in respect to this; but I am prepared to maintain that during the last four years the construction of armour-plated ships has progressed at a rate as rapid as possible consistently with the economical construction of such ships. We may have been detained in completing ships from circumstances connected with their armament which have arisen, as I believe, unavoidably; but in respect of the construction of ships by the Board of Admiralty I say we have supplied money enough to build those ships as economically and as rapidly as possible. Another part of our policy has been, as far as possible, not to multiply types of ships; but, both in respect of economy of construction and of the advantages of manœuvring when ships are acting together, to build them as far as possible of the same type. The ships we have built are of the type generally known as the *Admiral;* and although as years went on and as improvements advanced some have been designed more powerful than others, still they were ships of the same class. Another principle which we have followed has been that in building this class of ships, and all other classes of ships, we should pay especial attention to the element of speed; and all the ships that we have laid down have been ships of great speed—that is to say, the speed of the ships laid down has been above the average of 16 knots. Having said this much, and shown what has been done and the policy that has been followed during the last four years in respect of armour-plated ships, I do not know whether your Lordships expect me to say anything in respect of the comparisons which many of your Lordships may have seen lately between the armour-plated ships of France and those of England. I have alluded on one or two occasions to this subject. It is naturally one of some delicacy. We are on the best terms with our neighbours. We have no right to make any objection to the increase which France chooses to make in her Navy. On the contrary, I think I have explained in this House on a former occasion that the reason which induced the French Government, more than 10 years ago, to lay down a scheme for the construction with a greater rapidity than ordinary of armour-plated ships was one which must be accepted as natural by anyone who has paid any attention to naval construction here or elsewhere. The fact is, that when the armour-clad ships were first introduced, the French Government continued far longer than we did the practice, which has turned out not to be an economical one, of building ships of wood and plating those ships with iron. It has been found that the ships so built become unserviceable within a limited time. After 20 years it is impossible to calculate that those ships will be of any value as ships of war; whereas ships built of iron or steel appear, so far as I am able to judge at the present time, to be practically indestructible. For example, one of the earliest iron-clads, the *Warrior*, laid down by Sir John Pakington more than 20 years ago, has been examined; and as far as her hull goes she is, I believe, pretty nearly as good now as she was at the time when she was built. I do not mean in the least to imply that the *Warrior* is a ship which would be at the present time of any particular value as a fighting ship; but I simply mention this to show the length of time which ships built of iron may last. That is the reason why the French some years ago laid down a programme for increasing the number of their armour-plated ships, and why they have been engaged in endeavouring to carry that programme into execution. Therefore I hope your Lordships will understand that in making any comparison at all it is not with the view of giving an impression that the French Government have been endeavouring to rival us on the sea, a thought which I honestly believe was undreamt of in making their programme. I make it merely because I have read so many such comparisons, and it seems to me that it would be hardly right for me to leave the subject altogether unnoticed. We have seen in those comparisons a great many distinctions drawn between ships of the first class, and ships of the second class, and ships of the third class—distinctions drawn between ships on account of their speed, on account of the armour they carry, and on account of the guns with which they are armed; but there is one thing which your Lordships will have seen for yourselves on reading those comparisons—that there is hardly one comparison which coincides with another made two or three days before. Only the other day there was an elaborate comparison made in which it was said, in regard to the English Navy, that nobody would deny that the English was superior to the French Navy in what are called first-class ships; but we read three days ago, I think, a discussion in which a very eminent professional gentleman said one thing was clear—that we were very inferior in first-class ships, but enormously superior in regard to second-class ships. This is one of the comparisons which I have seen; and, of course, those comparisons puzzle very much persons who are not acquainted with the technical details of this interesting question. I am sure that if our best naval officers were asked what should be called a first-class ship they would not agree. That places us in a great difficulty, and I came to the conclusion that it would be better to take the list of ships of the French and English Navies for next year, and to ask my Naval Colleagues at the Board of Admiralty to go through them, and, without reference to any arbitrary classification of first, second, or third class, to see what the general comparison between the ships was. Setting one ship as far as we could against the other, and when we could giving a decided disadvantage to our side, always placing ourselves in the worst position in the comparison, the conclusion we have arrived at is as follows, coming not on my authority, but on the authority of the Board of Admiralty. We made a distinction between the more modern class of ships, and those ships which are usually called obsolete—third-class ships, or whatever they may be called—which are now hardly of a class to be put in comparison with the better class of ships. As far as modern ships go, the comparison comes to this. Taking the more modern ships, there are 30 English of 210,430 tons, and 19 French of 127,828 tons, showing a balance in our favour of 11 ships.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: Was that the armoured tonnage?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I am speaking only of armour-plated ships. Taking the *quasi*-obsolete ships, to which we should not attach any great value, there are 16 English of 115,520 tons, and 12 French of 53,066 tons, and there is a balance in our favour of four ships. Taking the whole of the armoured ships together, there are 46 English of 329,550 tons, and 31 French of 180,894 tons. I am not going to make any comments on these comparisons, because the moment we come to make any comments we are apt to land ourselves in a quagmire of technical discussion. I wish, however, to call attention to this fact—that this is the most authentic and best comparison in regard to the state of the two Navies that I can offer your Lordships, not on my authority, as I said before, but on the authority of the Board of Admiralty.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: Do these figures refer to ships building or actually built?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: To ships actually built. During the last four years we have begun two armour-plated ships for every one which the French Government have begun. I must inform your Lordships that during the last few years there has not been any rapid progress or great expenditure of money upon the increase of the French Navy. In 1882 a very material change was made in regard to the money provided for the construction of the French Navy. Whereas up to that time the construction of the Navy was provided for mainly by Votes of Credit, apart from the annual Votes, and therefore from the annual taxation of the country, in that year a change was made, and since that time the construction has been provided for by annual Votes. Without entering into statistics, I may inform your Lordships that I am satisfied, after full inquiry, that our expenditure at the present time on the construction of armour-plated ships is very much larger than the expenditure on the construction of such ships by the French Government; and, so far as I am aware—and I have full opportunities of knowing—there has been no extraordinary activity in regard to construction in the French Navy. There is, therefore, my Lords, no reason for making us suppose that any exertions are being made in that quarter which would of themselves, apart from other circumstances, require large and new expenditure on our part. I have already said in this House, upon a former occasion, that, as regards ships being constructed by the two nations at the present time, there are more ships being constructed at this moment by the French than by ourselves. The number of ships actually launched and being completed is about the same in the two countries. I think there is a balance of one in favour of the French, but that ship is a small one; and the tonnage of ships launched and completed is about the same between the two nations. In regard to ships being constructed, and not yet advanced, there are two more ships being constructed by the French than by ourselves. That is the exact position at the present time. I should like to say one word in defence of the policy pursued by the Board of Admiralty in not having in 1880 asked for a large sum of money and commenced to build a great number of armour-plated ships. My Lords, this is a question on which one learns by experience. I am old enough to remember cases in which Boards of Admiralty have suddenly, and in consequence of the difficulties of the moment, come to the conclusion that they should make a large increase in a particular class of ships, and this has led to a great expenditure of public money, with no advantage to the strength of the Navy. One particular instance, which some of your Lordships may remember, happened in 1859. I remember it very well. It was not long after the introduction of steam into ships of the line, and it was supposed to be necessary to make a large increase in the steam battle ships of this country. Sailing ships were converted into steamships, and the increase was at once voted by Parliament. I am not finding fault with anyone. There was no difference of opinion among the high authorities of the day; but, unfortunately, the Admiralty did not take sufficient account of the fact that armour-plated ships were beginning to supersede the unprotected ships, and before half the new ships were completed it was found that they were entirely superseded by armour-plated ships. Many of those new wooden ships had to be pulled to pieces, and the remainder had to be converted into very indifferent protected ships. I recall this as an instance to show that it is not usually a safe thing in naval construction, when so many changes are going on, to spend a very large sum of money at any particular time in building any large number of battle ships of a class which may at that time be considered the best. My Lords, I will go further, and ask if in 1880 the Board of Admiralty had laid down 10 ships like the *Collingwood*—and a very good kind of ship she was—what would now be said by professional men who are acquainted with the present condition of naval warfare? The *Collingwood* has only 43-ton guns. She is still a very powerful and good ship, and not obsolete; but it is by no means the kind of ship which any naval officer would now recommend to be laid down. That shows the change that has taken place within the last four years. The use of the Gatling guns, of Nordenfeldt guns, and what is known as the quick-firing gun, have given rise to requirements which did enter into the consideration of Naval Constructors at the time the *Collingwood* was built. Moreover, since that time guns of more than 100 tons have been placed on board line-of-battle ships; and it is now almost impossible to put the heavier guns which are now made on vessels built four years ago. Therefore, I venture to think that we did wisely in gradually and steadily increasing the amount of our tonnage; and that we should not have acted a wise part if we had come down to Parliament with a sensational Statement and asked the country to agree to a large and immediate Vote for the purpose of building a great number of iron-clad ships of the kind that were then considered the best. Having said that much as to what we have done, let me state to your Lordships what we propose to do. We have, or shall have shortly, three "slips" vacant, and we propose to lay down three new ships in place of three ships which have been, or will shortly be, launched. That will be in accordance with our programme of four years ago. We have also laid down a ship—the *Benbow*—which is being built by contract. That ship will shortly be launched; and we propose also to lay down another to succeed her—that will make four iron-clads in all to be laid down—either at the beginning or in the course of the next financial year. So much in regard to the ships that we intend to lay down. As to those on the stocks, we are making the most rapid progress that is possible. As regards the class of ship to be laid down the Board of Admiralty have paid the greatest attention; and the subject is so interesting that I will not apologize for giving your Lordships a very slight description of the ship that we propose to lay down. The ship is to be of a little over 10,000 tons, of the same class as the *Conqueror*, with 18 inches of armour on the side, which, with the backing, will render her equal in defence to any ship afloat; her turret will be armed with two of the heaviest guns put into any ship of the present time—namely, two 110-ton guns, and she will have an 18-ton gun in the stern, and 12 6-inch guns in her after-battery. This battery will be protected by steel three inches thick, with a backing against the fire of the machine guns and the quick-firing guns, which, it is the general opinion, will in the future form so great an element of destruction in naval warfare. This ship will have a speed of 15½ knots; and I think, my Lords, that this ship, which has been worked out with great care by the very able officers at the Admiralty who design our ships, will be a very valuable addition to the Navy, and will be equal to any armour-clad ship which has been laid down, or which is now being laid down or constructed, by any Power. With regard to the particular design of the other three armour-clad ships it is proposed to construct, I cannot now give any further information. The Board of Admiralty have had several designs before them; and it is a matter of very considerable difficulty to decide between them. There is no reason at the present time to come to any conclusion as to the particular class of ship. All I can say at present is that they will be about the same class as those we have been in the habit of building—that is to say, between 10,000 and 11,000 tons. My Lords, there has been recently a development of a power in respect of naval warfare to which I do not think sufficient attention has been paid in many of the discussions which have lately taken place on the Navy. I speak of the power of torpedoes as used by ships against other ships. Your Lordships may remember that the Board of Admiralty, over which the late Mr. Ward Hunt presided, designed a ship which was called the *Polyphemus*. This ship was designed to be a ram, and at the same time a torpedo ship, which would be, by reason of the character of her construction, very little vulnerable to the guns of the enemy, having her vitals protected by steel armour. She was to be an answer to some of the large armour-plated ships of other countries, and that was the purpose for which she was built by the late Board of Admiralty. My Lords, that ship was an important experiment. We have paid the greatest attention to the development of her qualities; and I am glad to inform your Lordships that very recently the experiments made as to her fighting qualities in respect to her torpedo discharge have been exceedingly successful—so much so that the able officer in charge of the experiments, Captain Wilson, reported to the Admiralty that the experiments should not be continued in her, and that she was a valuable addition to the fighting ships of the Navy. My Lords, in respect to naval warfare, I do not think it becomes the Board of Admiralty in England to be behind, or to follow the example of, other nations; but rather to take the lead in introducing such experiments and such changes as may be likely by their development to increase the naval force of this country; and I think the Board of Admiralty over which Mr. Ward Hunt presided did a very wise thing in building this ship—the *Polyphemus* — and I will add that, in my opinion and in the opinion of many men conversant with the subject, the experiments made with her are likely to introduce a development of naval force which may, possibly, be not altogether appreciated at the present time. At any rate, we feel most desirous to continue in that direction; and we propose, therefore, to build at once two more ships of a similar class to the *Polyphemus* —that is to say, ships of the torpedo ram class—strong enough to be valuable as rams, and, at the same time, having a powerful torpedo discharge, and having their vitals so protected as to afford very little mark to the guns of the enemy. These ships will be of about 3,000 tons displacement, rather longer and wider than, but otherwise identical with, the *Polyphemus* in under-water arrangements, except that there will be no torpedo discharge through the ram itself. They will be sea-going ships, and their estimated speed will be 17½ knots. In respect of the development of torpedo warfare, there is another class of ship which the Admiralty have recently ordered, and of which they are building two at the present time, which may be called torpedo cruisers. They are ships of about 1,400 tons displacement, and are designed to act as auxiliaries to a fleet going into action. They will be of great speed, and will have powerful torpedo armaments. We now propose to build an increased number of this class of vessel—in fact, we propose to build 10 such cruisers. Their value, I believe, is universally admitted by those who have fully discussed the newer classes of ships which will form the Fleets of the future. They will be armed with six 4-ton guns, and, as they will have good coal endurance, they will perform service as cruisers in time of peace, as well as fast armed scouts and torpedo auxiliaries in time of war. Their estimated speed is 16 knots, but I will not mention the cost. None of your Lordships who have considered the condition of the Navy can look altogether with satisfaction upon the class of small ships which we are obliged to employ in different parts of the world. It is absolutely necessary for us to have those ships, and very useful, no doubt, they are; but it would be most desirable to substitute for that class of ships, which necessarily cannot be quite efficient as fighting ships in the present day, ships which will be equally well able to perform the duties they now perform, and be efficient for fighting purposes. In the opinion of the Board of Admiralty, the ships I have described will be able to perform those duties; and, that being so, I cannot conceive a more valuable addition to the Fleet of this country than a number of ships of that class. Besides that class of ship, I must mention the subject of the smaller boats, called torpedo boats. These torpedo boats are divided into two classes—the first-class are those which are not taken on board line-of-battle ships, and which go by their own motive power; and the second class are those which are carried on board line-of-battle ships, and which may be launched when wanted. In the opinion of the Board of Admiralty, the first-class boats, which are of about 120 tons burden, are of very great value for defensive purposes. They are also of great value in warfare which may be carried on within certain limits of the ports at which they may be stationed. But it is impossible to consider these boats as sea-going boats, or, as I believe the technical phrase is, "sea-keeping" boats —that is, boats that can keep at sea, and accompany a fleet in time of war. One of these little boats went the other day to Australia, under the command of a very enterprizing lieutenant in the Navy; and the description he gives of the boat, which was named the *Childers*, after my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would convince anyone that it would be quite impossible to expect boats of this class to accompany a fleet at sea; and, therefore, they are to be considered valuable mainly as a defensive and not as an offensive weapon, in the sense of being used as such in general maritime warfare. Therefore, I am not ashamed to confess that, in regard to the construction of these boats, we, being the strongest Naval Power in the world, have not paid so much attention to this class as nations that are weaker at sea, such as Germany and Russia. Science is causing constant changes, and the best torpedo boat of this year will not be the best next year. But, my Lords, as we are taking up seriously the fortification of our coaling stations abroad, we propose to make an addition of 30 to the number of first-class torpedo boats. In the opinion of some, no mean authorities on naval construction, the system of torpedo attack will before long be developed in such a way as to permit of the use in naval engagements of ships very much less costly than first-class armour-plated line-of-battle ships. Of course, no ship armed with torpedoes can take the place of an iron-clad in an attack upon fortifications, or in similar work; but, as regards service in the Channel, there are those whose opinions I much respect who think that the class of torpedo ram we propose to build may perform service equal to that performed by some of the armour-plated ships. I come now to a class of ships which the Board of Admiralty have taken very great pains to bring to perfection, and which have received very little notice from those who have discussed this subject out-of-doors. I am speaking of the ship called "the protected cruiser." The late Board of Admiralty, very wisely, just before leaving Office, ordered the construction of three ships, which are known as ships of the *Leander* class. They possess great speed, and are protected in a measure by a steel deck built over the engines and vitals of the ship. Now, we desired to improve upon that class of ships, and accordingly the able Constructor to the Admiralty designed for us four ships—the *Mersey*, the *Severn*, the *Thames*, and the *Forth*. These vessels are very fast, and they are protected to a much greater degree than the *Leander* class. They have a 3-inch steel-protected deck, which is inclined at the sides, so that a shot can only strike it at an angle. Ships of this class may be considered as belted cruisers with a protection of 6 inches of steel. In our opinion, no ships will be superior to them for the protection of our commerce, which is one of the most important objects which must be borne in mind by the Board of Admiralty when framing its policy in regard to construction. Then, under certain circumstances, they will be perfectly well able to cope with some of the inferior classes of iron-clad ships. And in any comparison between the fighting ships of England and those of other countries these ships must not be forgotten, although they are not included under the technical heading of armour-plated tonnage. We now propose to go still further, and improve upon the ships of the *Mersey* class. We propose to build belted cruisers which will not have inclined decks, but armour belts of 10 inches of steel, with which their vitals will be protected. These ships will have a displacement of 5,000 tons, and the weight of their armour will be 1,000 tons. Their water-line will be protected by side armour from end to end. A ship of this class will be armed with torpedoes. She will also be capable of being used as a ram. She will carry two 18-ton guns and 12 4-ton guns, and her speed will be 17 knots. Ships of this class will be perfectly able to contend with the inferior iron-clads of other countries. We propose to build five of this class of ships. To sum up what I have been saying, we propose to lay down four iron-clads, two torpedo rams of 3,000 tons each, five belted cruisers of 5,000 tons, 10 scouts of 1,400 or 1,500 tons, and 30 first-class torpedo boats. The additions we propose to the Navy will involve a cost of about £3,100,000 beyond, and in excess of, the ordinary Estimates for the year. We intend to ask for tenders from shipbuilding firms as soon as possible, as every one of these ships, excepting the torpedo boats, will take more than a year to build. My own impression is that an iron-clad cannot be built in less than four years; but the four that are to be built ought to be completed within five years from the date when they were ordered. Some may, perhaps, be completed more rapidly. I have said that these ships will be obtained by contract. The Board of Admiralty have this year had the advice of a very competent Committee, presided over by noble Friend (the Earl of Ravensworth), on the subject of shipbuilding by contract. That Committee did not recommend that the rate of shipbuilding in the Dockyards should be diminished; but it was their opinion that when the shipbuilding trade of this country was utilized for the purpose of assisting the Navy, it should be utilized in the way of building rather than of repairing ships. Ships can, in fact, be built by contract economically and efficiently. We are building one of the largest of our iron-clads—the *Benbow*—by contract now; and the opinion of Mr. Barnaby and the professional advisers of the Admiralty is that the way in which that ship is being constructed, under proper supervision, is such as to satisfy them that we can safely enter into contract for the building of those ships. Now, I am not of opinion that it is desirable to make constant changes in the establishments of the Dockyards. We have been obliged, in order to carry through the increased programme of the last four years, considerably to add to the number of men employed in the Dockyards—I think from 16,000 to 18,000. The Board of Admiralty are not prepared to make any considerable increase in that number. They think it more desirable that the work should go steadily on. The reasons for this decision are entirely professional, based on the best mode of carrying on the work. But if there were no such reasons at the present time, your Lordships would probably agree with me that if we are to spend money on the increase of the Navy, it is desirable, in consequence of the stagnation in the great shipbuilding yards of the country, that the extra expenditure should go, not to add to our permanent staffs, but to increase the work by contract in the private yards. There will be an additional advantage from this course. No one who has had anything to do with the Admiralty can help feeling it is a great advantage that the great shipbuilders should have practice in building ships of war. It is a different class of work from what they are accustomed to; and it is clear that when war breaks out we should look upon the great shipbuilding yards as part of the Naval Establishments—an addition and strength to the resources of the country which must be required if we have a naval war. Therefore it is an additional advantage that ships of different classes should be built in the many different shipbuilding yards of the country, which would thus acquire an experience they do not now possess in constructing the fighting ships of England. My noble Friend (the Earl of Carnarvon) asked me whether the sum of £3,100,000 includes the cost of the armament required for the ships to be built. I wish I could tell your Lordships that it was so, because I am a man of an economical disposition. I mentioned before that the armament of our ships is provided for in the Army, and not in the Navy, Estimates; and I am obliged to state that the carrying out of our programme will require a considerable increase in the Army Estimates, in order to provide the guns for these ships, and the other guns which will be required for the armament of the ships now being built. I could say a good deal upon the subject of guns; but I have already detained the House a long time, and I hope your Lordships will excuse me. But this I will say—that our professional advisers are satisfied with the large guns now built and building for our ships. I cannot think that less than £300,000 for the next five years, together with an additional £100,000 this year, or, in all, £1,600,000, will be necessary, so that a large addition must be made to the Army Estimates for naval guns in that period. But there are other matters connected with the naval defence of the country to which I must now allude. It has been already stated in this House that we shall require £825,000 for the protection of our coaling stations. We had a discussion on this subject not long ago, and therefore it will not be necessary for me to go at any great length into the subject. But I have seen it asked—"What is the use of a Navy if you have to come to Parliament to ask for money for the protection of your ports and coaling stations?" I heard that same argument used many years ago with respect to the protection of our naval ports against sudden attack; and I remember very well that my old master, Mr. Sidney Herbert, gave this answer—"If your Fleets are wanted to protect your Dockyards you might as well have neither Fleets nor Dockyards, because the only use of Fleets of this country is to leave its Dockyards, go out to sea to meet the enemy, and take the offensive." So I answer and say that the ships of this country abroad should not be used to protect our coaling stations. If we had a war to-morrow, what would be thought of any Board of Admiralty which incurred the responsibility of leaving one ship here, another ship there, and another somewhere else to protect the coaling stations, which ought to be able to protect themselves, and to which our ships ought to come for refuge and protection instead of going to protect them? I had myself the other day a letter from a most distinguished officer abroad with respect to two very important coaling stations, stating that if we had a war we should have to keep two armour-plated ships to protect those coaling stations. Therefore, if the coaling stations are not protected the Admiralty would have to keep a force much larger than would otherwise be required. The Government would, therefore, incur a grave responsibility if they were to leave those stations unprotected, when a moderate expenditure might make them perfectly safe instead of being a snare to this country. Accordingly, I cannot listen for a moment to those who say—"What is the use of your ships if they cannot protect the coaling stations abroad?" To sum up, there will be ships built by contract, in addition to the ordinary Estimates, to the amount of £3,100,000; an increased provision for guns in the Army Estimates of £1,600,000; on the protection of coaling stations, £825,000; giving a total of £5,525,000.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked how much of the £3,100,000 was for armoured and how much for unarmoured ships?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I stated that the £3,100,000 would give the following result—namely, one armour-clad; five protected cruisers, whether you call them armour-clad or not; 10 protected vessels of the scout class, and 30 torpedo boats; but I am not at present prepared to say that the ships that will be ordered to be built by contract shall be of the particular classes I have mentioned. For example, I think it is very probable it may be better to order by contract two, or even three, iron-clads, instead of one, and to build other ships in the Dockyards. What I mean is that this £3,100,000 will produce that number of ships which, whether ordered to be built by contract or not, will add to the strength of the Navy.

The sum we have put down as an increase to the Army Estimates for armaments will include an increase of the supply of torpedoes, which at present is hardly sufficient. Taking the proposals as a whole, I think that I may with perfect safety say to the House that if they are carried out the annual production of armour-clad ships will be increased by 2,000 tons, coming to a total of 14,000, instead of 12,000, tons every year. Her Majesty's Government, in "another place," have announced their intention to agree to the appointment, during the next Session of Parliament, of a Committee to inquire into the Naval and Military Expenditure of the country; and these proposals will be referred, as a matter of course, along with the Navy Estimates, to that Committee. There are two other most important questions intimately connected with the naval strength of the country, which are now under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, and to which, I think, sufficient attention has not as yet been directed. One is the defence of the commercial harbours of this country. Since the present Government took Office, a Committee was appointed, of which my noble Friend behind me (the Earl of Morley) was President, assisted by naval and military officers of distinction, to inquire into the best mode of defending the commercial harbours of this country. That Committee paid great attention to the subject, and made a Report. That Report has been considered by the professional authorities of the War Office; it is now under the consideration of the several Departments concerned, and of Her Majesty's Government. The other important question is, whether it is not necessary, in consequence of the increased power of guns of late years and the changes in that respect, to make some alteration and improvement in the seaward defences of our great military ports at home and abroad—I mean such ports as Portsmouth, Plymouth, Malta, and Gibraltar. That subject has also been under the consideration of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War; and it is probable that he will have proposals to bring before Her Majesty's Government. To the statement I have just made, I must, therefore, make an important reservation in respect of the proposals of the Government as to additions to the Navy. It is impossible to come to a conclusion as to how much or what class of addition to the Navy would be required, if the main responsibility should be placed on the Navy of protecting those ports, which otherwise might be protected by the fortifications. There is no doubt that the question is one of very considerable difficulty. The arguments I used just now, and which, I think, met with the general concurrence of your Lordships in respect of our coaling stations abroad, do not apply with equal force to similar ports at home, where the protection is much easier than at a distance from this country. I do not wish to anticipate the decision of the Government; but I wish to impress upon your Lordships and the public that it is possible further increases may be necessary to the Navy under certain contingencies with respect to these fortifications and defences.

Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Tabular Statement of the ships laid down by the Board of Admiralty since 1880, and Diagram illustrating the armoured and unarmoured tonnage built in Her Majesty's dockyards and by contract; and the total naval expenditure from 1865-66 to 1883-84 inclusive."—(*The Earl of Northbrook.*)

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked as to the thickness of the armour-plated ships it was proposed to lay down; and whether the proposals of the Admiralty were to be considered dependent upon any Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, or whether they were to be absolute?

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I feel some diffidence in taking part in a discussion which involves so much of technical details; but my excuse must be the interest I take in the subject, and that I think our ships should be commensurate for the protection of our great commercial interests. I, like everyone else, have been waiting anxiously for the statement to be made this evening by Her Majesty's Government. I can remember some statements which have fallen from them on previous occasions, intimating their belief that no considerable increase of expenditure was necessary; but I should be the last person to hold them to such statement, and I greatly prefer to see them diverging from such opinions. For it is my honest belief that the safety and the interests of the country are not sufficiently safeguarded, and it is our duty to leave no stone unturned until they are placed in a position of security. In considering the question of proposals to be made, I thought that either these proposals might be wholly adequate to the case, or they might be partially adequate, or else they might be wholly inadequate. I have considered in which of these three classes I have to place the proposals of Her Majesty's Government. I will not go so far as to say that they are wholly inadequate, and I should be wrong if I said that I thought that they were entirely adequate; I think, therefore, that they should be placed in the middle class. As far as they go they are satisfactory; but if the country supposes that the amount of increase now proposed by Her Majesty's Government will give that security which the wealth and interest of the country require, then I think the country will be deceived. My noble Friend deprecates any premature expenditure on new types of war ships. I agree that it is certainly a matter for very great regret that from time to time, as new inventions arise, public money should be expended to a large extent on types of vessel which in a few years become obsolete and inefficient. But this is a risk which every Government of this country must run; and even if we thought that the money had been wasted—which I do not go so far as to say—even then it would be our duty to make that waste simply to keep our Navy abreast of the Navies of other nations. Having said this much on the general view of the matter, I will now proceed to make some comments on what has been said by the noble Earl. He explained at considerable length to us what the policy of the Board of Admiralty had been during the last four or five years, and stated the increase in armoured tonnage and in armour itself. But, although this is very interesting, he does not seem to touch the real point, which is not only the net increase, but what proportion that increase bears to the increase in Foreign Navies. But what is the policy of the present Board of Admiralty? I gathered from the noble Earl that one additional iron-clad should be built.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I said four.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: The noble Earl did not give any particulars.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: Though I did not give particulars, I said they would be laid down next year.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I did not understand that there are to be four additional to those which the Admiralty would, under other circumstances, build. I rather gathered that three would come in the natural programme of the year, and that the net increase is one. Including iron-clads, fast cruisers, torpedo boats, and the other additions proposed to be made, the amount of money is estimated at £3,000,000 for naval construction, £1,600,000 for armaments, and £800,000 for the coaling stations, making in all about £5,500,000. With regard to these different classes of vessels, I am not going now to involve myself in any detailed argument on the subject. My view is broadly and briefly this—that in respect to all those different classes of ships and armaments possessed by other Powers we need to be greatly superior in number. I think that the building of one additional iron-clad can hardly be reckoned sufficient to meet the requirements of the case. Ten auxiliary torpedo boats would, no doubt, be of advantage as far as they go; but if you compare your torpedo boats with those of foreign nations, you will see how very much we are now in arrear as compared with France. At this moment I believe that we have no single torpedo boat of the first class, although before the end of the year we may have a certain number. France, if I am correctly informed, has 50 of the first class. Germany has ordered 70 fresh torpedo boats, at an expense of considerably more than £800,000. If you put these figures in comparison with the proposals of my noble Friend as regards torpedo boats, I conceive that even then we are very considerably in arrear. With reference to protected cruisers, I think that five of these ships is a small number in proportion to the commercial interests which they have to defend. Although, looking at the total cost now proposed to be incurred, I welcome this expenditure so far as it goes, I cannot but feel that the outlay upon the coaling stations is being cut down much below what the limit of safety and prudence requires. The noble Earl said it was extremely difficult for a Minister to compare our naval strength with that of foreign countries; but there has been for about 100 years a tacit understanding with France, by which the naval strength of this country should be at least double that of France. Now, I speak under correction; but I believe that what I am about to say would be accepted as a very fair statement of the case. First, as regards our ships, we are numerically somewhere about on an equality with France; but we have more ships of the old type, and fewer of the new type, than she has. In the same way our armour, taking it all round, is about the same; but the French armour is newer than ours—a very important matter. Then, as regards guns, I believe there is no doubt that our guns are very much fewer, and are also distinctly inferior to those of France, although we are endeavouring to exchange muzzle-loaders for breech-loaders. Again, our sailors are inferior in number to those of France. I have a statement of the numbers of French and English sailors at three different periods, and it is a very remarkable one. In the year 1860, England possessed 85,000 sailors, and France 34,000. In 1868, England possessed 67,000 sailors, and France 42,000. In 1883, England possessed 59,000 sailors, and France had got ahead of us, and possessed 66,000 sailors. I speak under correction. These figures may be wrong; but they have been cited publicly, and there has been no attempt, as far as I am aware, to contradict them. We have absolutely suffered a serious diminution in the number of our sailors during the time to which I have referred; while, on the other hand, France has largely increased hers, and is now very considerably superior to us in respect to the number of her sailors, and also of her Naval Reserve. Again, the guns of a large class which we possess may be pronounced in a certain sense obsolete. A revolution in gunnery has taken place, and it is clear that breech-loaders must supersede muzzle-loaders. We depend for the armament of our ships upon the supply from Woolwich, which is so limited that an expenditure of money upon works which would enable the production of Woolwich to be doubled would be money well laid out. Elswick, your other source of supply, is overwhelmed with foreign orders. To this must be added the fact that you are short of ammunition, short of powder and shell. Actual torpedoes, I understand, are to be provided. But the noble Earl said nothing about one other very important point—namely, the condition of the boilers in many of our ships. Besides all this, you ought to have an adequate Reserve. Even with what has been proposed tonight, there is no provision made for securing anything like the amount of reserve in ships or in material which is absolutely essential for a time of war. A rather ominous expression fell from the noble Earl. He spoke of the great advantage that would be derived in time of war from the employment ef private firms. But if you count upon those private firms in time of war, you depend absolutely upon a rotten reed; because all modern wars have been so extremely short, that it would be impossible for you to fall back upon private firms. This is all the more true when you have to deal with the scientific character of ship and arm, which you have to deal with at the present day. There is a true saying of a distinguished Frenchman that there can be no rapid improvisation of means in naval warfare. There is one other point which I think ought to be pressed, because it is essential. First of all, it is to be remembered that, if you compare yourselves with your great neighbour France, you will find that not only in the material means of war, in all conditions, so to say—geographical and commercial conditions—you are placed at a disadvantage. The seaboard of this country is at least double that of France, and the commercial interests of France are probably a quarter of ours. Our food supply comes to us principally by sea, while that of France comes to her overland; and, lastly, if you consider the military force at the disposal of France, you find for one soldier of ours that they have at least five or six. Therefore, it seems to me that, from whatever point of view you institute your comparison, you find hitherto, up to this time, we have been placed in a position of great inferiority. I fear that the proposals which Her Majesty's Government have made, though they tend, no doubt, to reduce in some degree this position, do not go far enough to do that which is essential for the real safety of the interests of this country. What, then, is really required? It seems to me, to sum it all up, that we need, first of all, a much larger outlay than that which has been indicated by my noble Friend opposite. It should be a capital outlay, to be expended within a reasonably short period of time. My noble Friend opposite spoke of five years, and he spoke even of five years with a certain amount of indifference. My Lords, I hold this is wholly below the mark. Whatever changes are made now should be made as rapidly as possible, because until these changes are effected this country is not in a position to hold its own. I do not say how this money is to be raised. That is a large question, and one into which I shall not enter. Secondly, however, I wish to say that there must be, I am satisfied, a considerable annual increase for some time, even independent of that large outlay. In 1868, not so very long ago, it was calculated that the four Great Powers of Europe—France, Germany, Italy, and Russia—spent about the same amount collectively which we spent alone upon our Navy. Since that time, so great has been the advance which they have made, they are now spending very nearly £5,000,000 additional to the sum which we are spending. That is a very serious matter. I will not take upon myself to say what the precise amount is which the French Naval Estimates involve; but I have seen it stated as high as £10,350,000. If that be so, and the figure is very near our Estimate, and even though there may not be any intentional rivalry on their part, it is a state of things which I think this country will not or cannot tolerate. Again, I am convinced, for my own part, of the necessity of some very great change in what I may call the executive machinery of the Navy. Anyone who has had the opportunity of observing must know how enormous a waste there is of time, of power, of money, in the circuitous communications which go on in the interchange—the needless interchange—of opinions, and the maintenance of many arrangements which I venture to call obsolete. The other evening, when I was arguing on the question of the coaling stations, my noble Friend threw the responsibility of the figures which I impugned upon the Defence Committee. I must say one word on that point. I do not know whether most of your Lordships have heard of the Defence Committee before. It is composed, no doubt, of most able and eminent officers in the Army, and it is presided over by the illustrious Duke whom I see opposite (the Duke of Cambridge). But does my noble Friend know how many times the Defence Committee, as a rule, meet in the year? Could you not number their meetings on one hand? Will my noble Friend tell me that the Report of the Commission on which I was arguing had been before the Defence Committee? I should be glad, indeed, to hear if my questions can be answered satisfactorily. In the next place, I think the shipbuilding operations in this country must be vastly accelerated. I cannot see the advantage, either as regards efficiency or as regards economy, in keeping a ship nine years on the stocks, and, when at last she is launched, finding out by some means or other that she would not work as was expected. It therefore comes to this—that hitherto the programme, say, of 1874, agreed upon by the Board of Admiralty, is carried out in 1880. It takes 10 years for that programme to be worked out, and that at a time, as my noble Friend says, when everything changes from year to year, and at a time when you require to be abreast of your neighbours. Such a policy is, no doubt, extremely cautious; it is very thrifty; but it is a policy which, in dangerous days like these, will not safeguard a great country like this. I must now say one word with regard to the Parliamentary system. For that system your Lordships are not responsible; the Government is not responsible; but, at the same time, it appears to me to be extremely difficult to keep the defence by land and sea of this country in a satisfactory condition under our present Parliamentary system. When I first knew Parliament there was, in the other House of Parliament, a great deal of sound and acute criticism in regard to naval and military matters, combined, fortunately enough, with a steady policy on the part of those who managed these affairs. Now, it seems to me, there is neither sound criticism nor steady policy. Her Majesty's Ministers are not wholly free from blame, and Parliament itself is certainly to blame. The Board of Admiralty, I think, ought not merely to tell us what, under the Parliamentary system, they expect to obtain, and frame their calculations accordingly; but they ought to tell us what is essential to the safety of the country, and then the responsibility rests with Her Majesty's Government. As it now stands, this is the state of things—that on many of those vital questions where there is an inter-departmental action, you have, perhaps, the India Office, the Colonial Office, the War Office, the Admiralty, all pulling in different directions by interchanging opinions; and at last, in final resort, the question is sent up to the Treasury, which cut and pare Estimates down, and this is a state of things which is sometimes literally absurd. There is no one single Body who possesses the knowledge of the whole subject, and which can gather up the threads of it into its own hands and assert the necessary authority to carry it out. On the other hand, parties are so engrossed with questions of an ephemeral and temporary character of far less importance that when the time arrives they can give no aid or attention to the subject; and the House of Commons, which ought to keep all those parties at their work, fails signally and utterly to do so. For these reasons, I am satisfied that nothing short of a total reconsideration of the whole system will ever place this country, both as regards naval and military matters, in a satisfactory position.

LORD ALCESTER said, there were two points, both of a purely professional character, on which he desired to say a few words. First of all, with regard to the Reserve. Ever since the days of Colbert, the French Navy had been supplied with men by conscription; and unless England was prepared to adopt a maritime conscription she must always be behind France in Reserves. The noble Earl who had just spoken must be aware that now the whole of their seamen in the Royal Service were recruited from boys brought from the training ships. There were but few exceptions, perhaps not amounting to two or three men a month, who came from the Mercantile Marine. It was, therefore, to the boys alone they must trust. In 1874, when there was a change of Ministry, 3,000 boys were voted for the supply of the Navy. In 1880 that number had been cut down to 2,000 boys annually. In the meantime, the country sustained two great losses, involving the loss by drowning of 450 young seamen—the loss of the *Eurydice* and the *Atalanta.* One would have thought that fact would have induced the authorities to maintain the number of boys at the former figure, instead of cutting the number down. On the present Ministry entering Office, attempts were made to bring the number up to the original figure. They proposed, he believed, to take 350 additional boys this year beyond those asked for last year; and, being responsible to a certain extent as to the numbers, he had involved himself in a great difficulty, because without the consent of his Colleagues he had gone further on with the recruiting than, perhaps, was absolutely necessary, but solely with the view of filling up the vacancies in the number of boys. With respect to the condition of the boilers, some boilers might not be quite satisfactory, because they had been kept constantly going; but generally the condition of the boilers was satisfactory.

LORD DUNSANY said, he thought the strength of the Navy wholly insufficient. The First Lord was of a different opinion; but First Lords were generally quite satisfied with the state of the Navy under their own management. They were told that everything necessary was to be done with a due regard to economy. Of course, economy was a matter not to be pooh-poohed; but this was not a matter for economy. Did the French at this moment study economy about their Navy? When all the circumstances were taken into account, France, indirectly, spent a great deal more than England. The French sacrificed personal liberty for one thing to the Navy. The Government had allowed the English Navy to go down very much. Even the First Lord placed their naval strength compared with that of France at 46 as against 31. That was not by any means a satisfactory proportion. The First Lord made it out that with their powerful Navy they did not require so many torpedoes; but their Colonies required torpedoes, and had not got them.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN remarked that, to adequately criticize the important statement which the noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook) had made, some time would be required; and he, therefore, for the present, proposed only to make a few general observations upon it. He quite agreed that Parliamentary institutions were not very well adapted in some respects either for the administration of the Navy or for the perfecting of such matters as Colonial defence; but even in that respect very much improvement had been made. The Navy had ceased entirely to be a subject of Party discussion, and it was the desire of one and all to use every endeavour solely for its improvement. In discussing this question, let them not indulge in anything in the way of a scare or panic; but let them look at the matter exactly as it was. He was far from saying that the Navy was in a perfect condition; but whatever they might say, the English Navy was, at all events, the strongest Navy in the world. Taken in connection with crews and officers, they had many of the most splendid fighting ships, and a number of the most powerful iron-clads in the world. However much they might decry the Admiralty, that was not the feeling held abroad; and he was inclined to think that Englishmen were rather inclined to under-rate the skill of their constructors, and the qualities of their ships. Comparisons with Foreign Navies—the French, for example—were to be deprecated very much as a general rule; because out of such a comparison they could bring any result they chose, as had sometimes been done in both Houses of Parliament. Those who were inclined to detract from the English Navy would point out the weak qualities in individual ships, and would deny that those ships were to be regarded as of any value at all; whereas ships of the same class and in the same condition belonging to a Foreign Navy they would maintain were perfectly sufficient for the purpose of defence. However strong England might be in her Navy, she could not expect to be as powerful as every other country in every part of the world at the same moment. Only the other day he saw it stated that France, being at war with China, and having a strong Squadron in the Chinese Seas, had English commerce absolutely within her power. Of course, cases of that kind must arise, and England could not expect to be superior to every Maritime Power in every part of the world. But he quite admitted it was necessary to compare themselves in some degree with Foreign Powers; because it was only by a balance taken on the whole that they could arrive at what their true state was. The reasons for the increase of expenditure upon their Navy at the present time went far deeper than that. Some more important reasons were the great growth of the population and of the Empire; the great increase in the imports and exports of the United Kingdom and of the Colonies, and the enormous increase in British shipping. Then there was the increase in the cost of building the ships, and the increase in the cost of the engines, which were now made of gun-metal and steel; lastly, and most important of all, the great increase in the cost of guns and fighting material. They must take into consideration that the aggregate expenditure on their Navy remained very much the same as it was 20 years ago, while a large system of retirement had come into force, and a considerable increase had taken place in the amount for pensions—an increase which he believed was amply repaid by increased efficiency of both officers and men. On that head alone there was an increase of about £1,200,000; and as the total expenditure remained the same as 20 years ago, it followed that that £1,200,000 had to be withdrawn from some other branch of the Navy. It appeared to him that, not for the present only, but for the future, they must look forward to an increase in the Navy Estimates. Another point was that the British nation, much to its honour, insisted upon a perpetual crusade against slavery in all parts of the world. If that crusade was to go on it must be paid for; but the ships that were used for that purpose might be so made as to be serviceable for war. From the statement of his noble Friend he rather gathered that an inquiry of some sort would take place, and, indeed, he hoped it would; for he thought that if it should appear from the inquiry of impartial men that an increased expenditure was necessary, such a statement would come with more force before the country than if it were based merely upon the opinion of the Admiralty. He was very glad to hear his noble Friend intended to adhere to a steady policy, as he was sure that was the key to the whole position, and many of the defects in the Navy were to be traced to the want of it. He hoped the noble Earl would insist on completing his programme of shipbuilding and repairs every year; and that when he had laid down the ships he had told them of he would press them forward to completion as soon as possible. He did not agree that it was desirable that the country should be building a very large number of iron-clads, though he admitted that England ought to be represented on every station by a large iron-clad. But he very much questioned whether it was for the true interest of the country that the Fleet should consist to a large extent of very big armoured vessels—for it seemed unlikely that those great vessels would meet in line-of-battle in the naval engagements of the future. The types he would like to see largely increased were the protected cruisers and torpedo boats, for he was certain that it was those classes of vessels of which England was chiefly in want, and it was in those classes of vessels that foreign countries had relatively at the present time a considerable superiority. In regard to the question of the supply of guns, he feared there might be some difficulty. He very much questioned whether during the next five years they would be able to provide the ships that were to be built with the necessary complement of guns. That question ought to be considered at once. It seemed to him more than doubtful whether the establishment at Woolwich ought not to be very considerably increased. If a sudden demand were to arise, or if a war were to break out unexpectedly, Woolwich would be found quite inadequate to the necessities of the case; and he did not know where else they would be able to turn for the armaments that would be absolutely necessary.

THE EARL OF CLANWILLIAM believed that the country would be very glad to give the money necessary to put the Navy in a strong and efficient state. He argued that the Channel Fleet was very much too small; when its composition was considered it would be found totally incapable of blockading a port of the enemy. The Flagship—the *Minotaur*—wanted new boilers. Would the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) say what could take her place—whether the *Black Prince* was ready, although she was only a second-class iron-clad, and besides her there was only one other iron-clad available at all—the *Iron Duke*—which was also a second-class obsolete type? The proposals of the First Lord of the Admiralty were not sufficiently large to meet the wants of the country. They ought to have more 43-ton guns, and steps ought to be taken to enable the manufactory at Woolwich to produce guns with much greater rapidity. The Navy ought to have the control of the manufacture of their own guns, or be able to obtain them from the private trade; at present Woolwich was quite unable to supply the wants of the Navy. The Navy not only lacked sufficient guns, but was also sadly in want of powder; two small quantities from Germany of about 1,800 lbs. were obtained last year and used in experiments. They were, as yet, unable to make the powder themselves, and had none in store. He would like to know from the noble Earl, if he had ever asked his Naval Advisers what was actually wanted? Would he send a Minute to the three Naval Lords and the Controller, to put down on paper what they required; not what they expected they might get for the asking, but what they considered was actually required for the Service to put the Navy into a state of efficiency? He also trusted that the noble Earl would hasten the construction of the ships that were to be built, in order that they might be ready in the coming year.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH observed, that the views of the First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to the efficiency of the Navy as compared with the Navies of other countries differed much from the views of other eminent authorities. The naval programme of Sir Edward Reed, as announced at a recent meeting of the United Service Institution, was thought insufficient by many critics well qualified to express an opinion, and yet his programme was much more extensive than that of the noble Earl opposite. His noble Friend had not thoroughly explained two points. If their Lordships would turn to the Report of the Committee over which his noble Friend (the Earl of Ravensworth) presided, they would see that when Mr. Barnaby was asked why the ships were so long in building, he said the reason was that the vessels had to depend on the Army not only for the guns, bnt actually for their construction. They had to spin out the building of the vessels for eight or nine years, because they could not get the guns required; and therefore the construction had to be proceeded with deliberately, and repeated alterations were made necessary. After what had fallen from his noble Friend (the Earl of Clanwilliam), he hoped the First Lord of the Admiralty would take into account the vast importance of allowing the Navy to superintend the construction of its own carriages and ordnance, as was done in other Services. As to what had been said about the scanty number of their ships on foreign stations, it should be remembered that they could not compare the present with the former state of things. There were points springing up all over the world where the ships of foreign nations were to be seen, but where they were never seen before. There was Germany, for example, which was sending her ships to the coast of Africa, and such was our ignorance that we did not know what a very important Power was doing in the Pacific. Some time ago, if a war had broken out with this country, that Power was prepared to swoop down upon the Australasian Colonies. These Colonies, which possessed a large amount of wealth and great stores of coal, had provided a Navy at their own cost. That Navy was not recognized by us, nor had the smallest step been taken by us to put it upon an efficient footing. He had had some correspondence on this subject with the Naval Authorities, and last year he asked the noble Earl a Question about it, and suggested that it was most important that he should put himself in communication with the Government of the Australian Colonies, with a view to utilizing their Navy and rendering it efficient. The following were the vessels of war possessed by, or being prepared for, the Australian Colonies:—Victoria.—*Cerberus*, turret armoured ship, four 18-ton M.L.K. guns, used for harbour defence only; *Nelson*, receiving ship, old two-decker. (This vessel was not accounted as available in case of war for even port defence). *Victoria*, gunboat, one 8-inch 12-ton gun, one 6-inch 4-ton gun; *Albert*, gunboat, one 8-inch 12-ton gun, one 6-inch 4-ton gun; *Childers*, first-class torpedo boat; two second-class torpedo boats. The guns for six hopper barges (one 6-inch 4-ton gun for each) were about to be sent out to Melbourne, and by next year these barges would be available for port defence. They were well built and well sub-divided. New South Wales.—The sloop *Wolverine*, proposed to be armed with two medium guns. This vessel was used by the Naval Volunteers. It formerly belonged to Her Majesty's Navy, and was presented to the Colony by Her Majesty's Government. The New South Wales Government had under consideration the purchasing of two fast gunboats and two torpedo boats and steam launches for the defence of Port Jackson and Newcastle. South Australia.—The cruiser *Protector*, 700 tons, armament one 8-inch 12-ton gun, and five 6-inch 4-ton guns. No torpedo boats yet obtained. Queensland.—Now at Brisbane, sloop *Mavis*, believed to have two 6-pounder guns. *En route* to Brisbane the gunboat *Patuma*, one 8-inch 12-ton and one 6-inch 4-ton guns, to be used as a surveying vessel; expenses shared by Colonies and by Her Majesty's Government. Also about to leave the Tyne for the Colony, the *Gayundah*, sister ship to above, and armed in the same way. Now in the Colony, the second-class torpedo boat *Wasp*. No Whiteheads yet supplied for it. Tasmania.—It was believed that no armed vessel yet belonged to this Government. There was in Hobart a second-class torpedo vessel; but it was without Whiteheads or a machine gun, and depended for power of attack on its spar torpedo. New Zealand.—Four torpedo boats (second class), built in 1883 by Thornycroft. No torpedoes yet supplied. One of the boats armed with a (1-inch two barrels) Nordenfelt gun. These Colonies had a fighting force of 400,000 men, and looked to this country for training them. Could not the noble Earl devise some plan by which the many gallant officers now unemployed might get employment in that way? One point more, and that was as to the utter uselessness of the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty. Within the last few years one post-captain and two or three clerks were appointed, whose duty it was to get intelligence as to Foreign Navies. Considering the importance that Department had now assumed in the Military Service, he ventured to ask the noble Earl whether something could not be done to increase its efficiency in the Navy?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK, in reply to the noble Viscount (Viscount

Sidmouth), said, he had no intention to imply that the expenditure of the £3,100,000 upon new ships would be dependent upon the Committee upon our Naval and Military Defences which was to be appointed in the other House. The intention of the Admiralty was to enter into contracts as soon as they could —he hoped before that Committee could commence its labours. He did not intend to reply to any remarks made by Sir Edward Reed. Sir Edward Reed was a Member of the other House, and his observations would be better discussed there. The impression of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) as to the guns was not a correct one. They had larger breech-loading guns than he supposed—43-ton guns—of which as many, he believed, as 11 had been delivered. He wished to say very distinctly, in order to remove any impression to the contrary, that the ships at this time being constructed were not waiting for guns; and they had every reason to believe that none of the ships now being built would have to wait for them. As respected the 43-ton gun, the delay had not been caused by the constructors at Woolwich, but by a difficulty in the particular working of a small part of the hydraulic machinery; but he hoped it would very soon be set right. He did not agree that the delay as to the guns had arisen from not going to Mr. Whitworth or some other manufacturer, though he should be glad to go to them if necessary. The real reason for the delay was that the orders for the new guns were given rather too late. He was not surprised at that, for in the attack on the forts of Alexandria the old muzzle-loading guns were used without any serious accident. He would be glad to find any system producing the same results. But the change to breech-loading guns had become a necessity, and the mistake had been that it was not set about soon enough. In the last four years they had been doing work which ought to have been done some years before. They were now getting right; but everyone who knew the subject would agree that this delay had occurred. With regard to the question whether any arrangement had been made for increasing the plant for the manufacture of the new guns at Woolwich, a sum of £100,000 was to be set apart for that purpose. It was not intended, however, to set up the manufacture of steel there. His noble Friend the Secretary of State for War had thought it better to go to the trade, and to encourage the great manufacturers of steel. With regard to the length of time that this programme was to take, it had been objected that five years was a very long time. But one of the principal merits of this programme was that, by the very facts of the case, if they went to contract these ships would be finished as soon as they could be; because in that case there were no delays. Once they had entered upon a contract they must go on, and the smaller class of ships would take less than five years. With regard to torpedo ships of the scout class, speaking generally, they would be built by contract, and therefore would be completed rapidly. The case of the *Agamemnon* had been referred to, which had taken 10 years to build. That was one of the particular cases which had induced the present Board of Admiralty to alter the system they had found of proceeding so slowly with the construction of ships. It certainly was a great pity that ships should have been so long in building; and he agreed with his noble Friend behind him (the Earl of Camperdown) as to the importance of taking a Vote sufficient to allow of steady progress being made with iron-clads when once laid down. It had been said that the five cruisers proposed were not enough; but it must be recollected that they were in addition to the other ships of the same class which they had been building during the last four years, and that it was proposed to build 10 other cruisers which, though smaller, would be effective and valuable ships for the protection of commerce. He hoped that their Lordships would not run away with the impression that these five cruisers were all that we had for the protection of commerce. Those cruisers were much more powerful than those of the same class belonging to any other nation. A complaint had been made that they were only building one more iron-clad. He must have failed in making his explanation of the policy of the Admiralty clear if he had not shown that their policy was to increase the building of iron-clads. He had also shown how this had been done; and he would have condemned his own policy if he had thought it necessary largely to increase the building of armour-clad ships. With respect to other classes of ships, the progress of events and the improvements which had taken place justified the spending of more on those other classes of ships which he did not think the country would have agreed to spend in a large programme of iron-clads. Then the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) had suggested that the Defence Committee might be got rid of, apparently because it had not altogether agreed with the recommendation of the Commission over which the noble Earl had himself presided. In his own opinion, the Defence Committee was a most valuable Body.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, that he had not complained of the recommendations of his Commission being overborne by the Defence Committee, which consisted of most eminent men. His question was, whether the Defence Committee had ever had the Report of the Commission over which he had presided before them?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, that the noble Earl had suggested that the Defence Committee should be improved off the face of the earth. Although the Defence Committee met very seldom, yet it was composed of the very men to whom a question such as the present one of fortification could be most properly referred. With regard to the defence of the coaling stations, a very important work could be done at a comparatively small cost. At Alexandria the forts which had been heavily protected with masonry had been those which had suffered most; and the most powerful battery which their Fleet had had to attack on that occasion was the Mex Fort, which consisted of three or four guns, which could hardly be distinguished from the foreshore, and which were simply mounted upon earthworks. He believed that the present view of many most distinguished engineers was that more could be gained by placing guns without elaborate fortifications in positions where they could command the channels by which harbours were approached, than by the construction of batteries in the ordinary sense of the word. The noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Sidmouth) had spoken, as he understood him, of complaints from some of the Australian Colonies that they had not received encouragement from the Admiralty in respect to the ships which those Colonies had so patriotically provided for their own defence. He could assure the noble Viscount that, if any such representations had been made to him, they had not the slightest foundation. The Admiralty, had constantly, to the best of their ability, given every possible assistance to the Colonies in regard to their naval defence, and especially in regard to the provision of officers belonging to Her Majesty's Navy to be employed in connection with those ships. At that moment some of the best young officers in the Service were so employed. Therefore, he could not understand how such a misapprehension as appeared to exist on that subject could have arisen. If the noble Viscount had anything to communicate to the Admiralty which could in any way assist them in furthering the efforts made by the Australian Colonies in respect of their defences—efforts which must be of great advantage to the Empire — there was no man who would receive it with more cordiality than he should do.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, that he wished to observe that the vessels which those Colonies had provided required trained officers; and unless they had some they could not be of the great service they otherwise would be—they had the raw material, but not the trained officers.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK repeated that the noble Viscount must be under a misapprehension as to the action of the Admiralty on that point. With respect to an observation that fell from the noble and gallant Admiral (the Earl of Clanwilliam) with respect to the powder for the 110-ton guns, he had to state that the noble Earl was correctly informed that the best powder for this class of gun was some German powder; and that it was not till recently that the War Office had been able to purchase the right of manufacturing it.

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned at Eight o'clock,
till To-morrow, One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, *2nd December*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Knaresborough, *v.* Thomas Collins, esquire, deceased.

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Metropolitan Board of Works (Further Powers),* [44].

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 1), and *passed.*

Withdrawn — University Education (Ireland),* [6].

NOTICE.

ORDER—MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS—AMENDMENTS.

Mr. CRAIG SELLAR: I beg to give Notice that, in consequence of the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister as to the new Members for Scotland, I shall move, on going into Committee on the Redistribution Bill—

> "That, considering the admitted right of Scotland to a large increase of Representatives, no Bill is satisfactory which makes that increase dependent upon the chance of both Houses of Parliament consenting to an addition to the Members of this House."

Mr. WARTON: I wish to ask you, Sir, in reference to the Notice which has just been given by the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig Sellar), if it is in Order to give Notice of an Amendment to be moved on the Committee stage of a Bill before the Bill has been read a second time?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is somewhat irregular, and I must admit that there is some inconvenience in that course. The Notice, however, given by the hon. Member will not appear upon the Paper until the Bill reaches the proper stage.

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — DONEGAL WORKHOUSE—APPOINTMENT OF CATHOLIC OFFICIALS.

Mr. LEA asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If the deadlock at the Donegal Workhouse, as regards the appointment of Catholic officials, still continues; and, whether the Local Government Board will put in force its powers to appoint paid Guardians, or, if it should be considered that no such powers exist, whether the Government will supply a remedy by legislation?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker), in reply, said, that there was no change in the position of matters in the Donegal workhouse. The section of the Act authorizing the substitution of paid Guardians would not, in the opinion of the Government, apply to the case. The Guardians had, in this instance, exercised their discretion, though, he thought, unreasonably. He did not think it expedient to legislate for a single case.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882 — THE TUBBERCURRY SECRET INQUIRY—JOSEPH WALL.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If Joseph Wall, lately of the town of Carlow, was summoned to appear and give evidence at a secret inquiry at Tubbercurry, county Sligo, in June last, and, on being examined there by Mr. Horne, R.M. was pressed to give evidence incriminating Mr. P. N. Fitzgerald, and was promised "substantial expenses" if he would do so; but, on declaring his inability to incriminate Mr. Fitzgerald, was violently threatened by Mr. Horne, R.M. who conducted the inquiry; whether the police had in their possession at the time a sum of about £45, which had been found with Hall when he was arrested on a charge of purloining the money of his employer, and whether Detective Carroll and Mr. Randle Peyton, Crown Solicitor for Sligo, offered Wall not only "substantial expenses," but the return to him of the £45, without any further trouble, if he would swear against Fitzgerald; and, whether, as he maintained his declaration that he could not swear as suggested, the police retained, and still retain, the money so offered to him?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Joseph Wall was summoned to give evidence at an inquiry held in Tubbercurry in July last, and was examined by Mr. Horne. It is not the fact that he was pressed to give evidence incriminating Mr. Fitzgerald, or was promised "substantial expenses" if he would do so, or was in any way threatened by Mr. Horne. He made a deposition and signed it. He received expenses according to the usual scale. A sum of over

£56 was found in the possession of Wall when he was arrested on a charge of robbing his employer—Joseph Whelan—from whom a cash-box containing money had been stolen. He was tried on this charge; but the jury disagreed. The statements as to Detective Carroll and Mr. Randle Peyton are without foundation. An action has been taken, and is now pending, by Wall against the District Inspector in whose custody the money remains, pending Wall's trial on the criminal charge. There does not, however, seem to be any immediate prospect of this action being proceeded with, as Wall left his residence some time ago, and has not since been heard of by the authorities.

Mr. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in giving this reply, he has rested on the results of simple inquiry of the three persons concerned—Peyton, Carroll, and Horne?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: We have availed ourselves of every means of information open to us.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) — SCHOOL TEACHERS — MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If there is a rule of the Irish Board of National Education prohibiting members of religious orders from acting as teachers in any school to the cost of erecting which the Board had given a contribution; whether, as schools taught by members of religious orders are inspected by the agents of the Board, examined, paid result fees, and fully admitted to participation in the system of the Education Department, any principle can be pleaded for preventing members of religious orders from teaching in those schools to the cost of erecting which the Board contribute; and, whether the rule, if such rule exist, will be rescinded, as being opposed to the interest of public education?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A rule has been in force to the effect stated by the hon. Member. The Government have had this rule under consideration in communication with the Commissioners of National Education; and, at the same time, they have reviewed the effect of two other regulations, one of which prohibits grants to more than one school in connection with the same convent; while the other excludes nuns from teaching in the industrial department. I am glad to say that it has been decided by the Commissioners, with the cordial concurrence of the Government, to remove all these restrictions.

BELGIUM—THE ANTWERP EXHIBITION—THE BRITISH COMMISSIONER.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have yet come to a decision in regard to the appointment of a Commissioner for the Antwerp Exhibition?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Mr. Grattan, Her Majesty's Consul General at Antwerp, has been appointed British Commissioner for this Exhibition.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — GROVE ROAD BOARD SCHOOL, REGENT'S PARK.

Sir THOMAS CHAMBERS asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Inspector's Report in reference to the erection of a new Board School in the Grove Road, Regent's Park, and of the Correspondence between the Department and the Vestry of Saint Marylebone on that subject?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The site of the school in Grove Road, Regent's Park, was acquired by Act of Parliament, which received the Royal Assent on July 14, 1884. The Report of Her Majesty's Inspector is confidential, and given for the guidance of the Department. I cannot, therefore, give the Correspondence my hon. Friend asks for, and I see no advantage in re-opening a question which has already been settled by both Houses of Parliament.

NAVY—THE DOCKYARDS — PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Portsmouth Dockyard is short of the number of men employed in the beginning of the year; if so, could he state how many; whether one hundred men will have to be discharged before the end of the year; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to obviate this discharge and to restore the strength of the yard to that existing at the beginning of the year?

DR. LYONS asked whether it was not the fact that by the stoppage of works at Southampton the number of men employed by the Admiralty had been reduced from 2,000 to 500, and that considerable distress prevailed in consequence; and, whether, in any extension of Admiralty works which was contemplated, this distress would be taken into consideration?

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked if it was contemplated that any portion of the proposed expenditure on the Navy should be distributed over the various Dockyards?

MR. CAINE: The number of men employed at the present moment in Portsmouth Dockyard is smaller by 200 than the number employed at the commencement of the year. I am not aware of any proposal to discharge men before the end of the year. I may add that the sum to be expended in wages at Portsmouth in the current financial year exceeds that of the previous year by £3,000. As to the other Questions put to me, perhaps my hon. Friends will give Notice.

INLAND REVENUE—BEER LICENCES.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will reduce the six shilling licences for those who brew their own beer to two shillings and sixpence?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The hon. Member attributes to me powers which I do not possess. I have no power to reduce rates of licence, and there is no intention of making any proposal on the subject during the present Sitting of Parliament.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—GENERAL GORDON.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will communicate to the House the latest intelligence received from General Gordon?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The latest intelligence of General Gordon is contained in a letter from him of the 4th of November, of which the substance has already been communicated to the House. A messenger who has since returned having been successful in his endeavour to reach Khartoum is reported to have stated that the Mahdi's troops were suffering from disease, that food was very dear, and that the Arabs were deserting him, but the Kordofan men remained faithful.

AUSTRALIA—CONFEDERATION OF THE COLONIES.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Draft Bill to enable the Australasian Colonies to establish a Federal Council, which it was proposed to introduce at the end of last Session, was identical in terms with the Draft Bill agreed upon by the representatives of those Colonies in the Convention held at Sydney, or whether it embodied the Amendments which the First Lord of the Treasury on the 24th of November said were required in it; whether the Draft Bill of Her Majesty's Government has been sent out to those Colonies with the suggested Amendments for further consideration; and, whether there is any objection to laying upon the Table of the House a copy of the Circular Despatch containing the terms of those Amendments?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Government never contemplated the introduction of any other Bill than that adopted by the Sydney Convention; and if the Bill had been introduced at the time mentioned in the Question the proposed Amendments would have been embodied. The Draft Bill, with the Amendments, will be sent for the consideration of the Colonial Governments either this week or the next; and I hope to be able to lay without delay on the Table of the House the Circular Despatch showing the Amendments to be inserted.

RAILWAY BILLS—RAILWAY CHARGES—PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

MR. ROLLS asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the notices given by several of the leading Railway Companies of their intention to introduce Bills in the ensuing Session of Parliament seeking for power to revise and define their toll rates and terminal charges; and, when, and in what way, a statement will be made of the course which the Board of Trade intend to pursue in connection with these Bills?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, his attention had been called to this matter; but it would be premature to express any opinion, as the terms of the Bills were not yet before him. He thought the most convenient time for making any statement which might be necessary would be when these Bills came forward for second reading.

NAVY—PAY OF STOKERS.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Board are prepared to consider the claims of the leading stokers of the Royal Navy to a higher scale of payment?

Mr. CAINE: No Memorial relating to the claims of leading stokers appears to have been received at the Admiralty. I am informed that there is no difficulty in obtaining suitable candidates on the existing terms for the rating of leading stokers.

NAVY—ASSISTANT PAYMASTERS.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether provision will be made in the Navy Estimates for the year 1885-6 for increased pay to Assistant Paymasters of the Royal Navy of over thirteen years' service in that rank?

Mr. CAINE: There is no intention of making further provisions for Assistant Paymasters in the Estimates for 1885-6. A Committee has had under consideration certain questions affecting Paymasters. The Report has been received, and will shortly be considered.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—COURT VALUERS—MR. J. HAUGHTON.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. J. Haughton, of Rockspring, has been removed from his position of Court Valuer under the Land Commission; and, whether, if this be true, the reason for his dismissal will be stated?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Land Commissioners inform me that, in August last, they dispensed with Mr. Haughton's services as valuer. They declined to state their reasons. At the same time, they think it right to say that Mr. Haughton's integrity was never questioned.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he considers that such a course as that pursued by the Land Commissioners is altogether fair? Is it right to dismiss a gentleman from the position of Court Valuer, which he was eminently qualified to fill, and thereby to considerably damage his reputation, and to give no explanation of the reason why such a course has been taken? Surely it should be stated why Mr. Haughton has been dismissed. I will, therefore, ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will state the reason?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have already said that the Land Commissioners, to whom I applied, declined to state their reasons.

Mr. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that, out of the nine gentlemen filling the position of valuers, seven were either landlords or in the employment of landlords, and only two were tenant farmers? I would ask him whether he thinks that the confidence of the farmers of Ireland in the Court of Land Appeal will be, or is likely to be, maintained by the dismissal of one of the few men who, as tenant farmers, have practical experience of the value of land?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Well, that is a matter of argument. If the hon. Member wishes to obtain any further information I will be happy to make inquiries.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: With reference to the Question which I have put to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant as to the dismissal of Mr. Haughton, and in consequence of the reply I have received, I beg to give Notice that on Thursday I shall ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will state how soon Mr. Haughton was dismissed after he had valued the property of the Duke of Manchester in the North of Ireland? I will also ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is not a fact that Mr. Haughton has received his dismissal because his valuations did not give satisfaction to the noble Duke? I also beg to give Notice that I shall take every opportunity afforded me of calling continued and persistent attention to the shameful conduct of the Land Commission in Ireland in dismissing a gentleman of the high character and qualifications of Mr. Haughton.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to use the epithet which he has just used in giving Notice of a Question.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Then, I will give Notice that I shall take every opportunity which the Forms of the House allow of calling attention to the grossly improper conduct of the Land Commission in Ireland. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: As the Question could not appear in that shape upon the Paper, it is irregular to give Notice of it in that form.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Very well. Then I will substitute the word "injudicious," although I would rather use those of "grossly improper" in connection with the conduct of the Land Commission in Ireland in dismissing from their service a gentleman of the high character and qualifications of Mr. Haughton without assigning any reason whatever for the dismissal.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—LORD NORTHBROOK'S REPORT.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact, as stated by *The Observer*, that "the Cabinet have rejected Lord Northbrook's Report?"

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think that the hon. Member, if he bears in mind what was said on this subject a few nights ago, must have foreseen that I should not be in a position to answer this Question. I could not, without a breach of public duty, explain what proposals Her Majesty's Government had framed and brought before the notice of the Powers of Europe, or in what they agree with, or differ from, Lord Northbrook's Report.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT wished to know, whether the details of the communication would be laid upon the Table before the rising of the House for the holidays?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not know when the House will rise; but, assuming and believing that it will rise very soon, I have no hope of being able to submit the results of the applications to the Powers to the House before the Adjournment; and I may, perhaps, remind the hon. Gentleman, in explanation of what I say, that this is not a question of simple application to the Great Powers of Europe, that being merely the first step in the process. Next to that would be the application to all the minor Powers who are likewise parties to the Law of Liquidation; and that will mean the introduction of changes, and the drafting and determination of changes, in the Law of Liquidation itself. That will involve considerable time, and I have no hope of being able to submit to the House the result of those applications within the period left us before the Adjournment of the House over Christmas.

THE MINISTRY—RESIGNATION OF MR. COURTNEY.

Colonel KING-HARMAN, who had a Question on the Paper addressed to the Secretary to the Treasury, and not seeing Mr. Courtney in his place, asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to whom he should put it with the hope of getting an answer?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Perhaps I may be able to answer the Question if the hon. and gallant Gentleman will repeat it in a day or two.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, REDISTRIBUTION, BILL.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he wished to ask the President of the Local Government Board a Question of which he had not been able to give him Notice—namely, Whether he could furnish, in the form of a Return, the population in all the constituencies named in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th schedules of the Redistribution Bill inclusive; and, whether he could, in the 5th schedule, give the population with the additions to the constituencies that would be made? He also asked whether the House could be furnished with an electoral map showing the new county districts and the urban constituencies in them?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply to the first part of the Question, said, he thought there would be no objection to lay on the Table the Return of population for which the noble Lord asked. With regard to the second part of the Question, he presumed that the noble Lord referred to the preparation of a map after the Boundary Commissioners had completed their work.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL said, he did not mean that.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, in that case, the noble Lord referred to a map to be prepared in advance of the rearrangement. Such a map might, undoubtedly, be prepared; but it would, of course, cost money, and it would be a difficult one to prepare.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked whether it would be possible to circulate the population Return before the second reading of the Redistribution Bill?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Seeing that the second reading is to be taken on Thursday, it will be impossible to do so.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he would state what was the uniform rule of the Redistribution of Seats Bill as regarded increase of Members to constituencies exceeding 165,000 population? For instance, what was the rule by which the county of Lanark, which in 1881 had a very rapidly increasing population of 387,000, was to have only six Members, while County Cork, which then—including the boroughs to be abolished—had a rapidly decreasing population of 391,000, was to have seven Members; County Tyrone, which—including Dungannon—had then a rapidly decreasing population under 200,000, was to have four Members; County Armagh, which—including the town of Armagh—had a rapidly decreasing population considerably under 165,000, was to have three Members; and Glamorganshire, which had a population of 235,000, was to have five Members?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In determining the number of seats to be allotted to counties, we have been guided by the general principle of dividing the county populations into equal divisions of between 50,000 and 60,000. In the case of Lanark we had to take into consideration the total number of county seats in Scotland; and, owing to the number of small counties in Scotland—no less than 13 of them having a population under 50,000, the lowest on the list having only 20,861—a further increase to the representation of Lanarkshire was not practicable without taking away some of the seats from the smaller counties by grouping counties. If this is generally desired by the Scotch people, a proposal to that effect might be, of course, made in Committee.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Has the Government taken into consideration the number of small counties in Ireland — smaller than those in Scotland — having two Members, and which are to retain their seats?

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked, when the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners would be in possession of the House?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he hoped that they would be circulated to-morrow.

Mr. GORST asked, whether the Report of the Boundary Commissioners would be laid before the House and circulated amongst Members as in 1868?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes, Sir; certainly.

Mr. D. GRANT asked, whether the whole of the constituencies of London would be single-Member constituencies?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that they would be, as had been stated by the Prime Minister last night, with the exception of the City of London.

Mr. BORLASE asked the President of the Local Government Board, whether, with the view of making the unit of Parliamentary representation and Local Government as far as possible one and the same, it might be an Instruction to the Boundary Commissioners so to adjust the limits of the several county divisions as to make them coterminous with those which would be best suited for Local Government districts?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Commissioners have been instructed to adjust the divisions of counties in conformity with well-known existing areas, such as Petty Sessional areas, and to take care that no division should intersect a parish. Sanitary districts, which often overlap counties, have never formed the basis of county divisions; and if it were intended that the inquiry of the Commissioners should extend to the question what were suitable areas for sanitary and other local purposes as well as for representation, there would be no possibility of completing the inquiry in any reasonable time.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL gave Notice that, in consequence of the reply of the President of the Local Government Board, from which it appeared that the uniform rule had not been applied to all the divisions of the Three Kingdoms, he should strenuously oppose all those portions of the Bill which dealt unfairly with Scotland.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Prime Minister, whether he could inform the House which of the points in the Redistribution Bill which the right hon. Gentleman had sketched last night were to be considered vital?

MR. GLADSTONE: It has never been customary in this House, as far as I know, especially in the early stages of a Bill, and before its provisions have come under discussion, to press the Government to state what points are, and what are not, to be considered vital. The reason for that practice is obvious enough, and it is this—that different points have a bearing one upon another; and it is perfectly conceivable that some point that might be vital if the House took a certain course with regard to it would not be vital if the House took another course; and I therefore hope that the hon. Member will not think me discourteous if I decline to make any statement in detail now. But the House entirely understands that the Bill is, in the view of the Government, vital to their existence.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked why the Isle of Wight was not mentioned in the Schedules?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is not disturbed. None of the counties which are not disturbed are mentioned there.

SIR JOHN HAY pointed out that Newport was a town of more than 10,000 inhabitants.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Considering the disproportion of county Members in the South-West of England, we have not seen our way to give a second Member to the Isle of Wight.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—BECHUANALAND.

SIR DONALD CURRIE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any information had been received by the Government as to the reported hoisting of the Transvaal flag in Bechuanaland?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: On the 24th of November we made inquiry by telegraph as to the rumoured hoisting of the Transvaal flag in Montsioa's location. In reply we got a telegram from Sir Hercules Robinson, transmitting one that he had received from the Government of the South African Republic, which stated that they had never ordered the hoisting of their flag in the Land of Goshen, and a further second telegram a few days later, in which they stated that they not only never hoisted the flag, but that they even prohibited it, and promised to institute an inquiry into the acts complained of.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked the Prime Minister, Whether the House would meet to-morrow; further, when it would be possible for him to state when the House was to be adjourned; and whether he could inform the House of the proposed length of the Recess?

MR. GLADSTONE: The first Bill which is down for discussion to-morrow has not yet been printed; and consequently it could not, in accordance with the practice of the House, be taken into consideration. The second Bill is the Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) Bill. That is not a Government measure; but, at the same time, the enactment which it contains is one of some importance, and we are of opinion that it will be convenient and advantageous if that Bill could come on so that the opinion of the House might be brought out in the debate. We, therefore, hope that the House will be disposed to meet to-morrow. With regard to the further Questions put by the noble Lord, I am not able at present to give a very distinct answer. A good deal depends upon the time the House may think proper to consume in the debate on the second reading of the Seats Bill. Of course, we could not think of moving the Adjournment of the House till we have read the Bill a second time. Consequently, I am obliged to answer the Question by putting another Question, inasmuch as the length of the debate may possibly depend, as often happens, more on the disposition of Gentlemen on the opposite side than on the disposition of Gentlemen on this side of the House. I should hope that if the Bill be read a second time even on Friday it possibly might be found practicable that the House should adjourn on Saturday in conjunction with possible proceedings in the House of

Lords. If the Bill be read a second time on Thursday, I make no doubt that the House will adjourn in the course of this week. With respect to the length of the Vacation I would rather not give an answer till Thursday. I may have some better power of estimating on that day than I have at present.

METROPOLIS—THE FULHAM BOARD OF WORKS AND THE COSTERMONGERS OF HAMMERSMITH.

Mr. D. GRANT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, having regard to his published Letter to Mr. Shiel, a magistrate at Hammersmith, and the very recent prosecution of, and sentence of fine and imprisonment on, ten costermongers at Hammersmith, who for more than forty years have had market rights in the main street of the town, he is prepared to protect the costers against continuous fine and imprisonment; or, whether he will introduce a Bill to terminate the market monopoly of the City Corporation seven miles from the City, so that a market may be established to give protection to these humble toilers in their industry against the continuous prosecutions to which they are subjected by the Fulham Board of Works, or at least stay proceedings until the local elections next year, that the inhabitants may express an opinion?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that no doubt a certain amount of inconvenience was caused by the costermongers. He had received a Report from the police stating that the costermongers agreed to abide by whatever regulations they laid down in the matter. The dispute had been a very long and foolish one, and in its present stage he thought the Fulham Board of Works were wholly in the wrong. He had written to the Fulham Board to say that if the costermongers followed the directions of the police he would consider any further proceedings against the costermongers as oppressive and unjust, and he would take whatever measures he should consider necessary under the circumstances.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS.

Ordered, That the Notice of Motion for a Return of ships in Her Majesty's Navy have precedence of the other Notices of Motions.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MOTIONS.

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NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY, in rising to move for a Return respecting the ships built and building for Her Majesty's Navy during the last four years, said: Mr. Speaker, it now devolves upon me to make the promised Statement, on behalf of the Government, with respect to the Navy. In the present anxiety out-of-doors, it was the obvious duty of the Government to give to the House an opportunity of discussing the subject; and I can assure the House that the opportunity is not less welcome to the Admiralty than it is to the most impatient of their critics. We feel our great responsibility for the maintenance of the naval power of the country, and we know that much of the criticism to which we have been subjected is due to imperfect acquaintance on the part of the public both with what we have done and what we propose to do in the future. In view of the optimist estimates of Foreign Navies, and the pessimist estimates of our own Navy, which of late have been expressed in the newspapers, and have been so widely circulated, I might be strongly tempted to give in detail the results of an examination of the naval situation. But, Sir, it is impossible to present such a statement in detail in a form which would be suitable for Parliamentary discussion. If we compare ships with reference to thickness of armour, we must also take into consideration the area protected; if we compare them in reference to the calibre of the guns, we must also take account of the number of guns which they carry. If we compare them with reference to their speed, we must also take into consideration their coal endurance, which is one of the most essential qualities in determining the fighting qualities of a ship. On the whole, we may take displacement as, perhaps, the fairest test of the relative power. In the hands of a skilful architect, it means either more armament, speed, coal endurance, or seaworthiness. But even if we were to adopt displacement as the measure of power it would be an imperfect test, unless we take into consideration the date when the design was prepared.

Waiving, however, these objections to a comparison of ships, I will give some general statistics, which, I think, will be of interest to the House. Throwing aside all arbitrary divisions of ships into classes, the Board of Admiralty carefully went through the French and English completed ships, and extended their examination to those which will be completed next year. Taking the more modern ships, there are on the English list 30 ships, of 210,430 tons, and on the French list there are 19 ships, of 127,828 tons, showing a balance in our favour of 11 ships. Taking what I may call the *quasi*-obsolete ships, the English list shows a total of 16 ships, of 115,520 tons, and the French list 12, of 53,066 tons—a balance in our favour of four ships of that class. Thus the English list includes a total of 46 ships, of 326,000 tons, and the French list a total of 31 ships, of 181,000 tons. Now, Sir, I have given to the House the result of a comparison of ships taken under a very broad classification. But, perhaps, it will be more interesting if I carry this classification somewhat more into detail by giving the names of the most important ships. We have five large turret-ships on the English list—the *Devastation*, the *Dreadnought*, the *Inflexible*, the *Thunderer*, and the *Neptune*, with an aggregate of 50,670 tons. These are ships which, as my right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) knows very well, are ships of great power. With these we may compare three French ships—the *Amiral Duperré*, *Dévastation*, and *Redoubtable*, with an aggregate of 28,990 tons. We then come to a long list of highly efficient ships, although, in view of the development of naval architecture, we may, perhaps, hardly call them ships of the first class, or of the newest type. That list includes the *Alexandra*, *Téméraire*, *Superb*, *Monarch*, *Audacious*, *Invincible*, *Iron Duke*, *Nelson*, *Northampton*, *Swiftsure*, *Triumph*, *Shannon*, *Hotspur*, *Rupert*, *Hercules*, *Sultan*, *Ajax*, and *Agamemnon*—in all, 18 ships, with an aggregate tonnage of 131,190 tons. I am sorry to trouble the House with these details; but I have thought it would be more satisfactory to have them. The total, as I have said, is 18 ships. Against these we may put nine French ships of a similar character with an aggregate of 68,170 tons, including the *Colbert*, *Trident*, *Richelieu*, *Friedland*, *Marengo*, *Suffren*, *Ocean*, *Bayard*, and *Turenne*. All these French ships, except the *Friedland*, are wood built. Taking the older ships and lumping them together, for their names are very well known, we have 14 ships of 112,410 tons, against 12 French ships of 55,981 tons. All the latter, with one exception, are wood built. Our own ships are of iron, except the *Lord Warden* and the *Repulse*. In the coast defence we have, including the *Orion* and *Belleisle*, 16 ships of 51,270 tons, against 13 French ships of 40,634 tons. The French list includes the *Fulminant* and *Tonnerre*, very powerful ships for harbour defence, but not, perhaps, in the fullest sense, sea-going vessels. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to give, in the same detail, the strength of other Powers. It may, however, be stated that the only first-class iron-clads which are yet completed are the *Duilio* and *Dandolo* for Italy, the *Peter the Great* for Russia, and the *König Wilhelm* for Germany. It will be admitted that in completed iron-clads we stand well both in number and tonnage. And with regard to the types and designs of our ships, we do not shrink from any comparison with the ships of Foreign Powers. I may say, on this point, that the present Board have endeavoured to press forward the improvement of designs. All our more recent first-class ships have a designed speed of at least 16 knots, as compared with the 14 knots of the *Inflexible*; and the *Conqueror*, though not, perhaps, a first-class ship, has a speed only a fraction below 16 knots. The armaments have been advanced from the 38-ton guns of the *Ajax* to the 43-ton guns of the *Collingwood*, and to 63-ton guns in later ships of the *Admiral* class, and 110 tons in the *Benbow*. The power of the 63-ton gun is not exceeded by any guns in construction for the French or any other Foreign Navies. I now pass from the unarmoured vessels to those cruisers for the protection of commerce, which to a great commercial nation are scarcely second in importance to the iron-clads for the line of battle. Our present condition in regard to unarmoured vessels is as follows:—Taking vessels of over 13 knots, not being transports or mere despatch vessels, we have 33 ships built and completed with an aggregate of 89,650 tons. I give the tonnage as well as the number, because I wish to enable hon. Members to appreciate the general type and power of the vessels with which I am dealing. We have also 15 of this class of ships building with a total of 40,590 tons. It has been the special aim of the present Board to produce a fleet of cruisers of the most effective type. The speed has been increased in the larger types from 13 to 17 knots, in the corvettes and sloops from 10 to 13 knots, and in the two gunboats now building at Devonport we have advanced from 10 knots to the unprecedented speed of 14 knots. Great pains have been taken, and a large additional expenditure has been incurred, in order to give to the cruiser class more complete protection and the most effective armaments. The inclined deck of the *Mersey* is considered equal in resisting power to a 6-inch vertical belt at the water line. This form of protection should, therefore, bring the ship up to a level with the Russian belted cruisers, which, though reckoned as iron-clads, are protected only with a 6-inch armoured belt. The nature of the protection in the *Mersey* class is identical with that of the largest Italian iron-clads. We do not put the *Mersey* class forward as iron-clads; but in many circumstances, at sea, their protection quite equals that afforded by thin armour. We have four *Merseys* now in construction. From the armoured and the unarmoured vessels I turn to the torpedo vessels and boats. In this class we admit that of late but little has been done in comparison with the efforts of some Foreign Powers. It is necessary, however, to point out that the torpedo boats, whether of the first or second class, which are found in such large numbers in Foreign Navies, are only available for coast defence, or for operations at sea within a limited area. They are not sea-keeping vessels, and could neither maintain a blockade, nor cruise on the routes of our ocean-borne trade. And now, Sir, I pass from these observations—necessarily of a general character—on the strength of the Navy, to review briefly the policy which has been pursued by the present Board. For the course pursued in the early years of our Administration I cannot give any information more authoritative or more lucid than that supplied by the following observations, taken from the speech delivered by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) in the debate raised by the noble Lord the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), in April, 1882. My right hon. Friend, on that occasion, spoke as follows:—

> "When Lord Northbrook became First Lord of the Admiralty, it became their business to examine the state of their own and Foreign Navies, and the conclusion at which they arrived was, that the time had come when they ought to increase the rate of iron shipbuilding; and so, without making any noise about it, they began building the ships which the right hon. Gentleman opposite had commenced at a faster rate. In 1880-1, instead of 7,231 tons, Lord Northbrook actually built 9,235, and in 1881-2 10,816 tons; and this latter estimate was adhered to within 100, or, he might say, 40 tons. . . . That was the quiet and unsensational, and not ineffectual way, in which they had dealt with the situation."—(3 *Hansard*, [268] 1057.)

Well, Sir, following up the policy in regard to shipbuilding, as described in its initial stages by my right hon. Friend, the present Board has further increased the construction of iron-clads to 12,548 tons for 1883-4. To provide for this steady increase of building, and for the addition of some 1,300 men to the number employed on repairs, the Shipbuilding Votes were increased from £3,147,000 in 1880-1 to £3,830,623 for 1883-4, with a slight increase for 1884-5. It has been the special policy of the present Board to maintain a high rate of construction, not only by laying down, as stated by my noble Friend in "another place," two ships for the British Navy for every ship laid down in France, but even more by accelerating the rate of construction; and we are glad to find that, in spite of the delays which are inevitable in a complete change of armament from the muzzle-loading to the breach-loading system, in this most important element of shipbuilding so persistently and wisely urged upon us by my right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith), we have made good progress, speaking, of course, in comparative terms. As a proof of this I may quote these facts. The *Impérieuse, Warspite, Howe*, and *Anson* will be completed each in about four years; and the *Hero*, a ship of over 6,000 tons, laid down in 1884, will be completed in 1887. Now, Sir, I know the objections which apply to any unnecessary comparison of our proceedings with those of Foreign Administrations; but I feel sure that on this occasion I ought to do my best to obtain for the practical men who are working for the Navy of England justice at the hands of their fellow-countrymen. With this object in view, a comparison of the rate of progress in construction may not be considered to be invidious. The dates of laying down, launching, and actually completing in readiness for sea, are the only certain marks of progress; and hitherto the interval which separates the laying down from the completion of a foreign iron-clad has, more especially in the case of the recent ships which I have named, been considerably longer in the foreign yards than in the English yards. If we take all the ships now included in the French shipbuilding programme, and compare the dates at which they were laid down with the earliest date at which it is believed they can be completed, we shall find that the number of years during which the ships will have been in construction ranges from ten to six, the average for 15 ships being seven-and-a-half years. I find that these figures are supported by M. Gougeard, a former Minister of Marine in France. M. Gougeard has recently published a pamphlet on the state of the French Navy, in which he draws the conclusion that French iron-clads take, on an average, about 10 years to complete. He instances the *Tonnerre*, which was laid down in 1872, the *Fulminant* in 1874, and the *Dévastation* in 1875, and he tells us that all these ships were still under construction in 1883. The *Foudroyant*, another example, was laid down in 1875; she will not be completed, M. Gougeard tells us, until 1885, and he throws some doubt even upon that date. I will now ask the House to contrast these figures with those I am able to give for the English ships. In the case of the English ships we find the number of years occupied between the laying down and completion ranges from six to three years, and the average time for 12 ships is four years and eight months. Sir, I have already referred to the large increase in the Shipbuilding Votes which was rendered necessary, as stated by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), in view of the great development which had taken place in construction and the expenditure on construction in France. But it is a necessity of the position in which we are placed that we are compelled to have regard to the course of policy, not of any single Administration, but of a combination of Powers; and while iron-clad construction has been practically suspended in the United States, and reduced to very small proportions in Germany and Austria, it is still being carried forward in Italy with the sustained activity so steadily exhibited since 1871; and in regard to Russia we know that the Shipbuilding Votes have of late been greatly increased in order to push forward the construction of some new and powerful iron-clads which were laid down in the course of last year. Well, Sir, it is in these circumstances, much as we may regret the necessity, that we feel it our duty to propose to Parliament an increased expenditure on armoured building. But there are other classes of vessels in which it is even more desirable to add to the strength of the Navy at the present time. I have admitted our deficiency in a torpedo flotilla; and the great improvements which have taken place within a few months in the range and in the accuracy of aim with which the torpedo can be fired justify us in making proposals which we could not have been justified in making before for an increased expenditure on the construction of a flotilla of sea-going torpedo vessels. It is not easy to fix a standard of strength at which our battle-ships should be maintained; but when we come to deal with the question of what number of ships may be necessary for the protection of our commerce the difficulty is infinitely greater. A means of attack upon our commerce may be improvised to an extent which it is quite impracticable to measure, by the conversion of merchant steamers into cruisers, armed with a few light guns. On the other hand, we know that the risks which are exposed to an attack of that kind are of enormous magnitude, and, indeed, of vital importance to this country. It has been computed that the value of British shipping and merchandise yearly placed upon the ocean is not less than £900,000,000 sterling, and that we have at all times afloat on the seas property in ships and merchandise of the value of not less than £144,000,000, the greater part being engaged upon distant voyages. The present Board have been gradually developing, and, as I would venture to say, in an effective manner, our resources for the protection of commerce. The late Board of Admiralty laid down an admirable type for the purpose in the *Leander* class. We have followed in their footsteps by producing the *Mersey* type, and we now propose to go a step further in the same direction, by laying down vessels of the *Mersey* class, but protected by a belt in lieu of an armoured deck. The belt will, I think, be approved by my hon. Friend who sits behind me (Sir Edward J. Reed). The creation of a torpedo flotilla having now become a necessity, and I may say a new necessity, for the Navy, and deeming it to be our duty to avail ourselves of an opportunity of an unusual character afforded by the condition of the shipbuilding trade to strengthen the fleet in ships for the protection of commerce, we now propose to put out to contract an immediate order. The total amount which we ask Parliament to grant for shipbuilding to be executed by contract is £3,085,000, and we ask it as an addition to the provision taken in the present Estimates. This addition to the Contract Vote will be sufficient to produce one iron-clad of the first class, five belted cruisers, two torpedo rams, 10 scouts, and 30 torpedo boats of the first class. We propose to order all these vessels as soon as the designs are prepared, with the exception of the torpedo boats. With regard to the torpedo boats, we propose to order 10 every year. We prefer to build this number every year, rather than order a larger number, and so deprive ourselves of the advantage of the improvements which are constantly being introduced. The additional sum to be spent next year upon these new ships will be over £800,000. And now, Sir, I will endeavour to give the House some details with regard to the types of the ships we propose to build. The statement I propose to make is one which is always interesting to the House, and which, I may say, is always criticized with great ability. Our proposal for increased construction embraces all the best types now represented in the Navy, and some new designs, which we trust will prove valuable additions to the Fleet. I will take first the battle ships. With regard to that class, we have always adhered to a policy of reasonable dimensions. Instead of advancing to the immense tonnage of the Italian ships, we have thus far adhered to the limit of 10,000 tons, with, I venture to say, highly advantageous results in rapidity of construction, and in the number of ships which can be built for a given sum of money. We hold that the value of large ships is inevitably diminished in proportion as the power of attack with the torpedo becomes more formidable. But, on the other hand, we recognize that the gun must still remain an essential arm of the Navy; and where heavy ordnance is carried hydraulic machinery and mountings are required, and for the protection of vulnerable mechanism armour is indispensable. On this ground, and also on more general grounds, large ships, capable of carrying numerous crews, with the seaworthy qualities and coal-endurance necessary in a sea-keeping ship, must always form part of the Fleet of a great Naval Power. As soon as the designs are completed we propose to lay down two first-class ships by contract, and two in the Dockyards. We shall thus have 15 ships in progress, 12 being of the first class. Of the 15, six are launched and in the completing stages. With regard to all of them, I desire to give an assurance to the House that they will be proceeded with as rapidly as possible. And now, Sir, I propose to give a more detailed description of the new armoured ships. The new armoured ship—the first of a series of four—which we propose to lay down early next year at Chatham has a displacement of just over 10,000 tons. On this tonnage it has been decided to combine guns of the greatest power yet manufactured—namely, guns of 110 tons—and armour as thick as can be properly made—that is to say, 18 inches. Our manufacturers are of opinion that with the existing skill and power of manufacture you will not get full value for your money if you increase the armour beyond the limit of 18 inches in thickness. With such framing behind the armour as it is hoped to give, it is not considered that the armour of the new ship will be inferior in resisting power to any armour in existence. Two 110-ton guns are to be placed in a turret, protected with the same armour as that on the belt; but there will be only one turret in the ship, as in the case of the *Conqueror*. The other guns in the ship will be one of 18 tons right aft, and protected by armour, and 12 4-ton guns, six on each side. These 12 guns it has also been decided to protect with armour, proof not only to all machine guns, but also to the new 6-pounder shell guns. The estimated speed is 15½ knots. With regard to the other iron-clad ships which will be laid down when the slips are vacant at Portsmouth and Pembroke, and the other ship which will be put out to contract, the designs are not sufficiently matured to enable me to describe them to the House.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Will my hon. Friend forgive me if I interrupt him. I understand him to say that there are four first-class iron-clads in all to be laid down?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Yes; that is so.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Two to be built by contract, and two by the Admiralty in the Dockyards?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: That is so.

MR. GORST: Did I understand the hon. Gentleman to mention Devonport and Chatham as the places where these iron-clads will be laid down?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The resources at Devonport are not adapted to first-class iron-clads. I now turn to the protection of commerce; and I wish to say to the House that we desire to present the protection of commerce as the main purpose of the large additional expenditure on building for which we are asking the sanction of the House. For this purpose we propose two types which have grown out of vessels already included in our programme. The most powerful which we wish to introduce may be described as the belted cruiser; the other type is a slightly improved scout. The belted cruiser is a ship of about 5,000 tons' displacement, and 3,000 tons' weight of hull, including armour. The total weight of armour is 1,000 tons. She is, therefore, in one sense, an iron-clad, her water-line being protected by side armour, or an armoured deck, from end to end. She is also an iron-clad in the sense that her directing house—a new term for the conning-tower, containing the steering wheel and directing instruments—is strongly armoured. From this house the under-water broadside torpedoes and guns can be fired, and the ship can be steered when in action. In another sense the belted cruiser is not entitled to be called an iron-clad, because her guns' crews will have no armour protection. They will be protected only by shields against the fire of the lighter machine guns. The guns will be two of 18 tons and 12 of four tons, with numerous machine guns. The estimated speed, as I am sure hon. Members will be glad to hear, is 17 knots; the complement will be 350 men; the coal supply will be sufficient for 2,000 knots at full speed and 8,000 knots at the reduced cruising speed of 10 knots. We might have produced a ship with higher speed by sacrificing protection, or by accepting increased dimensions; but with a given expenditure an increase of dimensions is tantamount to a reduction of numbers, and we hold a very large number of ships to be essential for the protection of our world-wide commerce. The qualities which I have detailed to the House, and which we hope to realize in the belted cruiser, present a type, which, I venture to say, through all the changes which may take place in the future in naval warfare, will scarcely become obsolete. We propose to lay down three belted cruisers by contract, and two in the Dockyards. In addition to the belted cruisers, we propose to lay down 10 modified scouts —nine of which are to be put out to contract.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Will my hon. Friend allow me to ask what progress is proposed to be made with these ships in the course of next year?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: We shall proceed at the utmost speed, consistent with due economy, in the Dockyards; and with regard to contractors, no obstruction will be imposed upon their exertions. I will now give to the House a brief description with which I have been furnished by the Chief Constructor, Mr. Barnaby, of the modified scout. The modified scouts are almost identical with the two now building; they will differ from them in having the gun armament more fully developed, and the torpedo armament somewhat reduced. They will be armed with six 4-ton guns, and as they will have good coal endurance they will, though only jury-rigged, be efficient for service as cruisers in time of peace, and as fast torpedo auxiliaries in time of war. The estimated speed for these vessels is 16 knots. The coal supply is equal to 1,650 knots at full speed, and 7,000 knots at 10 knots, which is, I venture to say, a very considerable performance. They are well sub-divided, and they give a combination of qualities which may be considered to be very economically obtained at a cost of a little over £60,000 for hull and engines. And now, Sir, having dealt with the battle-ships and the protection of commerce, we have to take in hand the construction of a torpedo flotilla. Torpedo vessels are scarcely inferior in importance to fast cruisers, and we hold that for the British Navy sea-going vessels capable of cruising with our Squadrons are far more necessary than mere harbour defence boats. We regard the scouts as a portion of our torpedo flotilla; and we also propose two special armoured torpedo rams. Our torpedo ram is a vessel of 3,000 tons' displacement, rather longer and wider than, but otherwise identical with, the *Polyphemus.* The under-water arrangements will be similar, except that there will be no torpedo discharge through the ram itself. The experiments with the *Polyphemus* have shown that the associated elements of speed with the ram and the broadside torpedo discharge under water make a most powerful combination. These it is designed to reproduce, but, in doing so, to give greater habitability by building an ordinary ship from above the turtle-back deck, which will be protected with 3-inch armour. This, with an addition to the supply of fuel, will give to the new type independent cruising power, which the *Polyphemus* was not designed to have. My right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) knows the intentions which were present in the minds of the designers better than I do; but I believe that the *Polyphemus* was designed as a tender to battle-ships. The experimental expenses connected with the *Polyphemus* will not re-appear in the new Estimates, as the torpedo discharge and the boiler questions have now been worked out. I have never been one of those who have criticized these expenses. Experiments must be expensive, and the Board of Admiralty should never be deterred from carrying forward experiments because they must necessarily be expensive. The armoured torpedo ram will have a small gun armament; the estimated speed is 17½ knots; the coal supply is equal to 1,600 knots at full speed, and 6,400 knots at 10 knots. These are the various types of vessels which we submit to the approval of the House. I will now enumerate to the House the new vessels which we intend to lay down. The list includes four iron-clads of the first class, five belted cruisers, two armoured torpedo rams, 10 scouts, and 10 first-class torpedo boats. Of these we propose to put out to contract two iron-clads, three belted cruisers, nine scouts, and the torpedo rams and boats. The remaining vessels will be laid down in the Dockyards.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Four iron-clads altogether?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Yes. The Dockyard programme has not been determined, except in so far as this—that we propose to lay down two first-class battle ships as soon as the designs are prepared. In addition to the new work I have detailed, we shall push forward the construction of all vessels now in hand at the highest economical speed. At this stage I think it may be convenient that I should give to the House the total tonnage which we propose to complete in the Dockyards and by contract in the course of the next financial year. We propose to raise the armoured construction in the Dockyards to 12,000 tons weight of hull. We propose to build, of unarmoured ships, in the Dockyards 5,500 tons, making a total of 17,500 tons to be built in the Dockyards. By contract we propose to build of armoured ships 3,050 tons, and of unarmoured ships 8,940 tons; and if we may speak of the tonnage of torpedo boats—and very expensive it certainly is, measured by the ton—of that class we propose to build 350 tons, making the total to be produced by contract 12,310 tons. The grand total of the construction proposed in Her Majesty's Dockyards and by contract for 1885-6 is 29,810 tons, as against 20,679 for the present financial year; and the result will be an increased construction of 9,131 tons.

MR. W. H. SMITH: For 1884-5?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Yes; the increased construction over that provided for the financial year 1884-5 will be 9,131 tons. The orders for these ships will be given, as I have already stated, as soon as the designs are matured; and we anticipate that the battle ships may be completed for sea in four years at the latest, the belted cruisers in three years, and the remaining vessels in less than two years. It is impossible for the Board of Admiralty to assume anything like finality in the amount of construction which is to be proposed for the Navy. The proposals which we now submit to the approval of the House provide, as we contend, a substantial addition to the power of the Navy; and at the time when we make it, and in the circumstances in which we make it, we claim that they are sufficient proposals. With regard to the future, it will be for the Board of Admiralty of the future to give orders for additions according to the view which they take of the exigencies of the time. The total cost of the new ships to be put out to contract will be £3,085,000, and the addition to the Contract Vote for next year will be £800,000. In making provision for requirements for which it is absolutely impossible to fix a common measure we cannot hope that our proposal will command universal acceptance. It will, at least, be admitted that the additions to the Estimates and construction have not been restricted by any narrow conception of the standard at which the British Navy ought to be maintained. In regard to the financial arrangements which may be necessary in order to carry out these proposals, I am not competent, nor is it necessary that I should enter upon them. They belong, I need not explain to the House, to the province of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. And now, Sir, having dealt with the increase of shipbuilding, I turn to the coaling stations.

MR. RITCHIE: Will the work be taken by tender, or how will it be done?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Yes; it will be let by tender. With regard to the coaling stations, it is obvious that the statement on this subject should more properly have come from my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War, or some other Representative of the War Office; but it has been thought by the Government that it would be for the convenience of the House if a brief outline of our proposals were included in the general statement with reference to the Navy which it is my duty to make to the House. The defence of the coaling stations abroad and the mercantile harbours at home is, as we admit, one of the most urgent necessities of the moment, and a necessity intimately connected with proposals for strengthening the Navy. The consideration of a general and comprehensive plan for the defence of the coaling stations has been delayed, because the subject has been referred to the Royal Commission on Colonial Defence. The case, as to the coaling stations, cannot be put more concisely than in the words used by my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty in "another place" in a recent discussion. He said—

> "No one can fill the position of First Lord of the Admiralty without being aware that, of all the measures that could be taken by this country for its defence in time of war, none can be more urgent than the defence of our coaling stations. It is a measure which, of all others, would strengthen our naval force, for the obvious reason that, if the coaling stations are left unprotected, we should have to provide for their defence by ships of war which, if they were fortified, could be employed in offensive operations."—(3 *Hansard*, [293] 1548.)

Papers have already been presented to Parliament stating the measures to be taken for the defence of the coaling stations; but some further proposals for the defence of second-class stations, and for the provision of sub-marine defences, have since been adopted. The Revised Estimate stands as follows:—Coaling stations of the first class—Aden, Ceylon, including Trincomalee and Colombo, Singapore, Hong Kong, Cape of Good Hope, including Mauritius, Jamaica, and St. Lucia. The cost for the armament and works at these stations is estimated at £976,760, from which amount should be deducted the sum of £330,470, subscribed by India and the Colonies, leaving an Imperial charge for works and armament of a little over £646,000. A further charge of £178,500 for the defence of second-class stations and for sub-marine defence brings the total charge on the Imperial funds to the sum of £824,900. Should further questions arise in the course of this debate, it is obvious that the noble Marquess, or some Representative of the War Office, will be in a better position than I can be to give the details which may be demanded by the House. There are two other subjects of great importance of the same class as the defence of the coaling stations. The first is the protection of commercial harbours. The Committee presided over by the Earl of Morley has made certain recommendations for the defence of commercial harbours; and proposals based upon them are under the consideration of the Department of the Government principally concerned. There is also another question of the same class—namely, the importance of the sea defence of what are called our military ports, such as Portsmouth and Plymouth. This also is under consideration, and the Government will shortly be in a position to state what they propose to do. For the naval ordnance the Government ask Parliament to approve an increased expenditure of £1,600,000. Of this £400,000 will be required in 1885-6, and £300,000 in the four ensuing years. My hon. Friend the Surveyor General of the Ordnance (Mr. Brand) will be prepared to give further details as to this Estimate, should he be called upon to do so, in the course of this debate. With reference to the more strictly naval aspect of the question, I am informed by the Director General of the Naval Ordnance that he is confident the supply of guns will keep pace with the advancement in construction. The 100-ton guns for the *Benbow* are in course of construction at Elswick. The 63-ton guns for the *Rodney*, *Howe*, *Camperdown*, and *Anson* are in hand. Those for the *Rodney* should be complete in March of next year. The guns for all the remaining vessels are in hand, and will be completed in 1885-6, except those for the *Anson*, and the reserve guns, which will be ready in 1886-7.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: They will all be ready next year, except in the case of the *Anson?*

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Yes; they will all be ready in 1885-6, except those for the *Anson* and the reserve guns. Forty-three-ton guns have been provided for the *Conqueror*, *Colossus*, *Edinburgh*, and *Collingwood*, leaving for 1885-6 the *Hero's* guns, and two 43-ton guns for the reserve.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: What will be done with regard to the lighter guns?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: As to the 18-ton guns, I regret to say that the Memorandum I hold in my hand does not show the extent of progress in reference to guns of a lighter calibre. The total expenditure on the Navy under the several proposals which I have detailed will be — for shipbuilding, £3,100,000; naval ordnance, £1,600,000; and coaling stations, £825,000. It is anticipated that the whole of this expenditure will be incurred in the next five years. I may explain that the increase for guns is in addition to the charge of £500,000 already included in the Army Estimates for naval ordnance for the present year. The expenditure upon naval ordnance arising from the change of system will certainly be enormous; but it is more than paralleled, I perceive, by the expenditure in other countries for a similar purpose.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What will be the expenditure this year?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: The additional expenditure on naval ordnance next year will, I understand, be £400,000.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR: Will that include protection for harbours?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: No. It is obvious that the amount of protection given affects the amount of naval force which it may be necessary to create and maintain. The proposals, therefore, which I have explained are subject to increase, if, upon full consideration of the proposals for the coast defences, such increase should be necessary. The House is, of course, aware that the Government are pledged to apply for the appointment next Session of a Committee to consider both the Naval and Marine Expenditure; and to that Committee, as a matter of course, the proposals I have detailed to the House must be submitted for consideration. It is proposed to make provision for all this expenditure under special arrangements, which will be explained at the proper opportunity by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In laying, I am afraid very imperfectly, and certainly under circumstances of great pressure, plans of such large and comprehensive character before Parliament, there are one or two general considerations which I desire to present to the House. And, first, I would remark that the expenditure, under the direction of the War Office, to meet the requirements of the Navy, is strictly and absolutely defensive. The expenditure under the War Office for the coaling stations abroad represents the arrears which we have to pay—gaps, as it were, in the walls which surround our great Empire, which have been left to us to fill up by former Governments. The question of the defence of the coaling stations has, year after year, been brought before the Minister of War by the Inspector General of Fortifications; but the first direct action which was taken was the appointment by the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) of the Royal Commission on which for a time I had the honour to serve. It now devolves on us to carry out the recommendations of the Commission. To a large extent, the observations which I have made with reference to the expenditure under the War Office are true of that directly under the Admiralty. Even when increased in the proportions which we propose, our shipbuilding will be largely devoted to vessels specially designed for a defensive purpose—that is to say, for the protection of commerce. Construction of this character conveys no menace whatever to Foreign Powers. Construction of ships of this class has, indeed, always been a prominent feature in the building programme, and has always thrown a heavy burden upon the Admiralty of this country. It is for this reason, as I have already explained, that when we come to measure ourselves with other Powers in vessels specially designed for battle, the strength at our disposal seems inadequate to the greater expenditure which we have incurred. Our ships, as we are glad to know, have been largely employed, not in warlike operations, but in operations of a most beneficent character—in giving freedom to the slave, in giving protection to the solitary pioneers of commerce and civilization, and in the prosecution of scientific research. Viewed in another aspect, the Navy may be regarded as a link which helps to bind together the Mother Country and her Colonies. In asking the consent of Parliament to the proposals we submit, I may repeat, in conclusion, that they are not a menace to Foreign Powers, with whom we desire to remain, as we now are, on terms of amity and peace; but they are to provide a defence for ourselves. If, indirectly, they tend to increase our influence, and the strength of the country as a Naval Power, it is, I know, the firm resolve of the country to use her power at all times to protect the feeble and the oppressed, in the cause of equity and justice, and to extend civilization.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That there be laid before this House, a Return respecting the Ships built and building for Her Majesty's Navy during the last four years."—(*Sir Thomas Brassey.*)

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The House will have listened with very great interest to the speech which has fallen from my hon. Friend. He dealt with a large number of subjects and figures; and, being a very intricate subject, he will pardon us if we have made some mistakes in following him. I hope, therefore, he will put me right if I labour under any misapprehensions.

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Perhaps I may just mention that I propose to give the necessary information in the form of a Return.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: That, no doubt, would be very satisfactory. My hon. Friend said that the proposals of the Government were defensive in character and not offensive, and he also enlarged on the duties of this country. There can be no doubt the object of the House of Commons would be to place any force at the disposal of the Government for defensive purposes, and for the discharge of duties connected with the oppressed in different parts of the world. But I want to make this remark. There is no provision whatever for accelerating shipbuilding now; everything is postponed until next year. I do not wish to be an alarmist in any shape or way; but it does seem to me that if the Government have realized that it is essential to take steps for the protection of the commerce of the country and for defensive purposes a delay of four months is a very serious matter indeed. I may refer to the occurrence of a sudden emergency, such as a declaration of war. We cannot help feeling that if war does fall upon us, most probably it would happen when we were not prepared. This delay, then, is a serious matter. The question is not one for Party. I am addressing Gentlemen opposite, who have as great an interest to protect, and as great a duty to discharge, as I have myself; perhaps even more so. I therefore ask why, if the deficiency is admitted, there is to be this delay, and why is the business to be spread over five years? My hon. Friend says the work in the Dockyards will be accelerated; but that will not result from anything which he provides for this year, or even next year.

He says that 12,000 tons of iron-clads will be provided for in the Estimates next year; but this involves only something like 1,500 tons more than was provided for this year. He calculated that an iron-clad would be completed every four years or four and a-half years; but the Returns before the House do not bear out that calculation. The *Collingwood* was commenced on July 12, 1880, and only 4,978 tons are completed out of 6,000. The *Conqueror* was commenced in April, 1879, and she is not completed; and the *Edinburgh*, which was laid down in 1879, is only three-quarters completed. These facts do not bear out the anticipations of my hon. Friend. I understand my hon. Friend to say that in the course of four years he hopes to complete four additional iron-clads, five cruisers, and two torpedo rams, 10 "scouts," and 30 torpedo boats; but he does not indicate why there is to be this delay with the torpedo vessels, which are so urgently required. If there is one offensive weapon of war more than another which we can use, sending it forth from our harbours and creeks, it is the torpedo vessel. I hope that it will not seem ungracious for me to say that this appears a most absurd proposal, considering the gravity of the circumstances in which we are placed. There are three or four places on our coasts—I do not think it advisable, for obvious reasons, to name them—where at least 12 or 14 torpedo vessels are immediately required. I have nothing whatever to say against the proposal to build "scouts" or torpedo rams, or belted cruisers—all of which I believe to be exceedingly valuable in their way; nor do I object to an increased expenditure on iron-clads; but I certainly do regret that there is so little prospect of our getting soon what we desire to obtain. It appears to me that we should spend far less if the work upon the ships were taken in hand and pushed forward rapidly. If the Admiralty could only make up their minds as to the type of ship, and the type of gun to be put into it, the ship could be built rapidly, and would be cheaper and far more efficient, while the security of the country would be more rapidly and certainly provided for. With regard to the subject of ordnance, I may state that I, as far back as 1879, in conjunction with my right hon. and gallant Friend the then Secretary of State for War (Colonel Stanley) signed the drawings for the 43-ton gun; but that gun is not yet complete, owing, as I understand, to experiments with the loading apparatus. The hon. Member opposite has told us that he expects that a certain number of new ships will be completed either next year or the year after; but has he taken into account how long it may be before the guns are ready to be placed in them? The noble Lord the Secretary of State for War has admitted that the guns of some of the ships which were to be completed last year are not even yet made, and that the machinery for making them does not exist at the present moment. I do not throw blame upon anyone for this; but the fact remains. But, even when the guns themselves are made, difficulties may arise with regard to their mounting and their loading apparatus. The difficulties that occurred with regard to the 43-ton gun may equally arise with regard to the 63-ton gun, which is not yet completed for trial. The steel for the latter gun is not yet in existence; and, furthermore, there is only one factory in England which can manufacture steel in ingots large enough for these guns. These are very serious matters, which affect the capability of the country to meet any sudden emergency. I have taken pains to ascertain what is the position of neighbouring countries in these respects. In mentioning the name of France I may be permitted to say that that is a country with whom we desire to preserve the most friendly relations; and I in no way complain of the course she has taken for the purpose of making herself strong for the protection of her own interests. But what is the condition of France with regard to her guns? It is very clearly shown in the very interesting Report which has been furnished to the United States Government by the Commission which they sent over to Europe to make inquiries with regard to the manufacture of large guns in England, France, Germany, Russia, and Italy. The Report, as far as it relates to France, is as follows:—

> "Previous to the Franco-German War of 1870, it was the custom in France to confide all matters relating to cannon to the Artillery Corps of the Army and Navy; aid from private sources was neither sought nor offered; much secrecy was observed in all things relating to the business of ordnance; admission to the Go-

vernment foundries was obtained with difficulty; and the experimental ground at Gâvre, with rare exceptions, was closed to all applicants. With the advent of war came the proof that a close corporation such as was constituted by the system heretofore adopted could not work to the best advantage of the country; and with the return of peace and the necessity of re-armament came a revolution of ideas which has led the Government to modify its practice. It was recognized that the Government must have under its control some establishments purely Governmental; but, in order to provide for all contingencies as well as to prevent official ideas from running too much in a groove, it was desirable to encourage private industries, so that a spirit of emulation might be excited by competition, and a channel afforded through which new ideas and inventions might reach the national works. The adoption of this course was made the more imperative in consequence of the new departure in gun metal, and this opened the way to the encouragement of the steel industries of the country. At the Fonderie à Ruelle, all the constructive force of the marine artillery has been concentrated, and here all the largest guns are made. It contains the most remarkable collection of tools of the age. They are designed for guns of 34 centimètres and upwards, and have a capacity for handling guns of 160 tons in weight and 60 feet in length. The plant has cost millions of francs, and five years elapsed from the giving of the order to the setting up of the tools. A large portion of the time charged to the manufacture must be credited to the preparation of designs, no tools of their size and great capacity having been before conceived. How entirely France has now altered her system is shown in a previous part of this Report; her present practice is theoretically perfect, and it has been proved to be practically efficient. Her Government establishments are still retained, but as gun factories simply, in which the parts are machined and assembled; but for foundry work she depends upon the private industries of the country, and many of these works have found it to their profit to establish gun factories, which supplement the Government factories to a great extent. The conclusions of the Board on this subject accord with the plain teaching of these historical instances. It accepts the system now pursued in France as the proper standard for imitation, and recommends that, in inaugurating the manufacture of war material in our own country, a conformity as close as circumstances will admit to the plans which have proved so successful in France should be observed."

That is an extraordinary statement, and it bears testimony to the foresight which France has shown in the production of war material and steel guns. Ruelle exists for the manufacture of naval guns and of coast defence guns alone; and it is stated that its capacity for turning out weapons is equal to that of the Woolwich and of the Armstrong factories together. But, in addition to this establishment, the French Government have entered into extensive contracts with a very large Company for the manufacture of guns. I will tell the House what France is doing with regard to steel guns. Ruelle has already turned out eight 75-ton guns, 42 centimètres 21 calibres in length; and six more are at present progressing of 37 centimètres 28½ calibres, and of 75 tons. Fifty guns of 34 centimètres 28½ calibres, of 50 tons, are afloat, finished, or in course of construction. The next size is 27 centimètres 28½ calibres, of 30 tons. Ruelle is capable of producing 30 heavy guns per annum, and orders for additional machinery have been given to increase their powers of production. The Société des Forges at Chantiers have orders for 480 guns up to 32 centimètres; about half of that number of the smaller calibres are delivered, and 50 of 32 centimètres have yet to be made. The Company is increasing its plant for heavy gun manufacture. Now, what is England able to do in that way? The Secretary of State for War informed us that three guns of 110 tons, four guns of 63 tons, and three guns of 43 tons, besides a very large number of smaller guns, are in various stages of progress. That is all that can be said of work done against the story I have told you of the progress made in France. The fact is that France, owing to her prudence, foresight, and energy, is some years ahead of us in the construction and manufacture of guns. Perhaps my hon. Friend may dispute that, because he may say that there is some difficulty in mounting these guns. I can only repeat, however, what I believe to be true, from observations made on the spot, and from information derived from persons in whom I place implicit confidence. What I wish to ask is, whether the Government will take the steps which are necessary to secure, first of all, that there should be a supply of steel and material necessary for the production of steel guns? I am far from suggesting that the Government should take into its own hands the manufacture of steel. I believe that if the Government held out to the trade the prospect of a profitable business, they would certainly get the article they need. But up to the present time there has been no inducement to manufacturers to provide plant for the production of steel of the quality required. I am told that Messrs. Whitworth and also a Sheffield manufacturer are prepared to supply a large quantity of this steel; but hitherto the practice of the Government has been to ask for tenders for a few tons at a time. Consequently, the country has been without that most valuable support on which to fall back in case of need—namely, a trade production which should be capable of furnishing anything that is considered necessary for the requirements of the Service. In the remarks I am making I wish it to be understood that I am not attacking the present Government, nor any men in the employ of the present Government. I consider it is the system which is at fault. It is a system under which the Admiralty may say —"Well, we are not responsible for the guns, as the War Department will furnish them." But the War Department is influenced by financial considerations. The materials necessary to be provided are, perhaps, considered in December or January, and the item which is most easily reduced is cut down by the Estimates clerk, or with the sanction of a Departmental officer; and so the gun is postponed and work is not done, or, if it is taken in hand, it goes on slowly, and we obtain no satisfactory results. There is, at present, no personal responsibility for any delay. There is no opportunity of reaching any individual, and of giving him the blame or credit attaching to the proper execution of the work. We have now a list of the ships which Her Majesty's Government propose to build — large ships involving heavy guns; but experience up to this time does not give them the least hope that the guns will be ready for the ships. Considering the language of the Committee of which several hon. Gentlemen opposite were Members, there is not much hope that the building department will be up to their time, because they will say that the guns are not ready. Consequently, it is impossible, under the present system, to bring home the responsibility to anybody. Mr. Barnaby, the Chief Constructor of the Navy, was thus interrogated in the Committee—

"'Do you in the Royal Navy make considerable alterations in the design and fittings during the construction of ships?'—'We constantly make alterations in the design and fittings of ships.' 'That is a very costly operation, is it not?'—'It is a very costly operation.' 'In a former answer, which you gave to the Committee upon the last occasion when you were here (Q. 336), you used these words—'We constantly make changes during construction in the designs and fittings of ships.' Now, I will ask you, if you please, to enlarge a little upon that answer, and to correct me if I am wrong in supposing that those alterations are necessary in order to, if I may use the phrase, keep pace with the times; is that the motive which would induce you to make these alterations in the original design during construction?'—'Generally that would be the reason.' 'But do you think it is a practical way of dealing with the great issues that are put into your hands to start building a ship without having a certainty in your own mind as to what you are going to build that ship to carry?'—'With regard to the iron-clad ships, whether it is right or wrong that it should be so, it is the fact that we do not know, and we have to wait for years before we do; and that the War Office eventually tell us what the gun is.' 'Do not you think that if your view were adopted—that is to say, if the great change to which you have alluded were made, it would save a great deal of delay, and immensely facilitate the carrying on of the ship construction of this country, and consequently benefit the Public Service?'—'In my opinion, it would very largely conduce to building rapidly; and I may give as an illustration what happened the other day. There are certain ships of a class called the *Admiral* class, which were intended to have guns of about 60 tons, two in each barbette. One of those ships, the *Benbow*, is building by contract; and one of the reasons for deciding (as was done) upon changing the armament and taking 100 or 110-ton guns, was that the 110-ton gun, or a gun of about that size, was a known gun, an Armstrong gun, whereas the 63-ton guns are in the air, and nobody knew when we should get the design settled. Therefore, as the ship was building by contract, and we should have to pay the contractor for any delay, the known gun was put into the *Benbow* in preference to the unknown gun.'"

I do not blame the present Government particularly because they have administered a system which has existed for ages. But here we are in the face of great dangers, as it seems to me; and some officer of the Government ought to be personally and solely responsible for the inception of a design and for the completion of that design. In a country like England it is monstrous that we should go on year after year permitting difficulties to exist and obstacles to present themselves which, in the conduct of commercial affairs, would not be allowed to continue for a single day. We are, it is said, to have the unknown 63-ton gun for four ships. The guns were not commenced a year ago; but we are told that we are to have them all within a certain period after the date on which the ship is laid down. That is contrary to all experience of past performances, and I am sceptical as to the power of the Department to produce the result which is promised. I will refer again to the Committee, the evidence of which I have quoted. It reports—

> "In connection with this point, the Committee, while fully acknowledging the necessity of keeping ships of war abreast of the most modern improvements, are of opinion that it is desirable to discontinue the system of endeavouring to adapt every ship to the latest improvements, whether in gunnery or mechanical appliances, that may arise during the period she is under construction. That vessels, when designed and laid down in the Dockyards or contracted for, should be completed to receive the best armaments and mechanical inventions known to exist, and thus great expense would be avoided and time saved. It appears in evidence that in the case of ships built in the Dockyards at least three years out of six might be saved by this course; and the Committee consider that the gain to the naval strength of the country by the more rapid completion of vessels possessing fittings of the most approved type at the time they were designed would more than counterbalance any advantage that might be gained by adopting the latest improvements at the cost of serious delay during the construction of the ship."

That is the general opinion, with which I think every Member of the House will be disposed to agree. I would refer also to the capabilities of other persons in the construction of ships. When the question was raised with great ability in the Press I wrote to a large shipbuilder, one of the first in this country, and I asked him whether he would state within what time he would be prepared to deliver a cruiser after receiving the order. His answer was that two or three fast cruisers of the 18-knot type could be turned out in 18 months from the date of the order, complete, with everything on board, ready for sea. But he insisted, in order to achieve this result, that he should have the entire responsibility, and that there should be no reference of points for settlement to the Admiralty officials, which always brought delay. The armoured class, he said, would take a little longer, perhaps two years, or a little more. I am reading a letter from a gentleman who has done a great deal of admirable work for the Admiralty and the country, and whose engagement could be as completely relied upon as any engagement imaginable. I entirely believe that a contract given to this gentleman would result in the supply of ships of the cruising class in 18 months, and of ships of the *Admiral* class in about two years and three months, with guns, mountings, and everything complete for sea. I asked another gentleman, who has built armoured ships for the Queen's Service, and the answer he gave was that he would be quite prepared to build and deliver fast cruisers of 18-knot speed within 15 months of the signature of the contract, ships of the *Conqueror* class within 24 months, and ships of the *Admiral* class within 30 months. We have been two, three, and even four years in building these ships; and my hon. Friend proposes to build in four years the ships which he has indicated. If he would only give designs complete in every respect, with guns and every arrangement unalterable, we might get the ships complete in from two and a-quarter to two and a-half years, delivered by the most competent builders in the United Kingdom. Why do not the Government use the same speed and adopt the same principles? Why should it be necessary that four, five, or six years should be required for the production of ships, a great part of that time being taken up by alterations which seriously hamper, rather than add to, the efficiency of the ships? I will not follow my hon. Friend in the figures he gave as to the present condition of the Navy. I believe the House and the country realize this fact—that, whatever figures have been produced as to the comparative strength of the French and English Navies, an immediate increase is required in the English Navy. But there are some curious figures which I should like to quote to the House from *The Sailor's Pocket Handbook*, by Captain Bedford, who is now in command of the *Monarch*. He shows that the total tonnage of armoured ships produced in England between 1869 and 1878 was 142,000 tons, and in France 95,000 tons; but that between 1878 and 1884 the proportions are reversed, and England produced only 129,000, and France 180,000. If these figures are accurate —and they are made from Captain Bedford's handbook, which gives a statement of the additions made to the Navies of the world during the last 20 years— they are of the utmost significance, and show that we have allowed the Navy of France to gain rapidly on that of England. Then there is the question of manning our ships. I heard that the *Dreadnought* was more than 14 days in getting her crews. There was a difficulty in finding stokers. I have also heard that, owing to the increase in the period of education for sub-lieutenants and the torpedo course which they have to go through, there is a deficiency of sub-lieutenants. It is quite certain that two or three highly skilled lieutenants will be required for these torpedo vessels. No allusion has been made by the Government to any intention to add to the number of men or of officers. The total strength in 1880-81 was 58,800, and in 1884-85, notwithstanding the additional strain caused by Egyptian affairs, the number is reduced to 56,950. I dare say I shall be told that the Reserves are available. I place great reliance on the Reserves, which are a most valuable force. But in case of war we should certainly require a large number of trained men accustomed to torpedo practice and able to handle the weapons entrusted to them, which would otherwise be quite as dangerous to the men themselves as to the enemy. If ships take a long time to produce, it takes a longer time to produce good sailors, and a still longer time to produce the highly educated officers which are now required. I have spoken of the progress made in France, but I know that in Germany also rapid steps are being taken. Krupp is extending his works for the manufacture of heavy guns, and Austria, Russia, and Italy are also advancing; although Italy, I am glad to say, takes a large number of her guns from England and from Germany. This progress on the part of foreign countries demands the greatest possible vigilance on our part. We have £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 worth of ships in a more or less incomplete condition. We have very few ships which can go to sea at once. They are mostly waiting for guns or gun carriages, or it is not yet decided how they are to be equipped. Our cruisers at present are deficient in number and speed. Their boilers are not in a satisfactory condition. Our torpedo vessels are few in number, and they are only to be increased by 10 in the course of next year; but we are even worse off with regard to the manufacture of the Whitehead torpedo. Our resources are limited to the production of 50 annually; and a single week's actual warfare would use up a year's manufacture. It is true, we can buy our torpedoes; but it should be remembered that they are contraband of war, and in case of hostilities could no longer be obtained. We are also told that the Government are now going to arm and protect our coaling stations. But what is our position? We have forts without guns, we have guns without carriages, and we have mines without men to lay them down and manage them. The condition of some of our harbours is causing enormous anxiety to those who are responsible for their safety. They remain unprotected, although arrangements have been made on paper. Plans have been laid down and agreed upon; but they have not been carried out, and stores and materials have, in many places, been exhausted. I could give information which I refrain from giving because it would create alarm. But the facts are known to every foreign officer who comes to this country to acquire information for the use of his own Government. Our inability to defend ourselves is known to them; but it is not known to the country. I protest against a policy of concealment, and I do not use the phrase offensively. But, as a matter of Departmental policy, it is held to be unwise to give the House and the country information which might be used to the disadvantage of the country. It is held to be unwise to give information to those who could use it offensively; but these facts are all known to the War Departments and the Marine Departments of Foreign Governments. They have skilful gentlemen in their employ whose duty it is to inform them. But the facts are not known to the House of Commons and to the people of this country; and I say the House of Commons and the people of this country ought to know accurately the condition in which they are placed. In a great undertaking requiring for its safety fire-engines, police, and locks and bars, those who were interested in the undertaking would have the right to know whether the engines, locks and bars, and police were adequate to the security required; and it would be a mistake on the part of the Governing Body to refuse to give the proprietors and shareholders accurate information as to the condition of the plant and the materials, and of the staff necessary to bring the apparatus into effective operation. I believe myself in a policy of publicity, which is stronger, better, and wiser for the Government, and which to some extent relieves them of a great responsibility. The Government is responsible if by chance—and it could hardly be called a chance—a sudden war should result in a calamity. Nothing is ready in the true sense of the term. We could not arm half-a-dozen ships under a fortnight's notice. We have a large number of ships in a more or less incomplete condition. The Departmental difficulties which exist have been produced by the highest and the best motives, by the desire to prevent extravagance, and to provide that all shall be done regularly. But the result is that, if a calamity should occur, the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Surveyor General of Ordnance, and the head of the factory at Woolwich can all say—"I have done the best in my power with the means at my disposal." I believe a calamity may overtake the country. If I did not, I should not be justified in asking the House to support the proposal for increasing the defensive force of the country. Those who are convinced that a great war cannot come without ample notice may object to timely expenditure; but those who are convinced, as I am, that such a war may come without notice will incur a great responsibility if they leave the country unprepared. Loyalty to the country in such a case must outweigh loyalty to Departments and to the Government; and in loyalty to the country I appeal to the House of Commons to effect a change in a system which I believe to be dangerous, and to make adequate provision for the defence of the country.

Sir DONALD CURRIE: I am glad that the House has at length the opportunity of discussing the important subject of the condition of Her Majesty's Navy.

This is not a Party question. The consideration of this subject should neither call for factious observations from the Opposition, nor for silence on the part of the supporters of the Government. The impropriety of discussing the state of the Navy from a Party point of view is evident from the fact that the late Administration, with a full knowledge of the intentions of Foreign Powers to increase their Fleets, made no adequate corresponding preparations. As regards any disposition to hinder the frank expression of opinion from this side of the House, I may remind hon. Members that we were warned in 1880 of the disadvantage to the country of being governed by a mechanical majority.

Why has the state of the Navy taken such a hold of the public mind at the present moment? It is said that we have been needlessly alarmed as to the condition of our naval defence. The question would not have attracted so much notice at the present time if there had not been brought within the last year or two, and with increasing force, to the public mind, the question of the new development of French Colonial interests, which involved a danger of possible rupture with this country. The policy of Germany in the direction of Colonial establishments has also stirred the public mind. Hitherto, it has been believed that, in the event of trouble with France, Germany would be found hostile to that country; and it has always been argued that there is no possible combination which could involve danger to Great Britain.

The public may well be alarmed, for the Navy of Great Britain has been allowed to dwindle into a serious position of comparative inferiority, unequal to the protection of our commerce and of our honour, and out of all proportion to the Fleets of Foreign Powers. The Prime Minister told us, with reference to the franchise, a short time ago, that he used the language of warning and not of menace; for that if one had a friend asleep in a house which was on fire, it would be his duty, at whatever inconvenience, to awaken the person in danger. In speaking upon this question I do not wish to be an alarmist; but the nation does not realize fully the dangerous position we are in with regard to the Navy, and I trust that the result of this debate will be to secure the re-establishment of our former naval supremacy, whatever the cost may be.

What are the interests which depend for their security and protection on the efficiency of our Navy?

In the first place, these Islands must be safe from invasion; for if a Foreign Power could either invade this country, or, for a short time, command the Channel, and dictate terms for an indemnity, the effect would be disastrous, both at home and in our Eastern and Colonial

Possessions. The enemy might make it a condition of peace that we should be limited in the number of ships of war to be built. When the First Napoleon defeated the Prussians, he stipulated for a limitation of their military strength; but that was evaded by a system of military conscription; whereas, in the case of a condition limiting naval construction, a superiority of naval power on the part of the enemy could prevent the laying down of more than the number of iron-clads specified in a Treaty of Peace.

Germany has a coast line of about 700 miles to defend; France, of about 1,200; Italy, of about 1,500; while Great Britain has about 3,000—in other words, we have, in the British Isles, a coast line to protect nearly equal to the whole coast line of Italy, France, and Germany put together.

We have also to safeguard our food supply. During the last 15 years we have become increasingly dependent on sea transport for our food supply. Within that period our imports of wheat and of flour from the United States have increased from 15,000,000 to 40,000,000 cwts.; our wheat imports from India were only 2,000 cwts. 15 years ago, and are now 11,000,000 cwts; while from Australia they were then 500,000 cwts., and are now 2,750,000 cwts. The total increase of wheat importation in that period has been from 44,500,000 cwts. to 84,500,000 cwts. The imports of barley, oats, grain, and meat have increased in the same proportion. Altogether, it is estimated that the population of this country imports about one-half of the food which is consumed; and there are two conditions precedent to the possibility of obtaining this foreign supply—namely, the power to defend the Channel, and the power to guard strategical points upon the ocean where the large mass of the food-carrying ships cross on their way to Great Britain.

We have further to look to the protection of our Home and Colonial shipping and general trade. Our Home population 15 years ago was, in round numbers, 31,000,000, and it is now nearly 36,000,000. The property assessed for Income Tax was £430,000,000, and it is now over £600,000,000 sterling. The annual Public Revenue of our Colonies and Possessions, including India, was £68,000,000 sterling 15 years ago, and it is now £89,500,000. British shipping was then 5,500,000 tons; it now reaches over 9,000,000 tons. Our imports and exports were under £600,000,000; they are now about £720,000,000.

Looking to this increase of our population and trade, and to the extent of the claims of our Eastern and Colonial Possessions, the question arises, has our naval expenditure increased in a corresponding degree, and is the condition of our Navy sufficient to give us perfect confidence in view of all eventualities? We are actually spending less upon our Navy this year than we spent 20 years ago, and less for effective service than we were spending 10 years ago. It should be borne in mind also that the iron-clad of to-day, on account of the additional necessary thickness of armour, steel-plating, increased size of guns and fittings, and otherwise, costs 40 per cent more money than 10 years ago.

Upon what principle, I ask, is the naval policy of this country based? Are we building our war ships to carry out in war a definite policy of attack and defence, or are we merely shaping our policy from an estimate of the vessels which we have in hand for employment? It is now proved beyond doubt that not only would we be unable to contend successfully against a combination of Foreign Powers, but that it would be next to impossible to mask the War Fleet of an enemy by shutting them up in their ports. We have not an adequate number of vessels. The popular error has been that we have a sufficient number of war ships armed and ready to be manned to compete with any probable combination of the Fleets of Foreign Powers.

In 1860, the late Mr. Cobden wrote to Lord John Russell as follows:—

> "So far am I from wishing that 'we should be unarmed,' and so little am I disposed to 'place my country at the mercy of France' (to quote the language of your note), that 'I would, if necessary, spend £100,000,000 sterling to maintain an irresistible superiority over France at sea.'"

Just before the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832 we had 106 vessels of war of the first class, and the French 53—that is to say, we had double the strength of France; 20 years later the proportion was 86 British to 45 French; and 20 years later still we had 94 British to 50 French. Well, to-day we have only 46 British to 44 French. Is this a proportion sufficient to satisfy and to protect the interests of this country?

It is admitted that we are inferior to France alone in second and third class war vessels—that is to say, our Colonies and coaling stations may be at the mercy of an enemy sufficiently strong to detain our powerful iron-clads near home.

We are also short of cruisers, and largely inferior to France in the number, speed, and fighting power of such vessels. For a long time the Admiralty led the people of this country to believe that the Mercantile Marine could be relied upon to supply cruisers in case of war; but there are very few merchant screw steamers which can steam more than 12 or 13 knots per hour, or which have transverse bulkheads extended to the upper deck, and are fit to carry heavy guns.

With regard to Marine Artillery, we are far inferior to the French in the quality, power, and number of guns. The late Ministry left Office without a single breech-loader in the Navy. The present Government has added somewhat about 550 breech-loaders, while we require about 3,000; but, at the present time, almost the whole of the vessels of the French Navy are supplied with breech-loading guns. It is a fact of vital significance that it is actually impossible for the Government to have the necessary guns now manufactured in this country within any reasonable time; and here I would observe that it is deeply to be regretted that Parliament was not asked long ago to establish a second Woolwich in the interior of England, free from attack by sea, and where guns and munitions of war could be manufactured; and that, in addition, inducements were not held out to private firms to establish and maintain the necessary plant for heavy gun manufacture.

As regards torpedoes, we are very far inferior to other nations. Torpedo boats are absolutely necessary in the new condition of maritime warfare. France has four or five times as many boats and torpedo ships as we possess; Germany has in hand, at the present moment, more than 100 of the improved type of sea-going torpedo boats; while England has only about 20 in all. There is not one at Halifax, Bermuda, Port Royal, Aden, Bombay, Trincomalee, Singapore, Sydney, or Vancouver Island, and there is not one at the Cape of Good Hope; but the Government has already ordered two to be sent to the Cape. It is not possible to provide torpedo boats in a hurry, and to arm them adequately, any more than it is to provide just when you want them first-class iron-clads. I understand that the German Navy will have attached to each iron-clad squadron torpedo boats as a floating auxiliary. The torpedo ram, the Austrian Minister of Marine has declared, is the battle-ship of the future. The Austrians have divided their coast into districts for torpedo flotilla defence. Have we any plan of defence at all?

Ships and guns require men, and I would earnestly call the attention of the House to the fact that the merchant ships of this country do not carry one-third of the apprentices which they carried formerly; and that, at least, 20 per cent of the seamen in our merchant ships are foreigners. Now, the Reserve of seamen for the Navy of France is five times as great as the Reserve for the Navy of England, and they are all trained men. The French Reserves of Marine Artillery and Marine Infantry are altogether numerically superior to what is possessed by this country. I have to point out another serious danger—namely, that our Navy is largely deficient in the supply of engineers.

Supposing, however, we had the ships, the cruisers, the torpedoes, the guns, and the men, the coaling stations abroad, which are to supply the necessary fuel for the vessels, are, to a great extent, undefended. So long ago as the year 1877 I read a paper at the Royal United Service Institution in favour of a complete telegraph system, the necessity for graving docks, and the absolute importance of the protection of our coaling stations. A Royal Commission to inquire into our Colonial defences was subsequently appointed; the Report of that Commission was completed two years ago; but nothing practically was done for the protection of our coaling stations and strategical positions of importance until the other day; indeed, I may state that Hong Kong was only ordered to be fortified in September last when *The Pall Mall Gazette* sounded the note of warning as to the state of the Navy. The instructions to fortify were then despatched by telegraph.

As regards graving docks, nothing really has been done, and at this moment we have no graving dock in India suitable for an iron-clad, or even for a large cruiser. We have no graving dock at any point between England and Australia on the Cape route suitable for the repair of a large iron-clad.

I would strongly urge the necessity for increased telegraphic facilities at strategic points, and upon the necessity of having an efficient Intelligence Department in the Navy, to procure and supply information to our naval commanders as to the armaments and movements of the forces of Foreign Powers.

But is it possible for this country to be suddenly engaged in war? Yes; it may happen through accidental circumstances. A short time ago there were difficulties between the French and the Chinese, at Hong Kong; British merchant ships were also being searched, and we were exposed to the chance of a rupture. The House will hardly believe me when I say that at that time we had not really any efficient modern iron-clad upon the East India and China Station; nor have we now; and that the force which we did possess there might easily have been overpowered by the powerful plated Fleet of the French Marine. We were also nearly involved in hostilities owing to the action of the French Admiral at Tamatave, not only with respect to Mr. Shaw, but in connection with the treatment of the British Consul and the Admiralty letters on board of a packet carrying the British Flag. I am bound to relate, as briefly as possible, the circumstances of the case. Captain Johnstone, of H.M.S. *Dryad*, was Acting Consul, owing to the death of Consul Packenham; Admiral Pierre took the British mails from the mail steamer *Taymouth Castle* when they arrived at Tamatave, instead of allowing them to be delivered on board the *Dryad*, and he placed armed sentries on the deck of the mail packet. He forbade the embarkation of mails from the shore except through the French flag-ship, and absolutely refused to allow the captain of the packet to receive Captain Johnstone's despatches for the Admiralty, unless they were first of all sent to the French flag-ship. The commander of the *Dryad* told the captain of the mail steamer to refuse; and having previously arranged a private signal of readiness he assured her captain that he would transfer his despatches to him from alongside, and take the responsibility of seeing his vessel safe to sea. The captain of the British packet then steamed past the French Fleet, went alongside the *Dryad*, took the Admiralty despatches on board, and then, avoiding the French ships, steamed out to sea by the north passage. A conflict might at that moment have taken place, notwithstanding the fact the *Dryad* was only a sloop of war, face to face with four powerful French ships, and one of them an iron-clad. I will tell the House more —the *Dryad* had nine guns, but orders had been sent out to that vessel not to fire eight of them, as they might burst. We must bear in mind that, when least expected, there may be a provocation to war, arising out of some acts of foreign officers or our own Representatives.

The House will understand that, in view of the Tamatave affair, I could hardly do otherwise than call the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the circumstances. This I did at the time, nearly a year and a-half ago, in letters to Earl Granville and the Earl of Northbrook. I warned the First Lord of the Admiralty of the absolute necessity of increasing our Navy, and that we were not sufficiently prepared for the sudden outbreak of war; and I pointed out that other nations were building several vessels with much heavier armour-plating and more powerful guns than we possess, and specially fitted for Channel work—in other words, to command the Channel. I reminded the Earl of Northbrook that ships of war could not be built to compete with these vessels in less than three years; and I urged him to consider what would happen to our Colonies, and where would be the shipping interests and enterprize, the readiness to invest capital, the confidence of underwriters, the spirit of the seafaring population in this country, if, through being unprepared, we were taken at a disadvantage, and even for a short time lost our command of the sea.

I might ask, is there any programme prepared for issue to our Naval Commander-in-Chief in the event of a sudden outbreak of war, or would each Admiral dispose of his squadron as he might deem best? Are the instructions ready at Whitehall for issue at a moment's notice? I have heard it stated that when our relations with Russia were strained some 13 years ago, the Russian Commander-in-Chief in China had sealed orders telling him what to do immediately on war being declared; but that the British Admiral was without instructions of any kind, and that his most anxious thought was how to protect our vast commercial interests and the coast at Hong Kong. I believe it to be true that a British Admiral on the Australian Coast was asked by merchant shipowners what he proposed to do for their defence in case of war with Russia? He replied —"He didn't know;" and to the question what the Admiralty would do, he said—"He hadn't the least idea!"

We are now spending millions in Egypt with a view to the control of the route to India; but what is the use of the route if we are not able to control it at sea? Is it not high time for us to consider another question—the question how to utilize and extend the Indian Naval Force maintained on the coast of India? For example, we have at Bombay two turret vessels 13 years old, which are useless for sea-going work, and in case of need there are no gunners to fight these. The batteries of Royal Artillery on shore would require to provide the crews in case of need—that is to say, we would have Royal Artillery serving afloat, while Royal Marines are riding on camels in Egypt!

This country requires absolutely and at once a largely increased expenditure on behalf of the Navy, in order to secure the protection of our coaling stations and the defence of our Colonies. The Democracy, it is thought, are indifferent to the value of our Colonies and impatient of taxation. I will read to the House a few words contained in a letter addressed to me from a working man since I spoke upon the Zululand Question. He says—

> "It is to our eternal shame that the Navy has been allowed to run down, and, should any danger overtake us, those who are responsible will have to answer for it as never men answered before. The defective state of our naval stations requires immediate attention, and the Democracy is awakening to the glorious inheritance we have in our Colonies, and the statesman whose policy is not strong enough and firm enough in regard to them will reap curses on his memory, whether Liberal or Tory."

Who is responsible for the present position of affairs? We must fix the responsibility somewhere; and I ask, is it the First Lord of the Admiralty, or the Naval Lords, or the Colonial Office, or the War Office, or the Treasury, or are we to blame the Cabinet?

In my judgment, we require extension and reorganization of our naval system; more iron-clads, more cruisers; more guns and more torpedoes; more men; fortified coaling stations and graving docks abroad, and a complete system of Home defence. I am satisfied that Great Britain should have a Naval Force sufficient to contend against any three Powers combined together, and double the Navy of France. Let us remember our history. Macaulay has told us of a time when—

"None were for a Party,
All were for the State;"

and he says this was "in the brave days of old." We have, as a nation, our world-wide interests to guard and our honour to maintain; and the country will expect that the Government and the House of Commons will take prompt and effective measures to preserve unimpaired our noble heritage of Empire and renown.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he agreed with every word that had fallen from the hon. Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie). His (Sir John Hay's) complaint of the proposal of the Government was that it did not go nearly far enough. He would be able to show that the number of iron-clads proposed to be constructed was by no means sufficient for the purpose for which they were required. The new cruisers were a most valuable addition, and they took a shorter time to build, so that it was the armour-clads he was most desirous to see completed. In regard to other matters, the immediate attention of the Department ought to be given to the construction of torpedoes to be employed by torpedo ships and at our outports. Instead of 50 torpedoes in the year, 50 in the day would not be anything like the number used in the case of war. He hoped that the Return now moved for would not be as inaccurate as that laid upon the Table by the Predecessor of the Secretary to the Admiralty. That Return was excessively misleading. It stated that there were 62 armour-clads, fighting and sea-going ships; but on analyzing the Return it appeared that of the 28 ships in commission only 15 were fighting and sea-going vessels. In the Return which had been presented, out of 62 armour-clad sea-going ships ready for action only 39 were not obsolete, and of these 12 were building. If they looked at the First and Second Class Reserve, they had 38 ships against 32 French. In the case of the First Reserve completed ships, out of 14 given in the Return only eight were prepared for the First Reserve. France had been doing what she ought to do in respect of her naval defence—making an exertion to keep ahead of other Powers. Germany and Italy, who had been allied against Austria, had 37 iron-clads between them. To have a Navy sufficient for our wants 26 additional iron-clads ought to be ordered, so that we might be able to defend our commerce, our Colonies, and India, and our own shores. These, in his opinion, could be built in five or six years; but instead of commencing the building of four or five iron-clads we ought to commence building 13. Instead of the £5,500,000 asked by the Admiralty, we required £14,000,000 for the Navy, spreading it over four or five years. The Navy Estimates in 1860-1-2-3 were £12,500,000. Of this £11,500,000 were spent on the Effective Service. It might be said he was asking for a large sum; but he could not think the country would hesitate to raise the Naval Estimates to the figure at which they stood from 1860 to 1863; for it must be remembered that £2,000,000 of the present £10,000,000 was a dead-weight. We were at the mercy of France at this moment. In China there were four French—*Bayard, Atalante, Triomphante*, and *La Galissoniere*—and only one British iron-clad, the *Audacious*. In the Mediterranean there were eight British iron-clads, and very good ones, and seven French. In this country we had a Channel Fleet, of which only two were ships that could fight. If France wanted to regain her naval superiority, she could telegraph to Admiral Courbet to stop fighting in China, then proceed to ram the *Audacious*, burn Hong Kong, Singapore, Colombo, Bombay, and Aden. At the same time, orders could be sent to the French Mediterranean Admiral to rendezvous with seven ships at Algiers, and to send one into the Suez Canal to block it. The Algiers Squadron could reach Liverpool three days before the British Squadron could arrive from Malta, and, sinking the defence at Holyhead, could summon Liverpool to pay £100,000,000 ransom, or burn it and Birkenhead; while the three coast-defence ships, sallying out, could bombard Brighton and destroy the shipping in the Tyne. That could be done before our eight ships in the Mediterranean could pursue and follow the French Squadron. There would be no difficulty in doing that, if the French Government pleased; but he did not suppose they were likely to do anything of the kind. But the burning of Liverpool, without the declaration of war, would be no worse than the bombardment of Alexandria and the burning of Foo-choo-foo. We ought not to be liable to such a danger. We ought to have such a Navy as would make it impossible, under any circumstances, that such a thing could be done. It must be remembered that within the last 50 years most wars had broken out without any declaration, and a country like this ought not to be left at the mercy of any other country. We ought to have a sufficient force in India, in China, and in the Eastern Seas generally, to protect our commerce; but would anyone pretend to say that we had such a force there now? It might be said that even if a few Indian cities were burnt, and if our commerce in those seas was destroyed, we should easily recover from the blow. But was that fair to India, who had been deprived by us of her Navy on the understanding that we undertook her protection? It was said with truth that the defence of this country and of her Colonies was a great undertaking; and he was glad to hear from the hon. Member for Perthshire that the Colonies would be willing to join the Mother Country in forming an Imperial Navy. He trusted, therefore, an appeal would be made by the Government to our greater Colonies, such as New South Wales, Queensland, New Zealand, and perhaps Canada, and that they would join in the construction of a great armour-clad Navy, which would assist to protect the whole of our Empire and our commerce at sea. What had been said about new guns was even more important than the ships. It was a startling fact that, of the 3,605 guns which it was said were necessary to arm our Navy efficiently, only 387 were actually in existence. No doubt we possessed a certain number of old-fashioned guns and old-fashioned ammunition; but if war were to break out our ships would have to fight the enemy, who would have the new guns under great disadvantage. He was glad that the country had at last awakened to the real state of its defences; and he trusted that, whatever Government was in power in the future, they would be kept up to the collar in this matter, and that the Navy would be made thoroughly efficient. A great deal of the fault lay in the alteration of the system under which the Navy was managed. During the last century the practice was to place the best Admiral at the head of the Admiralty, and to give him the command of the Fleet in the event of war breaking out. For 59 years of the 100, between 1705 and 1806, Lord Orford, Lord Torrington, Sir John Leake, Lord Dursley, Sir Charles Wager, Lord Anson, Sir Charles Saunders, Hawke, Keppel, Howe, St. Vincent, and Lord Barham were First Lords. He it was who informed the Treasury what sums were necessary to keep the Navy in a state of efficiency; and if he went to sea and was defeated we shot him, as occurred to Admiral Byng. That, however, was a system that was not acceptable to Prime Ministers; and after the battle of Trafalgar, and when the Navies of other countries had been destroyed, we gave up the practice, which had made our own Navy so efficient, of having a naval officer at the head of the Admiralty. When we gave it up the French adopted it, and the rapid increase of the French was due to that arrangement. Besides having a naval officer at the head of that Department, we ought to restore the Office of Master General of the Ordnance, who should be made responsible for the expenditure of the enormous sums obliged to be laid out upon patents. Under the old system the civilian First Lord was supposed to be advised by a professional First Sea Lord, who came into and went out of Office with his Party. Now, however, the First Sea Lord remained in Office when his Party went out; so that there was no skilled professional adviser to advise an ex-civilian First Lord in criticizing the shortcomings of the Party in power with reference to the Navy. It had also been the practice for the Sea Lord to resign Office in the event of the Government refusing to take the necessary steps for maintaining the efficiency of the Navy; and that was the course that Captain Berkeley had taken, and that he and Admiral Seymour had followed, when Lord Derby's Government refused to take their advice. The result was that they had been requested to resume Office, and that eight ironclads were left on the stocks when that Ministry resigned in 1869.

Mr. BRAND said, that it was not his intention to reply to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down, because he had no information with regard to many of the subjects on which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had dilated. All he could say was that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had as enormously exaggerated the power of the French Fleet in the Chinese Seas as he had underrated the strength of the defences of Hong Kong. His principal object in rising had been to reply to some statements which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), who complained that there had been some delay in the manufacture of guns for the Royal Navy. The right hon. Gentleman said that the design for the 43-ton gun which he signed in 1879 was not completed at the present time. The truth was, however, that the gun had been completed, and that other guns after the same design had been completed and tested. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman meant to say that although the 43-ton guns were on board some of Her Majesty's ships, yet, owing to difficulties connected with their loading gear, they had not been used. As far, however, as the manufacturing departments of the War Office were concerned the gun was finished. It was true that not one of the 63-ton guns was ready for trial; but the delay was owing to the decision arrived at in 1882 that those guns should be constructed entirely of steel. He believed, however, the gun would be finished by the end of the year. It had been said that the French were far beyond us in breech-loading guns for the Navy, and no doubt that was true; but the right hon. Gentleman must be perfectly aware that this country did not take up the construction of breech-loading guns until after France had begun to do so. There had been great difficulties to contend against in regard to them, for which the Admiralty was not to blame. The right hon. Gentleman had under-rated the capacity of the War Office to manufacture torpedoes, inasmuch as the manufacturing department had been able to turn out 200 Whitehead torpedoes per annum. There had been a great development in submarine mining, which might almost be said to be a new system of defence for our ports. It was hoped that arrangements might be made for the organization of a portion of the Volunteers and Militia for this service. He contended that the delay in the manufacture of ordnance for the Navy had not been of an avoidable character. The difficulties in the way of manufacturing the new ordnance had been almost overcome when the Ordnance Committee, in the Spring of 1883, decided that all guns for the Royal Navy should be made entirely of steel. A new test steel was established, and a great many rejections were the result. The "trade" in Sheffield could not supply the Department with steel ingots of the size and quality required. In November, 1883, Sir Frederick Campbell was commissioned to visit the principal steel factories in the United Kingdom, and subsequently those in France, with a view to its being ascertained what reasonable modification in the test would admit of the English trade producing steel that would be passed by the War Office Inspectors. Sir Frederick Campbell reported that if certain modifications were made in the specification there would be no difficulty on the part of the trade in producing the steel required. The Ordnance Committee accordingly recommended a revised specification, and some further modifications were subsequently suggested by the manufacturers, which had within the last few days been adopted by the Committee. The position now was that the steel trade was both willing and able to meet the requirements of the War Office with regard to steel forgings. A proposal had in the meantime been pressed by the Superintendent of the Royal Gun Factory to put up steel plant for forging heavy steel ingots at Woolwich Arsenal, but this had not been approved. The Secretary of State was of opinion that such a policy would be mischievous, and ought not to be adopted except under the stress of the most imperative necessity. They did not want to kill the trade, and if they set up the manufacture of these large ingots of steel at Woolwich Arsenal what would happen would be this—In years of great activity, when they had plenty of guns to make, they might be able to give orders to the trade; but when they came to lean years they would be obliged to keep the manufacture to themselves, and the trade would be strangled, so that there would be no trade upon which they could depend in times of great pressure. It was his hope and belief that what the French private trade could do the English private trade could do, if properly encouraged; and he declined to believe that where the French trade had succeeded the English trade would fail. There were 10 43-ton wrought iron guns to be completed next year. Of 9-inch guns four were actually completed, and 16 were in progress, making 20 in all. There were 172 6-inch guns practically complete so far as the War Office was concerned. The mounting, as the House was aware, was under the exclusive control of the Admiralty, as advocated by the right hon. Gentleman himself. Three 110-ton guns had been ordered from Elswick. There were also five 63-ton guns ordered, of which three would be ready by October 31, 1885. There were 15 12-inch guns ordered, of which one was ready now; two would be ready in March, 1885, and two more in the following October. The hon. Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie) stated that the Royal Commission had made its Report in 1882, and that nothing had since been done to give effect to its recommendations in regard to the protection of our coaling stations; the hon. Gentleman also said that the Government never sent to Hong Kong until after the appearance of an article in *The Pall Mall Gazette.* But they had sent these guns long before—namely, last June, in consequence of the recommendation of the General Officer at Hong Kong. In fact, there had been no delay on the part of the Government which ought to have been avoided. The Report of the Royal Commission was presented in July, 1882, and immediate steps were taken to consider that Report. In January, 1883, he obtained the authority of the Secretary of State to send an Engineer officer to Aden to revise the defences, the revision having become necessary owing to the progress of the science of artillery. He was disinclined to press forward the adoption of the measures proposed for the defences of these stations, for two reasons. First, because we were in a transition state as regards armaments. We were, in fact, re-arming the Navy. It was better to wait a few months rather than send out guns which would be obsolete almost as soon as they were mounted. They acted on the advice of the Inspector General of Fortifications. Then it was clearly inadvisable to defend these coaling stations as we defended Bermuda, Malta, and Gibraltar. To do so would involve a large expenditure, and the purpose rather was to defend the coaling stations against the attacks of single cruisers, and they had taken steps which would be quite adequate for that purpose. The advance of the science of artillery was to the advantage of forts rather than of ships. But there was no desire on the part of the Government to sacrifice efficiency, and there was nothing in these proposals which would prevent the extension of the works if found necessary in the future. Those proposals did not form a complete system of defences. Torpedoes would have to be provided. He was quite convinced that, when the scheme of the Government was fully considered by the Members of the Commission, they would agree that it was fully adequate for the purpose for which it had been framed.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM said, he had had an opportunity of visiting many of the British ports and coaling stations abroad, and thought it was evident that unless those places were sufficiently garrisoned they would, in the case of a war, be a source of great danger to the Empire. Whatever the outcome of the debate might be, they had ample evidence that the Government were thoroughly awake to the danger that was threatening the Empire. Whether the Government increased the number of ships so as to provide for the safety of the Empire or not, they had distinctly acknowledged the necessity of providing for the defence of the coaling stations and naval bases abroad; and they could not deny that both at home and abroad means must be provided for the local defence of the great British ports. A sea-going Fleet could not be relied on to defend its own coaling stations, or any fixed points. The essence of naval strength lies in the absolute freedom of the Fleet. Now, the defence of a port must ultimately rest on skilled and trained men. It was worse than useless to provide works, torpedo boats, and armaments for the defence of ports, unless, concurrently with the provision of those appliances, they also provided an efficient force and organization, suited to the works or armaments. A strong place with an insufficient and inefficient garrison invited attack, and insured the success of an attack, the result being that the works and armaments were turned against those who had defended them. Speaking of the works and armaments now about to be provided for a selected few of the coal depôts and strategic ports abroad, the Duke of Cambridge had said—

> "There is no use in the works and armaments if there are no men to put behind them."—(3 *Hansard*, [293] 1555.)

Field Marshal Sir John Burgoyne, in his evidence before the Royal Commission of 1860 on Defences of United Kingdom, in answer to Question No. 607, had also said—

> "My fear would be of establishing works at very considerable cost, and afterwards being forced to abandon them for want of troops."

Some time ago a mobilization scheme was published, and had since been carried out by the War Office. That scheme defined the place and post of every military organization on the outbreak of war. The posts of the Artillery, Cavalry, and Infantry, whether Regular, Militia, or Volunteer, were all laid down in this scheme; but there was no mention of such places as Malta, Gibraltar, Bermuda, Halifax, Aden, Singapore, Hong Kong, Mauritius, Simon's Bay, Sierra Leone, Vancouver, Jamaica, St. Lucia, &c., all of which were now provided with, or were to be provided with, works, armaments, or torpedo arrangements. At not one of those places did we maintain anything but skeleton garrisons. In some we had none. On the outbreak of war all would require war garrisons adequate for their armament and defence; but no provision had been made in the mobilization scheme. One of two things must happen when we had to defend ourselves. Either we must hold fast to the scheme and let go those keys of the ocean, or we must break up the scheme and chance a descent on our shores, rather than risk our command of the seas by placing in danger the bases of our Naval Forces and the centres of our Mercantile Marine. The country, therefore, ought to know what was the scheme of the Government as to this question of garrisons for the defence of Imperial strategic points abroad, and of skilled, trained, and disciplined men to work appliances for the defence of mercantile ports at home. The Duke of Cambridge in "another place," on November 13, 1884, the speech already referred to, speaking of the works and armaments of such places, said—

> "I am sure . . . . it will be found that more men are required to defend these works than we have now available. But sailors cannot be spared for this duty, and therefore soldiers are required to defend the works.—(3 *Hansard*, [293] 1555.)

Now, the size of the question was at once realized, when you considered that, roughly speaking, the Navy mustered some 58,000 men. You could not send Militia and Volunteers abroad; and if 58,000 be about the number required for the garrisons of these naval bases, it followed, when you put your mobilization scheme into force, you must destroy the efficiency of it by sending out of the country, and away from the posts assigned to them, about one-half of the Regular troops. Supposing you were attacked or forced into war before the cream of your Army could struggle down the Nile, where would you be? The mobilization scheme was based on the idea that we were a country, and not an Empire; and his opinion was that it would break down, and would not work in time of war. They might be told that forces raised locally at the places to be defended could form the garrisons, and thus avoid the necessity for using Regular troops. That was true with regard to our mercantile ports at home and our coaling stations and mercantile ports in our great Colonies; but, at the same time, local forces, to be efficient, required a due admixture of Regular Forces. But it so happened that the larger proportion of the coal depôts we were at last arranging to defend by works, armaments, and torpedoes were not situated in our great Colonies—such, for example, as those mentioned in the Parliamentary Papers recently laid before the House—Aden, Trincomalee, Singapore, Hong Kong, Sierra Leone, St. Helena, Mauritius, Jamaica, and St. Lucia. You could not rely to any appreciable extent on local forces, though you might supplement Regular troops by Native levies for manual and rough work. It would be sheer madness to spend money on works, armaments, and torpedo defences at any one of these places, with a vague idea that men raised in the places could provide the garrisons. Besides which, experience proved the necessity for abolishing local forces, such as the Gold Coast Artillery, and such-like local organizations. Fancy trusting heavy modern-rifled artillery to Malays or Kroomen, or putting a Whitehead torpedo into the hands of a West Indian nigger. It followed, then, that we required a certain trained, skilled, and disciplined Regular Force to provide a nucleus for local forces at the great mercantile ports at home and in the great Colonies, and a force for the defence of Imperial and strategic ports, to perform all the higher and important duties of defence where English local forces could not be raised of sufficient numerical strength. The nature of the work to be done in defending a port did not vary with geographical situation; the same sort of duty would have to be done by the forces provided, wherever the port might be. The work would consist of the management of artillery and of torpedoes secured by Infantry to resist land assault and capture. It would be of obvious advantage if the nucleus for local forces were drawn from the force supplying the garrisons, at positions where no local forces could be raised. Such a system would provide, amongst other things, for that varied experience, so essential to efficiency. It would be advantageous to the health of the force that periodic and frequent changes should be made to home and temperate climates of our great Colonies from tropical stations. The organization of the force required should admit of despatching small or large bodies to different places without destroying its efficiency. There was no such organization in the Army. The only organization that admitted of such dispersion without destroying itself was that of the Marine Forces. Why, look what our Marines were doing at the present time. They were scattered about the Fleet all over the world, and never lost touch. At this moment we had one battalion at Suakin, another at Suez, and a detachment working in the Dockyards at Bermuda. Some 6,000 in various-sized detachments cruising over the waters of the world, while 80 to 90 are bounding about on the humps of camels, on the road to Khartoum, and another 200 or so are marching after the crofters in the Isle of Skye. Here there is practical proof that we had one and only one organization adapted to the fulfilment of the varying requirements of the force which we must have, if our mercantile and coaling ports all over the world are to be secured. The following is the opinion of General Andrew Clark, R.E. :—

"With reference to the future and extended employment of Marines—I am perfectly indifferent whether they are called Light Infantry Marines or Artillery Marines—but any body having the admirable organization, the admirable interior economy, of the whole Marine Force—for Colonial occupation and defence. This is not a new idea with myself, but I believe I can trace it back somewhere nearly 25 years ago, when the question of bringing away the regiments of the Line from the various Colonies of the Empire was first started; and I think before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1858 or 1859, after I came back from Australia, I advocated the extension of the organization of the Marines on some similar system to our Colonies as being the most efficient, as it is the most economical, system that the Empire could have adopted. The necessity for this has still more arisen in consequence of the new organization of our Army. In former years it was not unusual for a regiment of the Line to go to a Colony and remain there 10, 15, or 20 years. Now, of the territorial system, of the short service system, I recognize the full advantages. Of course I know to a certain extent their weakness, but still to both systems I am myself an adherent; therefore I speak as an advocate of those systems when I say the introduction of the territorial system and short service into the Regular Army in England, even had we no such organization as the Marines—would necessitate our sooner or later creating that very organization; and I believe that instead of having a dark future for the Marines, as General Schomberg would lead us to believe, circumstances are now rapidly making it much more likely that there is a very good future for them on the extension of the same principles on which his grand old Corps is formed. In our smaller Colonies, especially taking those Colonies most valuable to us, and at the same time most difficult for us to control and defend—the whole of our Colonies to the Far East, reaching up to China—I have always advocated, and would advocate still, that the garrisons should be entirely Marines. Regiments of the Line, constituted as they are, are not the most effective agents now for Colonial defence, and they are most expensive in those positions, requiring as they do large civil departmental corps to be attached to them to make them at all efficient. On the other hand, as Major Moody has just said, you can move the Marines at twelve hours' notice, or less than that; without all the necessary departmental arrangements which are involved in moving a regiment of the Line, you can remove them 10 or 20, or 500 or 1,000 miles, knowing that their organization is of such a character that wherever they may go they can take care of themselves. That in the defence of the Colonies is a point of great economic value. Their organization offers another very great justification for their being employed in such a way. An Admiral, knowing every place where they are, on difficulties arising, whether amongst a civil population or by the approach of an enemy's fleet, could at any moment reduce his other garrisons and increase his forces at the menaced point. In our separate commands correspondence must take place, the case must be proved, and valuable time is lost before you can move any portion of the regiments, especially in parts of the world I have just spoken of. If there was one homogeneous command over the Marines stretching round the China Seas under one General or one Admiral, you would secure for the Empire a very efficient service, far more economical than the present one, and one which would especially meet the requirements of our Colonial Service."

The House and the country felt that though the Marines did all the hard work they got very little reward. He had pointed out in the House how the scientific training obtained at the cost of the taxpayer was not, as regarded the Marine Artillery, made a proper use of, and that both Marine Artillery and Marine Infantry officers possessing professional knowledge second to none were excluded from all responsible or high commands. Here, then, as regarded defence of mercantile ports and naval bases, was an opportunity of putting the right men in the right places with advantage to the Empire and to the force itself. It might be argued that if you so employed the Marines, they ceased to be Marines, and became simply Colonial troops, not available for sea service. This need not be the case at all, because the Marines, being at the headquarters of the naval stations, could be exercised on board men-of-war. The passages out and home of the frequent reliefs by small detachments on board men-of-war would afford ample opportunities of keeping the force efficient as Marines, and at the same time save the country vast sums for transport, which expense was, and must be, incurred if a military force were applied to garrison the naval bases abroad. The Army moved by batteries and regiments, and could not be accommodated on board war ships; the Marines move by detachments, and could be so accommodated. The Secretary to the Admiralty had himself proposed, in a pamphlet on Naval Reserves, published in 1871, to habituate the men to service afloat by giving them frequent exercise in launch and gun-boats; so he (Viscount Sidmouth) thought it was clear, if this contention held good, that the Marines ceased to be Marines, it would be the fault of the Admiralty, and of the Admiralty alone. There was enough, and more than enough, evidence to show that the question of garrisons for mercantile and coaling ports at home and abroad was a most serious and pressing question; and, further, that the Marine Force, if increased to the number required, afforded the only economical and effective solution of the problem. Without any increase of cost they could give Marine Generals commands. For example, under the system, their garrison at Halifax and Hong Kong would be Marine Artillery and Infantry under a Marine General, instead of a Line General. They would have one uniform and economical system at the naval bases throughout the whole Empire, with local forces affiliated to that force represented by the nucleus furnished by it to the mercantile ports at home and in the great Colonies. The House and the country had a right to know where the garrisons for the places it was about to secure and arm at great cost were to come from. It took time to train men for artillery duty and torpedo work; and unless the matter of garrisons was settled now, when the works were beginning and the armaments were being prepared they would not have the garrisons to defend the works, and their last state would be worse than their first.

Sir EDWARD J. REED said, he hoped the noble Lord who had spoken last, delivering, as he did, a very interesting speech on an important point, would not think it a slight upon him if he failed to pursue the subject which he had brought before the House. He was disposed to treat of a subject which was more familiar to him. In the first place, he should like to say that he, for one, was quite aware now, as he was quite aware at all times, that there was in the House and in the country a considerable and most estimable section of persons who were accustomed to regard all this extraordinary expenditure as extravagance. He did not wish to put himself in rivalry with any economists whatever; but he did wish to say this—that if he believed there was any element whatever of anything analogous to a foolish and senseless panic in the agitation which had led to the proposals made by Her Majesty's Government that evening he would separate himself wholly from it. He would even go further, and say that he sometimes took part with reluctance in movements in favour of additional expenditure, when he looked with so much dissatisfaction on the expenditure which at present went on. He had tried over and over again to call the attention of the House to the whole system of naval defence which was set up, a system which tended continually to have inefficiency devouring efficiency, ineffectiveness devouring effectiveness; and his belief was that, although he cordially assented to the broad and able statement which his hon. Friend the Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie) made concerning the responsibilities and the enlargement of those responsibilities which rested on the country, yet, at the same time, he believed that they wanted a great deal of reformatory action as well as expenditure. His predominant feeling that evening was this—that after that evening a heavier responsibility than ever would rest on those who were anxious to see the Public Service efficiently and economically conducted. He would even go further, and say that if the proposals of the Government had been so unsatisfactory as many persons feared they would be, and as he believed they were likely to have been up to a few days ago, he should have been prepared to follow up any Motion which might have emanated from either side of the House on behalf of the increase of naval expenditure by a further Motion requiring of the Government an improvement in its administration. He felt that evening many grounds of satisfaction. In the first place, having made a good many statements about the Navy lately, he was pleased to find that evening that the Representative of the Admiralty did not think it right or proper to call any of those statements in question. His hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty did that evening what had been done before, and what had been so thoroughly discounted as not likely to have much weight, even if he had insisted upon it, which he did not —he called attention to the number of ships this country possessed, and compared our number with France; but he did not, in his judgment, direct the attention of the House to those considerations which had especially led to this proposal for increased expenditure. He (Sir Edward Reed) felt considerable responsibility as well as interest in this matter. When, many years ago, he had the privilege of entering upon duties at the Admiralty the House had voted the money for the construction of five iron-clad ships with wooden hulls. He used all the efforts he could make—and they were successful—to get the Admiralty to forego their intention of building five wooden ships. They never built but two of the five, but substituted instead iron ships for them; and the consequence was that to-day his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty was able to count among the ships which he placed before the country as vessels of the British Navy a number of vessels which were of early date, but which would have been so completely decayed as to have passed away had they not changed from wood to iron. At the same time, he (Sir Edward Reed) thought it would be wrong for him in any degree to be a participator in the country being led to understand that those early ships, which were very valuable still for many purposes, were suitable vessels to compete with the modern vessels which had been built. He would now endeavour to tell the House why he agreed in asking an increase in the naval power of the country. The French were not as thoughtful as this country was in the early days of iron-clad ships, nor had they the convenience to build iron and steel ships which we had. Therefore, they went on for many years building largely of wood. A few years ago, however, they found the larger part of their iron-clad Navy decaying and passing away, and they applied themselves to the construction of vessels to take the place of those decaying ships. What was the state of the facts with regard to the French and ourselves at this moment? The French had been building, or were building at this moment, modern ships—and by that phrase he implied armour of more than 12 inches in thickness—they had built 146,000 tons of armour-plated ships, in every one of which the armour was more than 12 inches thick, and in nearly all of which it was more than 17 inches thick. He found great difficulty in comparing to the satisfaction of non-technical persons our position with the French in regard to those very powerful ships, for the reason that for many years past the Admiralty of this country had given up the system of armour-plating the whole displacement of their ships. He did not believe that any Member of that House would have the slightest difficulty in seeing that if a policy of that kind were pursued we must at some time find ourselves in a disastrous position. He had undertaken the unpleasant and painful task of holding up these facts to the public view; and he stated that approximately—for they could only give such figures approximately—against 146,000 tons of thickly-armoured French ships we had now only 61,000 tons. Were those who knew these facts to be reproached with creating a panic if they stated them openly? He hoped that no one would ever reproach him, or anyone else, for doing what they considered their duty. He was not one of those persons who believed that it would be wise in times of peace to bring up our defences to the highest point on the presumption that war might occur. The country, with its enormous productive powers, ought to be satisfied if it was defended against any probable disaster, and it might very well rely on its inherent power of construction to meet any contingency that might arise. He felt a reluctance to see public money expended on anything that could be quickly produced, and which could be dispensed with for the short time during which it could be produced. He should be wanting in what was right if he did not express his strong congratulations to the House on the proposals of the Government so far as they went. It certainly had been apprehended by many of those who took an interest in this question that the Government proposals would fall far short of those which they had explained to-night. He would like to compare them with the proposals which he himself, at the invitation of a number of gentlemen, had recently made. He proposed an expenditure of £6,300,000. The Government proposed an expenditure of £5,300,000, which carried with it £1,400,000 for guns. Four first-class armoured iron-clads were to cost £3,000,000; five belted cruisers, £1,250,000; 10 torpedo craft, £650,000; two vessels of the *Polyphemus* type, £300,000; and 10 first-class torpedo boats, £120,000. The proposals of the

Government differed only from his proposals in the following particulars:—He proposed five first-class armoured ironclads; the Government proposed four. He proposed that one should be built by contract, and he was glad to find that they proposed to build two by contract. He proposed five belted cruisers, and the Admiralty proposed the same. He found also, to his great satisfaction, that the Government had abandoned the idea of relying on unarmoured ships. He had often pointed out the danger of sending unarmoured cruisers into action in these days of tremendous shells; and he believed that the man who deliberately sent to sea to enter into naval engagements worthy of the name the sailors of this country mounted on steam boilers that any shell would blow to pieces should be strongly condemned, especially as the arming of these cruisers was only a question of money. A few weeks ago it was feared that the Government would propose a great addition to the unarmoured cruisers; and he was very pleased to find that nearly their total additional expenditure was to be in respect of vessels more or less protected by armour. The Government would themselves feel that whatever expenditure they went to upon these armoured vessels would be to them a source of satisfaction, and would operate to protect them against any unreasonable claims in the future. He was also glad to find that the Government proposed to build two new vessels of the *Polyphemus* class. The *Polyphemus* had to some extent been under a cloud; but he agreed with the Secretary to the Admiralty that the *Polyphemus* was a very useful ship. He had taken a trip in her before her boilers were altered, and even then she was a very fast ship that would have done very good service. Still, he was glad to know that the number of vessels to be built of this class was not large. Although the torpedo and the ram were very useful as auxiliaries here and there, he would not like to see a great multiplication of them, since the gun was, after all, that upon which they must mainly rely. Without guns they could never attack the shore, or reach, even at sea, any other vessels than those to which they were very near. The 10 first-class torpedo boats which the Government proposed to build were certainly not adequate. He should have thought that 50 torpedo boats might have been applied for. There was another part of the programme with which he was much disappointed. He regretted that the five belted cruisers were only to be of 17 knots, and he thought that the extra money would have been profitably expended in making these five vessels of 19 knots, and thus securing for their commanders the superior mastery which that speed would have given them. His hon. Friend (Sir Donald Currie) had referred to the use to which the Mercantile Navy might be put for war purposes. That had been a much debated question, and he could not agree with those who pronounced the Mercantile Navy entirely useless for war purposes. He believed they might, judging from the ships belonging to the hon. Member which he (Sir Edward Reed) had examined, be made very useful indeed for certain purposes in times of war. As regarde water-d tight bulkheads, they were exceedingly well provided. He was sorry to hear the Surveyor General of Ordnance say that certain guns had not been produced, because matters were in a transition state at the time, and that we were in a better position now than if the guns had been produced, because improvements had been made which could now be utilized; but if the argument was good for anything, it would hold good as an argument in not providing any guns at all; for improvements were always being made, and consequently we should always, to a certain extent, be in a transition state. Many of those who had been anxious to get the Government to increase the number of the vessels in the Navy had been anxious, at the same time, not to raise any question on the point of the system of construction. But he must revert to one question, because it had been made a matter of public consideration in a letter in *The Times* of that day. It was the question of the extremely limited amount of armour-plating of certain of the first-class ships. It seemed to him a parody upon ironclad shipbuilding to so much limit the armour-plating that an enemy going along, by simply injuring the unarmoured end, should be able to render a vessel completely useless and turn her topsy-turvy. He was at a loss to find any ground whatever for the course taken by Her Majesty's Government in treating the first-class ships of

Her Majesty's Navy in such a manner. He could be silent upon the subject no longer when naval officers, speaking with a sense of responsibility, spoke in the gravest manner of the danger of that type of vessel. He himself did not raise the question last week at the United Service Institution; but, the question being raised and open to discussion, it was taken up by the Navy; and he stood at that moment paralyzed at the thought of the general opinion that was expressed of those vessels. He mentioned the subject then for the reason that he wished to ask the Government to impose such an injury upon the Naval Service of the country no longer—and he thought he should not ask in vain. They had no right to play tricks with Her Majesty's ships; and if the Government did not abandon this system—that was, so far abandon it as to make every future ship safe—he should feel it his duty to ask the House to interpose between Her Majesty's Government and the Navy, which they undertook to protect, and to stop the building of such ships. He was at a loss to understand how even the proposals of Her Majesty's Government could satisfy the exigencies of the present position; but still he thought they had great cause to congratulate themselves upon the fact of the Government having come down with the programme as large and as wise as it was. He hoped the causes and the considerations which had led the Government to make their present extraordinary proposal in this extraordinary Session would also induce them to consider seriously, and with a view to a permanent enlargement, the Naval Expenditure of the country.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, he did not presume, as a layman, to be able to decide the many technical points which had arisen between the advisers of the Government on the one hand, and the large body of opinion which, on the other hand, said the country required something much more comprehensive than the scheme which the Government had unfolded. He would say, however, that he looked upon it as absolutely imperative upon the Government to place the Navy in such a state that there should not be even the whisper of a suspicion that they were not masters of the sea. It was idle to inquire whether they were equal to France in their naval power. They wanted much more than that, although he was not quite so sure that if the affair at Tamatave, in Madagascar, had led to a rupture with France they would have been able then to have given a good account of the Naval Forces of the country. And if they had been able to do so, would it not have been due to the *personnel* of their Navy, which they might always count upon being superior to any other country, rather than to the superiority of their ships or material? The Government stood self-condemned to the extent of some £6,000,000 or £7,000,000, and some of their own supporters even said that was not enough. He would, therefore, leave them to reckon with their critics themselves. He only rose to express his satisfaction that the Government had not allowed themselves to be led away by what he believed to be the interested cry which had arisen in some quarters on behalf of an increased expenditure upon plant at Woolwich for the purpose of manufacturing heavy steel ingots for great guns. He was very glad that that was not in the contemplation of the Government; and he could assure the Surveyor General that if only that security was provided which was to be found in a consistent and settled policy on the part of the Department, there would be no difficulty in obtaining a good supply of heavy steel ingots of any size for the Naval Service much cheaper than they could be produced at Woolwich. He had been informed of a private firm which had recently laid down hydraulic machinery capable of forging ingots of greater weight than any machinery in existence. It stood to reason that a firm of that sort, devoting its energies and resources to a greater variety of objects, should be able to produce objects to which it devoted itself cheaper and better than a Government Department. He was glad to be able to express, upon this point, his satisfaction with the programme of the Government, for it appeared to be based upon reasonable lines; and he hoped that this new Ministerial departure would not be departed from with the same haste which had characterized its acceptance. He also trusted that in future the Government would not listen to those who, when the question of naval supremacy arose, urged them to rely solely upon the cultivation of friendly relations with Powers who could be increasing their Navies only for purposes of offence rather than defence.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he should not have risen but for the speech of the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), who was almost the first Member who had that evening made an attack upon the Government as a Government; and he (Mr. Trevelyan) could not but spend a few minutes in deprecating, and, as he thought, in disproving, that attack. The hon. Member said that the Government were self-condemned by the additions to the Navy which they proposed. He could not agree with the hon. Member. The condemnation of a Government consisted in altering its policy. It was a bold Government that did so; but in doing so it condemned its previous policy. It was not condemnation when a Government enlarged its policy. Her Majesty's Government had announced that night an enlargement of a policy which it had not only been steadily pursuing, but steadily enlarging and extending, ever since it came to Office. If the Government were self-condemned by their proposals to add 2,000 or 3,000 tons to the iron-clad tonnage for which they were responsible, how deserving of condemnation must the late Government appear when it was borne in mind that the present Government had extended the shipbuilding of this country from 7,000 to 8,000 tons, from 8,000 to 10,000, from 10,000 to 12,000, and now from 12,000 to 14,000 tons. [Mr. Stuart-Wortley asked for an explanation as to repairs?] The question of repairs was an old one. He did not want to turn this into a Party debate. But did the hon. Member for Sheffield mean by his interpellation that there had been any backwardness in repairing our iron-clad Fleet? He could assure him, if he had been informed to that effect, he had been wrongly informed. Lord Northbrook's Government had been quite as careful to keep the fighting iron-clads in a state of proper repair, and fit for sea, as they had been careful to increase the iron-clad shipbuilding, which he thought, though not sensational, had been exceedingly solid and satisfactory. It would be presumptuous to take the words out of the mouths of the Members of the Government who represented the Department specially concerned with guns and powder; but he wished to emphasize and to supplement the interesting statement made by the Secretary to the Admiralty. The debate about the state of the Navy had been conducted for a long time with great energy and vehemence outside the walls of that House; and he wished to state one or two facts in the hope of inducing those who had read alarmist prognostications of our maritime future, and exaggerated accounts of our maritime present, to believe that the case against the naval policy of the Government had been overstated. There had, he admitted, been a time when France laid down ships very much faster than England; but it was before the present Government came into Office. In consequence, when, four years ago, the present Government came into Office, anyone who looked forward to 1890 or 1892 to the time when all these French ships should be completed, and should have against them only the iron-clad ships which we had at that moment laid down, might, indeed, have been in a state of very considerable patriotic uneasiness. But since then the situation had greatly changed, and it had changed so fast in the right direction that even those comparisons with France need not fill them with any very great apprehensions. Was the House aware that since the year 1881, while the French had laid down four iron-clads, we had laid down eight? And on the top of these eight iron-clads Lord Northbrook now had announced that we were going to lay down four more. Therefore, if they looked to the fleet which had been laid down since Her Majesty's Government came into Office, when the ships were completed, if there were no others, the English would have 12 iron-clad ships and the French only four. That represented what the present Government had been doing to correct any deficiency which might have existed in the iron-clad Fleet when they entered Office. It ought to be a satisfaction to the House and the country not only that at this moment they had a much better anticipation of the relative state of the French and English Navies, but that that anticipation was increasing very rapidly in the right direction. The hon. Member behind him (Sir Edward Reed), who spoke with a great knowledge of the subject and with great common sense, had congratulated the Government on their proposals being good, so far as they went. The hon. Member compared them with his own proposals, which were those of an enthusiastic gentleman who was under no Ministerial responsibility, and who was not trammelled by the necessity of asking for increased taxation, and he admitted that they went nearly as far as his own proposals did. Such approval of what the Government had done and were doing carried infinitely more weight than any number of declamatory sentences about the state of our Navy as compared with that of France. They had been told that with their immense commerce, extending all over the world, they would be at the mercy of any hostile privateer; and that, especially in swift ships, they were very much behindhand. They were told, with very great truth, that the old-fashioned ships were now archaic and out of date, and that nothing which did not exceed a certain rapidity of movement would be a valuable fighting and cruising ship in the future. Well, what was really the case? The French had five ships whose speed was over 16 knots an hour; but we had no less than 12. Four of these 12 were of an extremely powerful type—namely, the *Mersey*, the *Severn*, the *Thames*, and the *Forth*. Four were of the *Leander* type, and four of the type of the *Inconstant*. They had heard a great deal of the *Esmeralda;* they were told that Chili had a ship which would blow our own ships out of the water, and they were asked—"Why not get a ship like the *Esmeralda?* Now, he confidently asserted that the *Mersey*, the *Severn*, the *Thames*, and the *Forth* were more formidable vessels, and that with those four cruisers, which we were going to build, the original ship would bear no comparison whatever. There was no use in saying—"You cannot count those ships that are unfinished." But it was by counting the unfinished French ships that Gentlemen tried to make out their case. When we had those four powerful fighting vessels we should have 17 ships, of which five would be equal to third-class iron-clads, and nine would be formidable fighting vessels; and not only that, but we should have 19 ships of over 16 knots. His hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) was not in the House when he began his speech; but he was glad to see his hon. Friend now in his place, and to offer him his heartfelt thanks for having described in terms that never would be forgotten the criminality of sending men to battle in ships which could not be trusted. Reference had been made to the torpedo boats. His hon. Friend had mentioned 10 torpedo boats as the number to be laid down in the first year; but in the special Vote of £3,100,000 it was proposed to build 30 torpedo boats, and that in addition to what was done in the Navy Estimates; so that he presumed that the first-class torpedo boats would be among the ordinary services estimated for, as they had been in the past, and he hoped and trusted more liberally. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) alluded to the diminution in the number of our bluejackets. That was rather a large question; but he must remind the House that it was by no means certain that a diminution in the number of the men we called bluejackets meant a very serious diminution of our fighting strength. He saw it stated that 15 years ago we had 60,000 of these men, and that now in this great crisis we had only 56,000. But the crews that were wanted to man the ships were incomparably less now than they were in past times. Fifteen years ago there were in commission fighting ships cruising in the Channel Squadron which carried 1,100 men, of which 600 were bluejackets. That was the ship of the past, the typical ship 15 years ago. The *Thunderer*, which answered to a 90-gun ship in the old days, carried, he believed, not more than 110 bluejackets, and, perhaps, not 200 men altogether. We had always a large number of men kicking their heels in our guard-ships and depôt ships; and behind that Reserve there were other large Reserves of a more irregular description, not counting the Coastguard, which was a very important one. But when we came to spend £700,000 on a ship like the *Inflexible*, which carried only 370 men, against a ship like the *Duke of Wellington* 15 years ago, which carried 1,100, of which 600 were bluejackets, it was ridiculous to contend that a slight reduction in the number of men was not compensated by an enormous increase in the strength of our vessels. As to the Marines, he would be very sorry to give up the special qualities of those men, who, in many respects, were sailors as much as the bluejackets. That admirable quality which made them so different from the Marines of other countries could only be gauged by sending them to sea, and if they were sent to sea it could only be done in limited numbers. It was proposed to devote £800,000 to the fortification of Colonial harbours. That sum of £800,000 was the price of an iron-clad, and every one of those Colonial harbours would require an iron-clad to defend it if it had not adequate works to secure it against the attack of two or three cruisers. The upshot of the whole was that the Government had determined in the course of the next five years to devote a little over £5,500,000 to strengthening the Navy, to naval guns, to naval building, and to making certain cheap and useful works, which would have the advantage of setting free a more than proportionate amount of our naval strength. That would form a very considerable addition to the defences of this country; it would follow on the old lines; and he was proud to have the acknowledgment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite and of his hon. Friend that the money would be spent in the right direction.

Mr. GORST said, that the House was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman again; but he thought he had brought into the debate to-night a little of that warmth which was required in another and more belligerent Office. The right hon. Gentleman was severe on the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) for having condemned the Admiralty. But the chief gain of the debate to-night was that the Admiralty had condemned themselves, because they had admitted that the Navy was not in an efficient condition, and that a large extra expenditure was necessary in order to put it in that condition. He appealed to hon. Members who had been present at former naval debates whether his noble Friend the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), and Members on both sides, had not repeatedly urged on the Government the inefficient condition of the Navy; and whether they had not been always assured by the Admiralty that there was no ground whatever for alarm, and that everything was managed in the best possible way by the best possible Department? It was a great change to have the Secretary to the Admiralty to-night addressing the House in such a very different tone. He did not believe that the Admiralty had found out anything which they had not known for a long time past. In a former discussion on naval affairs it was an open secret that the Admiralty had made application to the Treasury for a sum variously estimated at £500,000 and upwards, and that it was refused. He referred to the matter himself, and he challenged the Secretary to the Admiralty to contradict him if it was not true; but when the hon. Gentleman spoke later on in the debate he carefully avoided doing so. Whether it was that the Admiralty was growing stronger, or that the Treasury had more leisure to look into the requirements of the country, or whether the action of the newspapers and speeches out-of-doors had opened the eyes of the Treasury to the feeling in the country, it now appeared that the Admiralty had leave to tell the country that a great deal more expenditure was necessary. Having admitted that so far they had something to be grateful for, he must say that he had listened to the declarations of the Government with very little satisfaction. He had asked himself the question—What practical result was the country going to gain that evening? The practical result was absolutely *nil.* The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) had come back, a kind of Rip Van Winkle, to these naval debates. He evidently thought that the House was engaged in discussing a Vote; but the fact was that it was engaged in nothing of the sort. The House was not asked to vote a single sixpence for the Navy. He thought the Government should offer some explanation why, if they held the same opinion that they now did as to the state of the Navy, they allowed five months to elapse before doing anything to bring the Navy into an efficient state. The conduct of the Government was inexplicable and self-condemned. They now admitted the great necessity for expenditure upon our naval defences, yet they did not propose a single Vote for the purpose. All that they had done was to come down to the House and throw dust in the eyes of the public by telling them what they were going to do in their Naval Estimates for 1885. The Secretary to the Admiralty had sailed out a number of iron-clads and cruisers and torpedo boats; he had given a very pleasant vision of the Navy of the future; and he (Mr. Gorst) had been particularly entertained by the iron-clads, which in the course of the hon. Gentleman's speech multiplied like Falstaff's "men in buckram." At first there was one iron-clad, then there were four, and then there were five.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY explained that there were to be two iron-clads laid down in the Dockyard under the ordinary Estimate, and there would be two iron-clads built by contract.

MR. GORST: Then there were to be two extra ships, and not four, as the Secretary to the Admiralty had led them to believe. The House and the country ought to be made to see that the whole of this debate had been, on the part of the Government, mere moonshine. Having admitted the urgent necessity for increasing the naval defences of the country, they had given no effect to the views entertained by the country on the subject; but only held out vague promises of some additions to the Estimate of next year.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY observed, that the Naval Department had been engaged as actively as possible in preparing plans; and as soon as they were completed the vessels would be ordered.

MR. GORST said, it was to be regretted that the Admiralty did not show its earnestness in the matter by proposing a Vote. He was quite certain that the Admiralty might rely on the cordial support of both sides of the House in any efforts it might think proper to make suitable provision for the naval defences of the country; and he was equally certain that if the Admiralty neglected its duty it would incur the serious condemnation of the people of this country.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON remarked that the discussion that evening had been of a humiliating character for both sides of the House. It was extraordinary that, after spending about £11,000,000 a-year, they should be told that the Navy was utterly useless, helpless, hopeless, and in a miserable condition, and that their only salvation was to vote £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 more. If all this money was really wanted there must have been some neglect previously. It was a confession that there had been some failure in what had been done before in the Admiralty. It was clear that both Parties in the House were to blame in the matter. In 1871 the Prime Minister said—

> "Indeed, there never had been a time when our country had been so secure in her naval superiority."

And in the same year Earl Granville quoted Commodore Roberts's statement of—

> "Our Navy's immense superiority to all the other Navies with which he was acquainted."

The present Secretary to the Admiralty had also said—

> "Our Navy is superior to the united Navies of the world."

It was extraordinary that 13 years after they should be told that it was necessary to spend this large sum of money, and that at a period of such depression. They had been told over and over again that France was making such tremendous preparations that we must make preparations to meet her. He, however, had seen a statement, which he had every reason to rely upon, showing that the assertion that France was largely increasing her Naval Force was not well founded. The truth was that, on an average of the last 20 years, France had been spending one-third less on her Navy than we had done. It was said that people were waiting to suddenly rush upon us and invade us; but, in his opinion, the existence of that danger had not been satisfactorily proved. He looked upon the preparations we were about to make, not as defensive, but as offensive. When the Volunteer movement was first started the Volunteers took for their motto—"Defence, not defiance," which was a satisfactory proof to his mind that both the standing Army and the Navy were to be used for defiance, and not defence. He had no sympathy with those who said that they did not care about the Army, but that we ought to have a strong Navy. If our Navy were strong it would let loose the Army, which would be used to slaughter the Chinese, the Zulus, the Afghans, the Egyptians, and the Arabs. He should like to know what this strong Navy was for? What were we afraid of? Perhaps the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) would inform the House. It was clear that we did not fight strong people now; we only fought the weak ones. It had been said that expenditure depended upon policy, and he should always protest against a policy which involved an increased expenditure upon armaments. He objected altogether to a policy of keeping up an Army for the sake of attacking people with whom we had no quarrel. He knew very well that there were many Members of the Government who took the same view of this question that he did besides the hon. Member for Scarborough. He knew, however, the unfortunate position in which Her Majesty's Government were placed, and that it was no use asking them to stand up against this crazy panic which had been got up by the Press and the platform. It was a misfortune to the country that the Government should be so strongly influenced as it was by the Press and the platform. The fact was that no Government was able to stand against the public opinion of the country. He regretted that they were not able to stand against the force of public opinion when public opinion was false, and he only regretted that that false public opinion did exist. What interest had the people in keeping up these enormous armaments? Their interest was all the other way, and the whole of this panic had been got up by the writers in the Press, anonymous people whom nobody knew. What had the Press done for this Government? In the early spring it had compelled them to send out Gordon on his absurd mission, and now it had compelled them to send out this equally absurd expedition to Egypt, where our soldiers were engaged in slaughtering people who the Prime Minister had said were fighting for their freedom. It was a pity that the Government could not withstand the hysterical shrieks of a certain portion of the Press. This increase in our armaments meant no good to the people of this or of any other country; it meant outdoor relief to the aristocracy, as the right hon. Member for Birmingham had said. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Who denied that? He had thought that that expression embodied a political canon which was generally accepted. This increase of our armaments meant higher wages to the men in the Dockyards; it meant contracts to manufacturers and large profits to great shipowners. But it also meant having a weapon ready with which to go into evil enterprizes, because "having the power to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done." Thus, when he was lamenting the bombardment of Alexandria, a friend of his had said—"Why, having our iron-clads there, you would not prevent their doing something." The result of this increase in our armaments would be increased taxation and increased suffering to the people. Speaking at Warrington in 1868, the Prime Minister had warned the people against being misled by the cry of "efficiency." The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "If you intend to have any limit at all put upon the expenditure of the country, it is high time that you should stand upon your guard against 'efficiency.' Efficiency in itself is a very good thing, but efficiency in the mouth of a Minister who wants to find an excuse for a great increase in the public charge is a plea which ought not to be admitted without a great deal of careful scrutiny. The result of my experience is that, when there is a disposition to spend money, it is invariably discovered that the Services are inefficient. The next thing is that money is spent. Then the next thing to that is, that those who have spent the money declare the Services to be now efficient. That would be all very well if that were the end, but that is not the end; the next thing to that is that somebody else comes in and says the Services are not efficient—and then they spend more money to make them efficient. And then, again, they say that they are efficient; and in this bewildering circle you are led round and round, while no fact is brought to a state of certainty except one, that is the augmentation of the public charge. . . . . For the last 15 years we have been doing nothing but arming and re-arming, building and re-building, thinking we had found a better method of building ships, thinking we had found a better method of constructing guns or small arms, rushing with precipitate haste at the idea of the moment, and before the idea of the moment had been fully embodied, in a vast public expenditure, and in the new form of armament, finding that some other fashion or pattern was superior, and that the whole thing has to be done over again. What is the lesson of common sense under those circumstances? It is this: to proceed with moderation. Of course, when you know something of better arms or better ships, you must endeavour to set about getting them; but do not throw yourself into a fever for the purpose."

He (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) protested against our going on in this mad rivalry with the other countries of Europe, who, declaring that they were Christian peoples, maintained 3,500,000 men in arms on a peace footing, as it was called, and spent £166,000,000 a-year upon armaments. The Government might, before making this statement, have proposed to France some scheme of mutual disarmament. Such a policy had been advocated by Bentham, who said—

> "Whatsoever nation shall get the start of the other in making the proposal to reduce and fix the amount of its armed force will crown itself with everlasting honour."

Sir Robert Peel, in 1841, also said—

> "The true interest of Europe is to come to some one common accord, so as to enable every country to reduce those military armaments, which belong to a state of war, rather than of peace. I do wish that the councils of every country—or that the public mind and voice, if the public did not—would willingly propagate such a doctrine."

But such a policy would, of course, be scouted by all the fighting men of this country, who believed in brute force, and not in argument and reason. It would also be condemned by the Jingoes, and by all those politicians who liked nothing new. Having regard to the general lines of the foreign policy of this country, he was driven to the conclusion that there was a great deal of truth in the words of a German writer, who said that after 19 centuries of Christianity the religion of Christ had yet to be tried. At one period the doctrine of peace and conciliation was adopted by many Members of the present Government when they proposed to refer the Alabama Claims to arbitration; and that noble policy was approved by all who believed that Christianity was not a sham. In his judgment, the policy of diminishing our armaments and trusting to reason instead of brute force would be acceptable to those persons whom we were about to enfranchise. Hodge was coming; hon. Members had heard his step yesterday and again that day. He did not know whether Hodge would be a Christian; but if Hodge was getting only 15*s.* a-week he would grudge any portion of that sum being taken from him by increased taxation for the purpose of slaughtering his fellow-workmen in other parts of the world. In conclusion, he expressed a hope that this step on the part of the Government would mark the high tide of our reckless and foolish naval and military expenditure, and that the new-born freemen would exercise their influence in order to put a stop to a policy so senseless and so injurious to the highest and best interests of the country.

LORD HENRY LENNOX: I do not think there is any subject which could engage the attention of Parliament on which I might with more certainty be expected to address the House of Commons than that which is engaging our attention to-night; because it is perfectly true that for many years past, and long before the question engaged the attention of hon. Members in this House generally, or of the public out-of-doors, I have tried, as far as I could, with my single voice, to show the Government that they must inevitably come to the point at which they have arrived to-day. I confess that I am unable to give a cordial approval to the proposals which have been made by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty. I look upon it that the position of the Government in reference to this question is altogether inexplicable, for I find from the remarks of the Secretary to the Admiralty, and I took down his words, that they are going at once to make plans and enter into contracts in order to build new ships, and that they are to be met by liabilities incurred by Parliament next spring. To my mind that course simply means the incurring of liabilities in the name of Parliament which Parliament has not yet sanctioned. I do not know whether the immediate exigencies of the case justify it; but, at all events, that is the condition of things. Her Majesty's Ministers are going to engage in liabilities which Parliament has not yet sanctioned. I join with the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) in congratulating my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) on having emerged from the privacy of the Duchy back again to his old element in connection with the Navy Estimates. I could wish that the right hon. Gentleman had been present at this moment, because I have many quarrels to pick with him, and quarrels which I would rather pick with him face to face than after he has retired from the Bench opposite. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman, I must say, has gone nearer in the direction of bringing Party into this debate than any other hon. Member on either side of the House who has spoken to-night. The right hon. Gentleman said, among other things, that French ships were being laid down very fast at a certain period when he was in Office. Now, that was the very period when, whenever the right hon. Gentleman addressed a popular assembly in this country, he denounced me as the author of the fabulous stories and ideas which have prevailed in regard to Foreign Navies. At Bury, in Lancashire, and when addressing the jovial brewers of Burton-upon-Trent, the right hon. Gentleman held me up to supreme ridicule as an alarmist and a panic-monger. At that time he told those credulous beings—I am glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman is now back again in his place—at that time he told them that our Navy was armed with the best guns possessed by any Power in the world; and on another occasion he stated that the ships which I ventured to put forward as being advanced by the French Government were nothing more nor less than paper ships. We have to-night, however, seen the Government come down to this House to propose, without any sort of pressure except the pressure of public opinion, not a Vote, I am sorry to say, for there is no Vote of money proposed at all, but to give a *quasi*-promise on the part of the Board of Admiralty that next spring they will spend certain millions of money in adding to the strength of that Navy which I have so long endeavoured to strengthen. I must say, also, that although at that time the right hon. Gentleman was very hard of belief, what is more, he has never had the goodness to correct the unfounded assertions he made with regard to my mis-statements—that is to say, he has never yet said that at that very moment when he was announcing that the English Navy was being armed with the best guns in the world—that at that very moment there was not a single breech-loading gun in the Naval Service at all. The right hon. Gentleman has never done me the honour to correct the mis-statements he made as to the course I took, or to admit that what he then said was not really borne out by the facts of the case. I do not wish to quarrel with the right hon. Gentleman for what occurred years ago. Since then he has been reposing on a bed of roses in Phœnix Park, from which he has gone into the *otium cum dignitate* of the Duchy of Lancaster. But the right hon. Gentleman said to-night, when one of my hon. Friends behind me spoke of the late Government and their repairs, that the Conservatives had really done nothing in the way of repairs. Now, Sir, I have got the figures here before me, and I should like to show the House what they are.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I beg the noble Lord's pardon; and I am sure, when the noble Lord hears the correction I desire to make, he will be glad that I propose to make it. I did not say that the Conservatives had done nothing in repairs. On the contrary, I admit that the repairs carried out by the Conservative Government formed an extremely valuable contribution to the efficiency of the Navy; but I stated that the repairs at that time were not excessive.

Lord HENRY LENNOX: I accept the right hon. Gentleman's explanation; and if the country knew that that was what the right hon. Gentleman meant it would save me the trouble of reading the statement which I have here as to the repairs effected from 1874 down to 1880 and up to 1884. In point of fact, the repairs of the late Government amounted to £4,640,503, or a yearly average of £928,101; whereas the present Government spent in the repair of iron-clads and other vessels, from 1880-1 down to 1883-4, the sum of £3,288,357, or a yearly average of £822,000, against £928,000 spent by their Predecessors. Therefore, I was naturally surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that repairs did not enter into the question at all. I admit that I am one of those who think ill of the proposals of the Government. I confess that I do not believe in the proposals of Her Majesty's Government. I believe that this is a sort of attempt to meet public opinion—a sort of attempt to show, in deference to public opinion, that there is such a thing as requiring them to devote themselves to the condition of public affairs. Why are we here to discuss the condition of the Navy at this abnormal time of the year? I certainly do not consider that the Government have consulted anything like the actual necessity of the Navy, and I want to know this—If our Navy is, as it has been represented to be, consistently and persistently, by every Member of the Government Official Bench in this House and in the other House for the last two years—if it is everything that can be required for the safety of the Empire—if the First Lord of the Admiralty is so situated that he would not spend £5,000,000 even if he got it—I want to know why we are assembled here to-night to discuss this question? I will not go into the question of a comparison between French and English ships, for this reason. I think the careful and statesmanlike speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) must, once for all, put an end to any doubt or hesitation as to how we stand with regard to the Navies of the world. If my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty had been present, and could have heard that most interesting statement recently made by my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff, I believe he would have been convinced, once and for all, that, unless an immediate addition is made to our Navy the French Navy will be, to use an official expression, "in dangerous proximity to our own." I doubt not only the inadequacy of the proposals of the Government, but I also entertain grave doubts as to the fitness of those by whom the proposals would have to be carried out. We always judge of trees by their fruit, and I judge the Admiralty by the way in which they have carried out their policy in the past. Since I had the honour of taking an active part in naval affairs I have had to deal with four or five Secretaries to the Admiralty. My impression is that we have never had one for more than a year. They have always drifted to the Phœnix Park, or some other place; and the result has been that we have had in recent years, to a certain extent, a limited acquaintance with at least four or five Secretaries to the Admiralty. Now, I should like very much to give the House some idea of the sort of promises by which the House of Commons—and not so much the House of Commons as the people of this country—have been deluded by the various Representatives of the Admiralty in this House. In 1882 the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) promised that the *Agamemnon* and the *Ajax* should be ready for sea in that year. The *Ajax* is still incomplete, and the *Agamemnon*, although she has been commissioned, and is on her way to China, I do not believe that she is really fit for sea. I would ask the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to this matter, because it is a serious question. I can prove that this House voted money in 1882, as it has voted money over and over again within the last four or five years, for certain purposes, to which purposes it has not been applied. Where the money has gone I know not; but the result of its employment has certainly not been visible so far as the service of the country is concerned. In 1881 the Secretary to the Admiralty told us that the *Shah* and the *Raleigh*, two of our best frigates, would be refitted with breech-loading guns; but neither the *Shah* nor the *Raleigh* has yet been completed. In 1882 we were told that the *Bellerophon* would be ready for use and fit for service. She was not finished in that year, and she is not yet fit for service. In the same year we were told that the *Hercules*, which I think my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff knows something about—and she is certainly one of the most valuable and useful ships ever sent to sea—was to be refitted, and instead of carrying her old armament she was to be supplied with a broadside of 18-ton breech-loading guns. That was in 1882. Two years have since passed away, and although the money was voted for refitting the *Hercules*, she still remains as she was, with muzzle-loading guns instead of breech-loaders, no more ready for sea than she was in 1882. I mention these facts in order to show the gullibility of the House of Commons. In 1882 the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) was Secretary to the Admiralty, and he was quite eloquent on the requirements of the Navy. He told us we wanted a great ship—a new ship altogether—a new *Polyphemus*. This new *Polyphemus* has been specially designed by Mr. Barnaby, the Chief of the Naval Construction Department at Whitehall, under the immediate direction of the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Cooper Key. She is to be plated with 10-inch armour, and the Secretary to the Admiralty told us in proposing her—

> "If all goes well she will prove to be both a cheap and an apparently serviceable vessel."

All I can imagine is that all did not go well, because we have never heard more of that ship for which the money was voted by this House. From that day to this we have never heard more of her than if this panegyric had never been passed upon her. I may go further, and tell the House that next year another Secretary to the Admiralty—number three in the present Government—promised that 241 breech-loading guns would be completed. In 1884—in March last—my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) went further, and stated that he had supplied, or would supply, 400 breech-loading guns to the Navy, and that in addition there were under construction for the Navy three 110-ton guns, four 63-ton guns, and three 43-ton guns, besides a large number of smaller guns in various stages of progress for land and sea service. What was the complement of men assigned by the Secretary to the Admiralty—Number 3? The hon. Gentleman came down, in this very year, 1884, and stated, with reference to this promise of 241 guns made by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War—

"The progress made during the past year is not to be measured by the number of guns actually manufactured. . . . The advance made towards settlement of patterns and types is the most important matter, and in this I am glad to say an immense stride has been made during this year."—(3 *Hansard,* [286] 379.)

The next point I have to bring before the House is one which my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty has touched upon to-night. I really was quite surprised to hear the hon. Gentleman talk of torpedoes as a new necessity, because I remember that a few years ago the hon. Gentleman expressed the most reasonable, the most sensible, and, if I may be allowed to say so, the most statesmanlike views as to the future of the torpedo. In 1883 the Secretary to the Admiralty said—

"Torpedo vessels are scarcely inferior in importance to fast cruisers. A combined attack of numerous torpedo vessels would be formidable, and perhaps fatal to the largest iron-clads. They are being largely built for all the principal nations of Europe."—(3 *Hansard,* [279] 104.)

That was what was stated by the hon. Gentleman two years ago, and speaking recently at Portsmouth the hon. Gentleman alluded to these torpedo boats as being destined to play a very important part in the warfare of the future. He said that, while Germany had only one large iron-clad building, she had recently expended a sum of £850,000 for the purchase of 70 torpedo boats. "The French," said the hon. Gentleman—

"Are also expending large sums annually on torpedo boats."

It would, indeed, have been interesting and highly satisfactory if the hon. Gentleman had given us a numerical comparison as between ourselves and other nations in the matter of torpedo boats. "If," as the hon. Gentleman says—

"Our great industrial capacity would give us a great advantage for rapid construction,"

why, I ask, have not the Board of Admiralty before now availed themselves of that great industrial capacity? The unfortunate part of the matter is that while we allow France, Russia, Germany, Italy, and all the other Powers of the world to go on building these torpedo boats, we allow our own industry to remain idle, and take no similar steps towards strengthening our Fleet. To show the House how we have been governed by the various Secretaries to the Admiralty who have come down to move the Navy Estimates, I may say that two years before the hon. Gentleman the present Secretary entered upon the Office—namely, in 1881, the right hon. Gentleman the then Secretary to the Admiralty came down to the House and stated that measures had been taken for carrying on the task of providing our Navy with a full equipment of torpedoes and torpedo boats. The right hon. Gentleman added, now nearly four years ago—

"It will interest the Committee to know that we have already 19 first-class torpedo boats, each armed with three Whitehead torpedoes. . . . The second-class torpedo boats, 60 feet long, might be carried on board our battle-ships and principal cruisers. They are armed with two torpedoes, and there is talk of altering them to carry machine guns likewise. Their speed is marvellous. . . . Of these boats we have 18 actually built, and we are building 30 more."—(3 *Hansard,* [259] 1395.)

Where are they now? I learn that the Secretary to the Admiralty promises to give us this year something like 29,000 tons extra of armour-clad ships.

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: No; 9,000 tons.

Lord HENRY LENNOX: 9,000 tons altogether?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Yes; 9,000 tons of armour-clad ships.

Lord HENRY LENNOX: Now, Sir, I want to show, when the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty tells us he is going to give the country 9,000 tons more of armour-clad ships, what it is that he means by 9,000 tons of armour-clad ships. What is it that he means? Because the right hon. Gentleman who was the most recent Predecessor of my hon. Friend in the Office of Secretary to the Admiralty spoke as follows in this House last year:—

> "There could be no doubt that tonnage was a wholly artificial unit, and it might perhaps be thought desirable to get rid of this system of calculation altogether."

He confessed "that the statement was one which it was very difficult to understand." The right hon. Gentleman went on further to elaborate that statement, and he said in March, 1884—

> "The effect of this mode of computing is, that if, as a ship advances towards completion, it becomes apparent, as, unfortunately, it frequently does, that her cost will exceed the Estimate originally formed, it follows that what has been called a ton was not really a ton, and that when the ship is completed we shall have built a greater number of so-called tons than are comprised in the total weight of the vessel."—(3 *Hansard*, [286] 372.)

Exactly what I have said. The House is led to believe in the Estimates that so many tons are to be built in a year, and that so many have previously been completed. But the result is that nothing like the tonnage the House is asked to pay for has been built. If a ton weight of hull is not a ton, it is the duty of the Admiralty to devise some means of measuring the progress which shall be intelligible to the House. The House has been lulled by statements as to the amount of tonnage to be added to the Navy year by year, and hence the natural surprise at now finding that there are such deficiencies in ships. If the ship cost more than was originally estimated, and approved by Parliament, the House should be taken into the confidence of the Government and informed of the cause of the increase, or otherwise there can be no financial control. I have a Return here which shows the actual production of the Dockyards in 10 years; but I know the House does not much like Returns, and I do not, therefore, often trespass upon its patience with them. It is not often that we can get a good audience for a naval debate; but, at any rate, I have a Return here which goes to show what a ton really is. I am sorry that I do not see my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) in his place to-night to take part in the debate, because this is a matter in which he has taken special interest. The Table I have here has not been prepared with any Party view. It extends over 10 years, and it, therefore, includes the Administration of my lamented Friend the Earl of Beaconsfield as well as that of the right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister. Now, the amount of tonnage as estimated and ordered by Parliament in those 10 years was 88,471 tons, and the Admiralty actually built 73,311 tons, showing a deficiency of 15,160 tons. But, unfortunately, according to this document, which tells how much tonnage was built in each ship, I find that in these 10 years, instead of 88,471 tons, the number of tons really built was only 66,806. Therefore there was, including the deficiency admitted by the Admiralty, a real and gross deficiency of 21,665 tons at least of armour-clad ships, or equivalent to some four or five ships of the latest or *Conqueror* type. Then I say that if the Admiralty cannot manage to arrange about the tonnage, so as to show what they are going to order, there ought to be a different system introduced altogether; and I am surprised that my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, after hearing all that his Predecessor stated upon the matter, has not provided some new arrangement by which he is able to tell the country how many tons of hull the Admiralty have been able to build in the iron-clad ships for which the sanction of Parliament has been obtained. I have another grievance, and a very serious grievance it is. I will not go into the waste of money by the present Board of Admiralty. I have here the orders given at Whitehall in regard to construction. Probably there are very few Members in the House who are old enough to remember a pamphlet which I wrote in my youth in regard to an irresponsible Board of Control. That pamphlet was directed against the organization of the British Museum; but I was swallowed into the British Museum and made a Trustee. I only mention the circumstance to tell you that the views I now hold in regard to irresponsible Boards are not views of yesterday or the day before, but views which I formed long ago in reference to the British Museum, and afterwards as Secretary to the Admiralty. The objection I have to the Board of Construction at Whitehall is to its want of system. I have often expressed that view, and the more I express it the more I think the view is right. I say that the Board of Admiralty, in their designs for the ships of the future Navy, did not consult public opinion, nor did they realize the requirements which rested upon them. I say that every ship they bring out—every line-of-battle ship—is with them an experiment, and to the country a very costly experiment. Many of the designs which emanate from the Board of Construction at Whitehall are condemned by naval officers, who have had the opportunity of seeing them, even before the ships were in existence. I say more than that—namely, that in the Board of Construction at the Admiralty, at the present time, in the ships they have designed, the speed put down is seldom realized, the water-line is repainted over and over again, and although the money is voted for ships by the country, the designs of the Construction Department are rarely, if ever, carried out. I can assure the Government that I am not speaking in any Party sense. The Return I have just given to the House extends over 10 years, and it includes the late Government as well as the Government of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Look at the work of the Construction Department. Some of the ships will not steer, or, at all events, are so extraordinarily erratic in their movements as to give very little satisfaction. Another class—the *Tourmaline* class—have had to be rerigged from one end to the other. Another class—the *Comus* class—had such very small speed, and such a small armament, that we cannot really count ships of that class among the strength of the Navy at all. I have for years past objected to the organization of the Constructive Department of the Admiralty. It is an irresponsible Board, in which surprising appointments are often made—men efficient as designers, business men not being so important as other considerations. I object to entrust such a Board with the expenditure of the vast sums of money which the Government are proposing to-night, although they are to be spread over a period of five years. What does the name of the Board of Construction at Whitehall sound like? Constructors know what their business is and what they are about. Now, I fancy that there is only one man on the Board of Construction who has ever been a constructor at all, or who has designed or superintended the construction of a ship. This question of construction takes me to another point. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister must take great interest in anything which involves the expenditure of so large a sum of money as our Dockyards. I do not hesitate to say that at present the Dockyards turn out better work than any firm in the world. Of that there can be no doubt; but, managed as they are now—extravagantly managed as I think they are—these Dockyards cost the country more money than they ought to cost. There is an officer, or I should rather say there was an officer—because I believe, as far as his duties go, he is non-existent—there was an officer called the Surveyor of Dockyards, a most imposing title, and if that officer did his duty in that state of life he was fitted for, he would be one of the most important persons in England for economizing the public money and securing a proper and sufficient control over the Dockyards of the country. But I believe—and, in fact, I have been told for a certainty—that, as at present arranged, and as at present filled, the Surveyorship of the Dockyards is a mere sinecure, having no influence whatever on the proceedings of the Dockyards. Last year the then Secretary to the Admiralty quoted the Report of the Committee presided over by Sir Robert Hamilton, on Dockyard Incidental Charges. I am one of those who regret extremely that Sir Robert Hamilton has followed the example of two Secretaries to the Admiralty and gone over to Dublin, for he was one of those straightforward, upright, honourable, clever men, from whom, whenever they give attention to any subject, we are quite sure to have valuable service. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has always been a good friend to the Naval Service; and, notwithstanding all the financial exigencies of the country, he must know that England must have a Navy. Therefore I would appeal to my right hon. Friend to see what he can do to remedy these anomalies in the organization of the Board at Whitehall, which controls, or rather miscontrols, the management of the Dockyards. Again, belonging to the Admiralty there is what they call an "Intelligence Department." One would probably suppose that the members of the Intelligence Department are employed in obtaining information which is unknown to the world generally. It is, therefore, absurd to announce the names of the members of the Department who should be all over the Continent inspecting Foreign Navies and obtaining information instead of walking the London Clubs. The Navies of the world have been increasing year after year, and yet no notice has been taken of the fact; on the contrary, both in Parliament and out of Parliament Her Majesty's Government have scouted everyone who told them that the French Navy was creeping up to our own. There can be no doubt that the Navies of the world have been rapidly increasing, and the Government have no one to blame but those who have misled them, and who have cried out that there was no danger when the Navy of Russia could really block us out from the Black Sea. If another Eastern difficulty should arise, what would be our position? I repeat that the Government have no one living to blame but those who have so misled them, and who have cried out to them that there was no danger when they knew themselves that their house was all but on fire. We know that the Chief Constructor of this irresponsible Board went over to France, and came back again. He went over there only last year, and I presume that he went with his ears closed and his eyes shut, since I understand that he has returned and reported that there is not the slightest danger. Within a year of that announcement we have this abnormal Sitting of the House of Commons—an abnormal Session at an abnormal season of the year—to sanction the expenditure of millions of money in order to put us on a footing of equality with that very French Navy which the Chief Constructor came back and said did not exist. In the face of all these facts I should be very sorry to entrust the expenditure of the money for which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is responsible to hands so incompetent as the present Constructive Board of Admiralty. I maintain that there ought to be some independent inquiry in order to look into the matter, and to satisfy the country what should be the normal condition of the British Navy, so that the Navy should not be subjected to these panics and to these sudden changes, but that we should know what is the proper condition of the Navy from the present time forward. I must say that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer tried to do that some years ago with much effect. He laid down what was to be the least amount of tonnage added to our Navy with safety to our Colonies and our commerce every year. I want to know what has been done since? Twelve years have passed, and I want the Prime Minister, or whoever may think it worth while to take the matter into consideration, to institute some independent inquiry, in order to look into the classes of ships, the number of our men compared with those of the French Navy, the question of the guns which are promised and provided for the Service, and to decide once and for all what is the minimum amount of money that ought to be voted annually in order to keep the British Navy in the position which it ought to occupy among the Navies of the world. I hope I have not trespassed too long upon the time of the House. I have now been for something like 10 years constantly engaged in bringing this question before Parliament. I have discussed it both in Parliament and out of Parliament almost alone. I have brought it forward on these Benches when there have been probably not more than four Members in the House. Notwithstanding, I have boldly asserted my view that when we see Foreign Navies coming close to ours it is necessary that there should be some exertion on our part to put an end to so dangerous a state of things. I have taken that course for many years, and I have undergone some indignity in consequence. I was first of all told by a right hon. Gentleman, when he was Secretary to the Admiralty, that we had the best guns in the world. I was told that the French ships were paper ships, and yet those ships have brought us here to-night to sanction a further expenditure of millions of money. Finally I was told, and among others by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, that no Administration could possibly enter into a comparison between the English and French Navies, because such a course would wound the susceptibilities of other countries. I have never, in all my life, entered into such minute comparisons between the Fleets of England and France as those which have been entered into this evening by the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) in "another place," and by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, who sits opposite to me. I do not care for all the slurs which have been cast upon me for doing my duty. I will only say that to-night is to me a very satisfactory night in my Parliamentary career; and I only wish that instead of hearing the announcement which has been made on the part of the Government this evening that they will sanction a certain amount of expenditure in the course of next year, that the House, instead of having you, Sir, in the Chair, had been in Committee, with the Chairman of Committees in the Chair and the Mace under the Table, so that we might be asked to vote the sum of money which I honestly and conscientiously believe to be necessary for the protection of the interests and the honour of the Empire.

Mr. PULESTON said, he did not propose to occupy the time of the House at any length at that late hour of the night; but he wished to echo the sentiments expressed by the noble Lord (Lord Henry Lennox) who had just spoken, and to whom the country was so much indebted for the manner in which the question had been pressed forward. Whatever dissatisfaction the House might feel at finding the question deferred until the tail end of this extraordinary Session, and whatever exception the Government might take to some parts of the speech of the noble Lord, it must be admitted that the noble Lord had done good service in constantly pressing the question upon the attention of the House and upon the country. He (Mr. Puleston) had listened with deep attention to the interesting statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty, and to his enumeration of all the ships which were to be built and the money which was to be expended in order to strengthen the Navy. It would go forth to-morrow morning to the country through the newspapers that some £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 was to be appropriated right off for the Navy; but that would by no means be a correct reading, because, as he understood the matter, out of that sum only a small portion was to be expended next year. Indeed, he was not at all clear that that portion would not be part of the ordinary Navy Estimates of the year. He, therefore, hoped that before the House adjourned that night that point would be made perfectly clear. It seemed to him quite possible that when they come together next spring, and listened to the Navy Estimates, they would find that the ordinary Estimates for the Navy included all this newly considered extraordinary expenditure, and that out of a total sum of something like £10,500,000 or £10,750,000 only some £200,000 or £300,000 could be really regarded as an additional expenditure upon the Navy. As a matter of fact, the Government, in the meantime, would have an opportunity of reducing here and increasing there, so that, in point of fact, the actual additional expenditure would be scarcely intelligible. He wished to have a distinct explanation upon that point, because, as the matter now stood, the House was given to understand that above and beyond the ordinary Navy Expenditure for the next financial year there was to be an addition of £1,250,000 on account of special expenditure, including what the War Office had to provide. Perhaps the Government would tell him whether he was correct in that assumption? It was also desirable to know what amount of money they were going to spend between the present day and the 31st of March; because, as it had already been put by the noble Lord, if they expended anything at all, it would be absolutely without the authority of Parliament. He confessed that he did not understand the position of the matter, and he did not think the country would understand it. It must not be supposed that he mentioned this point in any captious spirit; but it was a point which ought to be made a little more clear than it was at present. Although he desired that the Lords of the Admiralty should have full credit for everything they had done, and he would be one of the first to give them that credit, he did not want the House to separate until there was a distinct understanding as to what the Department was to get credit for. He would also like to ask whether in giving so small a proportion of the work to the Royal Dockyards—so small a proportion of the new work, and so large a proportion to private shipbuilding yards, the Government were acting upon the recommendations of the Departmental Committee? This Report was issued some time ago; but although he had had an opportunity of reading it, he was ashamed to say he had not yet done so. He understood, however, that its main conclusion was that the Royal Dockyards should practically be disestablished for all purposes connected with shipbuilding, and that they should be continued merely for the purpose of repairs. He looked forward to an opportunity for discussing that Report when the House came together in the ordinary way; but it would have been very desirable if they could have had that opportunity in advance of the discussion they had had that night. As they had not had it, it was necessary that he should call attention to a very important fact—namely, how far they were inaugurating a new policy of throwing on private shipbuilding yards a large amount of work which ought, at all events, to be done more cheaply and with more efficiency in Her Majesty's Dockyards. That was a very important consideration, and he hoped hon. Members would not think that his remarks were dictated by the fact that he happened to represent a Dockyard constituency. The House would know that, like his noble Friend the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox), he had endeavoured for some years to advocate what his noble Friend had been advocating that night, and what Her Majesty's Government themselves had now come forward to recommend. He recollected that, in the last discussion upon the Naval Estimates in that House, his hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) and his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) charged him and other Members, both personally and collectively, with having almost with indecent pressure, year after year, called for the expenditure of more money for the Royal Dockyards and the Navy. He was glad that these efforts had so far resulted in bringing the Government to the same point; and he hoped that, having now begun the work, the Government would continue it, and would also improve upon it. A great deal had been said that night, in the course of the debate, which should lead the House to fall back upon the old question of the organization of the Admiralty. A great deal turned upon the present effective organization of the Admiralty. Nobody was responsible, and because the First Lord was not a Secretary of State with a seat in the House of Commons a great deal of misunderstanding was continually arising. His own opinion was that there would be a great deal more efficiency in the Department, a great deal better work done, and more systematic organization in connection with the First Lord and the other officials of the Board of Admiralty, if the Board were placed under the direct control of the House of Commons. Of course, he was not going to import any Party tinge into the debate; but he would ask what would be thought, in view of the tone previously assumed by Her Majesty's Government in connection with naval topics, if he were to read now extracts from the speeches of the First Lord of the Admiralty, delivered no later than last Session, and compare them with the statements which had been made that night by the Secretary to the Admiralty? If those who condemned the policy of the Admiralty were wrong last Session, the proposals now made to the House by the Admiralty itself must be very wild indeed. His own opinion was that the Admiralty were very wrong last year and in previous years, and that they were much more nearly right now. He congratulated them most heartily on the view they were now taking on the question; and he congratulated his hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) on the fact that almost the whole of his excellent programme was now being carried out so far as it had been foreshadowed by him. He was glad to find that that programme was to be so closely followed. The speech of the Secretary to the Admiralty showed that the Government were spending less on the Navy now than they were spending on it 10 or 20 years ago, when they had nothing like a tenth part of the same coast line to defend, and when they were able to do with a much less powerful Navy than they required now. The commerce of the country was infinitely smaller than it was now, and fewer territories had been annexed. A great deal had been said about annexation, but he noticed that even now, as in the case of New Guinea, the process of annexation was going on, notwithstanding the fact that the Government were constantly denouncing the system. Although they denounced it one day they adopted it the next; and with every new annexation, whether it was New Guinea or any other territory, there was necessitated an increase of the means of defence. What he called upon them to do was to spend the money of the country now, in order to avoid the necessity of spending much larger sums hereafter. He thought there could be no greater fallacy than giving to private Dockyards a large amount of the work which the Royal Dockyards were able to do, and for this reason—that the more efficient they kept the Dockyards the more able they would be to rely on their own work, their own plant and plans, and their own people in a time of emergency. In the words of the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) last Session, they ought to rely very strongly on the efficiency of the work done in the Dockyards, and he did not concur with the hon. Member in attributing inefficiency to the Dockyards. All he would say was that if the cost was greater in the Dockyards the fault must rest with the manner in which the Admiralty managed the Dockyards; and if the work was not done as efficiently in the Dockyards as could be done elsewhere, the fault must entirely lie at the door of the Board of Admiralty. He did not believe that the work would be done more efficiently or more cheaply in private yards than in the Royal Dockyards. There were many other points he should like to touch upon; but he would not occupy the time of the House at that hour of the night. He would, however, remark that when they were discussing a question of expense and urging economy, they could still afford to spend at the present moment £1,500,000 upon new Admiralty buildings. Surely that expenditure might be spared, and there were many savings of that kind which might be effected rather than curtail the expenditure which was absolutely necessary to obtain the efficiency of the Navy. In previous discussions a comparison between the English Fleet and the French Fleet had strongly been deprecated by the Government; but, on the present occasion, the Secretary to the Admiralty had taken the opportunity of speaking his mind very freely upon that subject. Indeed, every Member who had spoken upon the Treasury Bench had entered into a similar comparison, and it was the text of every speech delivered by every hon. Member who had taken part in the debate. No doubt when they came to consider the actual figures they were startling. He trusted that the discussion which had taken place that night would not be lost upon the House, or upon the country, or upon Her Majesty's Government; and he would only express a hope that the Secretary to the Admiralty or the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give them the A B C of what the Government proposed to do—in the first place, whether they proposed to spend money without the authority of Parliament; whether they proposed not to spend any at all until the 31st of March next; how much of the expenditure which had been foreshadowed was to be considered part of the ordinary Naval Estimates of the year; how much was to be considered an addition of the ordinary Navy Estimates of the year; and whether the ordinary Navy Estimates were to be kept entirely independent of the statement which had been made that night?

Mr. PARNELL said, he understood that it was proposed to spend a sum of £3,085,000 upon the Navy, in addition to the ordinary expenditure estimated in the Estimates for the coming year; that this expenditure was to be spread over a series of years; that it was to be used for the purpose of building some 30 vessels of different classes; that 24 of these vessels were to be built in private Dockyards by tender; and that the remaining six were to be built in the Naval Yards belonging to the State. He wished to ask, in regard to the distribution of the tenders amongst the private Dockyards, whether care would be taken to insure that the Dockyards in Ireland would get a fair proportion of this expenditure? He understood that, with the exception of one eminent firm, that of Messrs. Harland and Wolff, of Belfast, there was no other Irish firm of shipbuilders on the Admiralty list for tenders, and that, consequently, the other firms of shipbuilders in Ireland, some of whom were capable of tendering for the smaller class of vessels, such as the torpedo boats mentioned in the Statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty, were, practically speaking, shut out from competition. So far as Messrs. Harland and Wolff were concerned, they had not, though on the Admiralty list for tenders, been fairly treated, or received their share of the Admiralty work in the past. Now, he knew very well that this was not especially the fault of the Admiralty or of the Government. One never got anything in this world without asking for it; and it so happened that the English shipbuilders were nearer the centre of power, and had been able, thus, to represent their claims more actively and effectively than the Irish, and hence it had happened that the Admiralty had not distributed their work in a fair proportion in Ireland. He wished to say that Messrs. Harland and Wolff, the Belfast firm to which he had alluded, were perfectly capable of contracting for the class of vessels called "modified scouts," and also for torpedoes. There were, he understood, to be nine of the former and 10 of the latter built by tender in private docks, and the firm of Harland and Wolff were perfectly capable of executing orders for these two classes of vessels, although, perhaps, they might not be able to contract for the heavier class of vessels. He would also remind the House of the fact that there was a firm at Cork known as the Passage Docks Company. He did not suppose that it had ever attracted the attention of the Secretary to the Admiralty; but it was capable of doing good work. No doubt the work of the Company had hitherto been upon a comparatively small scale; but they had employed until recently, when the Admiralty work was taken from them, 400 men. Of course, as compared with some of the establishments in England, this was only on a very small scale; but he was told that the firm managed by Messrs. Brown and Craig was capable of tendering for the smaller class of Admiralty work, and there ought to be no difficulty in their being able to lay down the lines of a torpedo boat. The question of the engines and machinery for the torpedo boats did not enter into the calculation, that being, he presumed, a speciality. This firm had been specially badly treated. As he had said, the Admiralty work had recently been taken away from them, when they were perfectly capable of executing a vast deal of the work which was taken elsewhere by the Government. Repairs of vessels damaged on the Irish coast, for instance, had recently been effected in England, instead of being done at Cork. Work for the Haulbowline Docks had recently been constructed in England, instead of being given to the Passage Docks Company. There was, he understood, altogether, just £4,000,000 to be spent on the contemplated work of the Admiralty; and he put it to the Government whether it was not fair and reasonable that the firm of Harland and Wolff, and the Cork firm he had alluded to, should, with any others that were equally capable, be afforded the opportunity of doing some of it? He thought they were entitled to a fair share of the expenditure in Ireland, and that some pains should be taken by the Admiralty to seek out a class of work which a modest engineering and shipbuilding company, such as the Passage Docks Company, would be capable of executing. Care should be also taken to extend fair play in this matter to the very able and energetic firm of shipbuilders known as Harland and Wolff, who were the builders of the White Star Line of packet ships, and were able to build clippers and first-class steamers with any firm in the world. A fair proportion was all he asked for. If he were to argue on the basis of the contribution which Ireland made to the Imperial Exchequer—a contribution of £12,000,000, or one-tenth of the total Imperial Revenue, Ireland would claim that of the £4,000,000 about to be expended £400,000 ought to be spent in that country. No doubt the Admiralty would say that large shipbuilding establishments were not numerous in Ireland, and that the Irish yards were not able to deal with the larger class of work; but that was no reason why they should not have their fair share of the rest of the work. He trusted that the Board of Admiralty would take a little pains, and evince some desire to encourage and promote the manufacturing industry of Ireland, by giving them such work as their establishments were capable of executing.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that up to that point the discussion had been carried on by official and professional Members, with the exception of his hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir

Wilfrid Lawson), and his hon. Friend the Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie). He (Mr. Illingworth) was not for one moment going to deny that the Government had been scared, and that it was almost impossible for any Administration to withstand the pressure which periodically came upon it. It was tainly to the credit of this Administration that on several occasions they had heroically contended against a spirit which was now prevalent in the country. Instead of extending war and complicating matters further they got them out of a great difficulty in Afghanistan, and they also endeavoured to do so in the Transvaal. But he began to despair that any Administration would be the means of elevating the public sentiment in this country, or in Europe at large. All Administrations seemed, sooner or later, to become the mere instruments and victims of the war spirit, and of the madness which periodically came over their own and other nations. The noble Lord (Lord Henry Lennox), who spoke from the Front Opposition Bench a short time ago, begged that they might be told seriously and in a business-like way what annual expenditure ought to be incurred by the Admiralty in order to keep them in their proper position in Europe, and at the head of other nations in their fighting naval strength. He (Mr. Illingworth) never heard before such a suggestion come from the mouth of a rational being. They set out with the very modest assumption that their Navy was to be double, at any rate, to the strength of the Navy of France; and most Members did not hesitate to say it should be equal to the united Navies of the world. That might be necessary; but if it was necessary he confessed that the people of this country had before them a most miserable prospect. They said they would be content, and they wished Europe to be content, that their Navy should be equal to the united Navies of Europe. France had declined to regulate her own position by the standard set up for ourselves; and we were given to understand that while we had imagined our Navy was at full fighting strength France had gone on extending and increasing, until now we found ourselves scarcely stronger than a single Navy. He asked himself the question, and he thought the taxpayers of England might fairly ask themselves the question—and they must not leave the answer to any Administration, however good their intentions might be, or however loud their professions of economy might be—was there no hope for them than continuing this mad rivalry as between their armaments and those of other countries? If there was no hope for them other than that, he saw no limit to the demands which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might make upon them. The noble Lord (Lord Henry Lennox) had said this was an abnormal Session, and this was an abnormal time of the year, to consider such a question as that which was engaging the attention of the House. At the close of the last Session of Parliament they were assured by the Prime Minister that, so far as the Government was concerned, they would seek to limit themselves, during the Autumn Sitting which they then contemplated, to the great work of extending the political rights of the people of this country. But already the House had been called upon to incur large expenditure in connection with the Expeditions to Egypt and South Africa; and, for his part, he thought it would have been better and more in harmony with the professions of the present Government if, in this instance, they had gone manfully into the question of Ways and Means. It would have been much better if, instead of indulging them to an increase of 1*d.* on the Income Tax, with the certainty of another increase, they had made a proposal to put 3*d.* or 4*d.* on the Income Tax, and really secured the Ways and Means for meeting the extraordinary expenditure they intended to incur. But he was in hope that in that House and in this country—placed as they were in an infinitely better position for an effort of the kind than any other nation of Europe—a cry would soon be raised to the people of Europe to see if they could not get their Rulers to control and check in some degree this Expenditure, which was ever on the increase, and which was bearing down the masses of the people. He confessed he was often depressed at the hot and cold moods in which he found the House. At times there was a begging and praying for a trifling relief on the part of the most important interest of the country—he referred to the agricultural interest. He remembered that at a time when agricultural depression had by no means reached its present condition, an influential Member sitting on the Opposition side of the House pleaded for a grant from the Imperial Exchequer, a temporary and immediate grant of £100,000, asserting that that would be a real and substantial relief to the agricultural interest. If such be the case, if the distress was so deep and so general, if it was not confined to the agricultural, but affected, more or less, all the interests of the country, he (Mr. Illingworth) confessed his regret that the Government had found themselves obliged to bow to the warlike spirit, and to come to Parliament at that moment for such an enormous expenditure as was now projected. Besides, no Member of the Administration could rise in the House and honestly say that when they had incurred that expenditure the country would be in any stronger position than it was in at that moment. Did anyone believe that when it was known in Europe that they had undertaken this expenditure there would be no stimulus given to the spending capacities of France, and of Germany, and of Russia, and of Italy, and of the other Powers? Why, this rivalry had no limits and no ending; it had no termination except in the impoverishment of all the toiling taxpayers of the civilized world. Apparently their own country was to be no exception to the general misfortune and misery. He knew that that was an inopportune moment for detaining the House, and he apologized for having said so much; but he confessed that he earnestly hoped that when next year they were called upon to find the Ways and Means to meet this increased expenditure, there would be other and more powerful voices than his own holding out to the overburdened taxpayers of this country some hope that something would be done to reach the people of Europe; because of one thing he was convinced, and that was, that not only in this country, but in France and Germany, and other countries, nine out of every ten people were seriously concerned at the direction in which things were going as indicated by this proposed outlay. He admitted he was almost like one crying in the wilderness, for there seemed to have been nothing but glorification all round. It had given him, a Member of the Liberal Party—loyal to every principle it held, and loyal to the Administration in every good work it engaged in — anything but satisfaction to hear the present proposals of the Government. Not only on that occasion, but on many occasions connected with their military policy and expenditure, he had received a shock which he could scarcely describe to the House.

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, he did not wish to detain the House at any length at that hour (12.30) of the night. With regard to the observations of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), he would only point out that, compared with the resources of the country and with the vastly increased quantity of their trade all over the world, he did not think any patriotic Englishman would consider that the sums that were required by the Admiralty were excessive. With a trade all over the world amounting to an annual turnover of £900,000,000 sterling, what could they do, in the face of the enormous armaments of other nations—what could they do, except endeavour to protect themselves in the best way they could? He would not attempt to answer the observations of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Illingworth) any further; but there were a few remarks he desired to make upon the course of the debate. In the first place, he ought to say that he did not wish to start in the debate any controversial topic. He was rather struck with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), who said there was no change in the policy of the Government—that the policy of expansion had not changed its programme. He (Mr. Egerton) did not cavil at that expression, although one might argue that a policy which came down with a demand for £5,000,000 spread over a considerable number of years was rather a startling expansion of the original programme. But whether it be an expansion of the original programme or not, the fault he found with the whole scheme of the Government was that they had no security at that moment that any part of the suggested programme would be carried out. At that moment they were asked for nothing. No hint had been given to them that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would shortly ask for any Ways and Means to carry out any part of this programme. They were entirely dependent upon what might take place next year, and what might take place in an entirely new Parliament which would meet in 1886. So far as the Admiralty could be bound, there was no doubt they were bound, as he took it, to the demand for £800,000 for shipbuilding in 1885-6, and also to a demanding of £800,000 for the defences of their coaling stations, or £1,600,000 in all. £825,000 was the total for the defence of their coaling stations, of which they would ask for £400,000 next year. £400,000, he believed, would also be asked for next year for naval ordnance. £1,600,000, therefore, was the total amount to which the Admiralty could be bound until the Dissolution came. It was quite impossible to say what view the next Parliament would take of the responsibilities which the Admiralty said they were about to incur. That was not a very satisfactory state of things. He should have preferred that the Admiralty should have come down and honestly stated that they required, within the next four or five months, a certain sum, and a certain further sum in 1885-6. But they had chosen to take another course, and the House must, of course, bow to their decision. The programme which they had set forth was, in his humble opinion, on the whole, a very satisfactory one. It concurred very much in its details with the views which were entertained by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed); and, on the whole, he (Mr. Egerton) thought the House would agree that it was a very satisfactory programme. He should like to say one word as to the observations which fell from the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff upon the question of armoured ships. Now, that had always been a very moot point between the Director of Naval Construction and the hon. Gentleman (Sir Edward J. Reed). He (Mr. Egerton) did not wish to enter at length into that controversy; it was too heavy a subject to start upon at half-past 12 o'clock at night; but he should like to point out to the House that, in spite of the observations of the hon. Gentleman (Sir Edward J. Reed), there was a good deal to be said in favour of the unarmoured ends of ships. That type of ship was decided upon, if he was rightly informed, before he (Mr. Egerton) or his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) had anything to do with the Admiralty. It was decided on upon the recommendation of a Commission or Committee, he was not sure which it was. He believed that type of ship was not entirely an emanation from the brain of the Director of Naval Construction; but it was approved at the time it was decided on not only by the Director of Naval Construction, but by a considerable number of naval officers. It was perfectly true that naval officers had recently condemned that type of ship. There was no doubt about it, because they uttered their opinion very freely at a meeting which had been referred to by the hon. Member; but, *quot homines, tot sententiæ.* He was not afraid to say that if naval officers were canvassed, a considerable number of them would be found of opinion that the type of the *Inflexible* was not a bad type of a fighting ship. Whether that was so or not, he thought—though he did not wish to quote himself as an authority—that it was very desirable that the ships which were now to be built should be armoured all through. If it was a mistake at all, it certainly was a mistake in the right direction. He was perfectly satisfied with the programme of the Admiralty in that respect. Now, there was another point on which he should like to say a word or two, and that was the vexed question of guns provided by the War Office for the Admiralty. That had always been a point of the very greatest difficulty. He confessed that his own opinion had always been that if it was practicable, which was rather doubtful, the Admiralty should be empowered to get their own guns. He was not sure whether that would turn out to be practicable; but, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, he thought there would be very considerable advantages in it, because it would get rid of all the existing friction between the Navy and the Army. As an instance of that friction, he might quote what occurred during the Conservatives' tenure of Office. What was the case when the Nordenfelt gun was invented and brought before the notice of the English public? The Admiralty were very anxious to obtain that gun, and at length, after experiencing the greatest difficulty, they did obtain it. He was bound to confess that the Ordnance Office of that date threw very considerable obstacles in the way of the Admiralty obtaining guns of that pattern, the fact being that the Ordnance Department of the War Office had in stock a very considerable number of Gatlings, and they did not like them superseded by an entirely new type of gun. No one in the Ordnance Department denied that the Nordenfelt was superior to the Gatling; but as there were so many Gatlings in stock, he supposed the Ordnance Office thought the Admiralty ought to take them. He only quoted that as an instance of the friction which went on occasionally between the two Departments. He passed from that point to that of the strength of the Navy. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) had said it was an almost endless expenditure—that if they were going to make their Navy double that of France, and equal to the combined Navies of the world, other Powers would, of course, embark upon an unknown and a limitless expenditure. He (Mr. Egerton) did not think there was any chance of any such thing. He believed that if they made their Navy practically equal to any combination of two great Naval Powers they would have done quite enough, and that was, in his opinion, broadly what any Board of Admiralty should aim at. When he was out of Office he took some pains to ascertain what kind of force would be necessary on a sudden outbreak of war with any great Naval Power. He would not go at any length into the figures he drew up; but, briefly, it appeared to him that at a sudden outbreak of war they ought to have the power of immediately placing in commission, fit for sea and ready to go anywhere, 37 iron-clads, of which 30, at least, should be of the first class, and, besides that number, they ought to have 12 or 14 in reserve, in order to replace ships that might be injured. That was a much larger number than they could by any means provide at that moment. He hoped the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) would work up to that point. He had no doubt the Admiralty had, in its own mind, an idea of what force would be necessary in case of an outbreak of war; but he feared that they trusted too much to the superiority of English iron-clads, and to the superiority of English workmen to enable them to repair damages at a much greater rate than any Foreign Power could repair damages. Besides those iron-clads, he made out that they should have at least 66 patrol vessels of various kinds for the protection of their trade. He believed that if a war were to break out they would find that convoys were quite impossible, and that the only mode of protecting their trade would be by establishing, as far as they could, a system of patrolling their great ocean routes. In their last naval war of any importance their frigates were scarcely ever out of sight of one another, and he believed they would have to adopt some plan of the same kind in the case of any future war. With a foreign trade of £900,000,000 sterling, he need not say that the burden thrown on the Navy in case of war would be very excessive.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), to which he had listened with some surprise, was remarkably characteristic of the hon. Gentleman, for it showed that natural hostility to the strength and influence of his country which they always perceived and expected to find in the hon. Gentleman's speeches. The hon. Gentleman spoke of a cry which he hoped would soon go up from the people against the expenditure, which he termed extravagant, on the Naval and Military Services of the country. Another cry of a different kind might go up if the naval strength of England were neglected. Was the hon. Member for Bradford not aware that the 35,000,000 of people who inhabited this country were dependent on foreign countries for half their supplies? If they were to lose for good the command of the sea the Powers which dominated over it would, in the event of a struggle with them, simply have to blockade the coast, cut off their merchantmen, and need then only await the inevitable result. They would be able to obtain from England any terms they chose to demand. In three or four months an iron girdle of starvation would environ the land, and a cry of despair would go up from millions for their daily bread. France, 14 years ago, paid £200,000,000 and two Provinces to Germany as the price of defeat; but did anyone think that if some Foreign Power wrested the command over the sea from us, they would be content with demanding £200,000,000 or even £500,000,000? They might demand half our Empire; they might impose a fine which would, practically, reduce the nation to beggary. Then, doubtless, a cry very different to that the hon. Member had referred to would go up from the people of England against the hon. Member and his class, and against the Ministers who had so culpably neglected the most vital interests of the country. The Statement the House had heard that night was, to a certain extent, satisfactory. It showed that the Government were waking up to at least some realization of the deficiency of the British Navy. As the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) had told them a short time ago, it was practically a condemnation of the Government by themselves for their neglect of the Navy during the past four or five years. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan) had endeavoured to make some reply to that Statement. He had set his argument in a cloud of language, and accompanied it with very misleading facts. But the facts the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) had put before the House were irrefutable, and the conclusions he had arrived at were irresistible. France had of late been making great exertions to increase her naval strength, and had been building at a rate which rendered it absolutely incumbent on England to increase her naval expenditure likewise. England depended for her very existence as a nation upon her commerce and the greatness of her Empire. So insufficient was our naval strength for its protection that, although France could with ease concentrate her naval strength at Cherbourg or Toulon without risking any great national interests, England could not concentrate her naval power at an English port, with her present naval resources, without leaving her great commerce and Colonies undefended. He was very glad to hear that the Government had determined upon the building of a number of fast cruisers. He took it that upon the question of these slightly armed cruisers of great speed, and the fortification of their coaling stations, depended the safety of their commerce—that those were the keys of the position. He regretted that the new cruisers were only to reach a speed of 17 knots. No doubt, that was great speed, but, compared with several existing war ships—the *Esmeralda*, for instance—it was far from sufficient. The *Esmeralda* had a speed of 18 knots, and would, therefore, be able to run away from the proposed new cruisers in any part of the world. It was satisfactory to find that there was now some prospect of a little money being spent upon their coaling stations, which had been so long neglected. The Government must remember that, although the subject had been considered by a very able Commission, and that that Commission had reported two years ago, nothing had been done by the Ministry to carry out that Report, beyond the sending of a gun or two to Hong Kong. The Government had not hesitated to spend £10,000,000 in Egypt, and it was spending a large sum in Bechuanaland. It had succeeded in spending, on an average, £6,000,000 more per annum than its Predecessor. He did not think the hon. Members who called themselves supporters of that Government should grudge this small amount of £5,500,000 which was to be spent on the Navy. He had to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer for giving him the opportunity of saying these few words. In conclusion, he would express a hope that no Members of the House would ever fail to remember that the Navy was the main bulwark of their Imperial strength and security, the source of their national prosperity, and the palladium of their liberties.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): At this late hour of the night (1 A.M.), I should, perhaps, be justified in only addressing the House for a very few minutes; but I feel that it is my duty to answer the questions which have been put to me, and also that I am bound to address a few remarks to the House on this subject, as I have had the honour to hold both the Offices which will be responsible for the expenditure we are now discussing—namely, the Office of First Lord of the Admiralty and that of Secretary of State for War. I have a special claim to address the House, because, when First Lord of the Admiralty, I laid down, with the concurrence of my Colleagues in the Cabinet and at the Board of Admiralty, what appeared to me to be a sound rule as to the future annual amount of building of armoured and unarmoured ships. My noble Friend the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox) has been good enough to allude to the concurrence of sentiment between him and me on this particular matter. I do agree with him in many of the points he has brought before the House to-night, and on previous occasions; and it is satisfactory to me to find that the sympathy and agreement which sprang up between us in 1869 have endured up to the present time. But, before I speak on certain points connected with the main question upon which I have been interrogated, I would say a word about two incidental matters which were alluded to a few minutes ago by two hon. Members. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) has asked me whether the Board of Admiralty, in accepting this large sum of money for building contract ships, would have regard to the possibility and reasonableness of expending part of the money in the shape of contracts with shipbuilders in Ireland. On that point I cannot speak with personal knowledge; but the rule which existed in my time—and which, I believe, still exists—was that shipbuilders, in whatever part of the United Kingdom they carried on their business, applied to the Board of Admiralty to be placed on the Admiralty lists of contractors to whom forms of tender might be sent according to certain categories. When such an application was made, an Inspector was sent down to examine their works and see for what class of business they were fitted. According to the Reports of the Inspectors, the builders were put upon the Admiralty lists, and then, according to the category in which the proposed work was, they were invited to tender. I am told by the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) that the old rule still exists. Irish builders, therefore, who are not on the lists, ought to apply at once for an Inspector to go down to examine their premises, and get them put on the Admiralty list for the class of work for which they are suitable; they will then be invited to tender. The particular firm to which the hon. Member referred the Passage Shipbuilding Company used to do a certain amount of repairs to ships requiring it on the Irish Coast. I am told they have not been removed from the Admiralty list, and that quite lately they have been asked to send in a tender. It only depends upon themselves, therefore, whether or not they obtain Admiralty work for which their works are suited. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) asked me whether what he described as "an open secret" was a fact—namely, that at the beginning of the present year the Board of Admiralty applied to the Treasury for permission to spend £500,000 upon the Navy, and that that permission had been refused. I heard some months ago that the statement had been made, and tried to ascertain from whence it had sprung, but I could not connect it with any particular person. I certainly had no idea that it had been made in Parliament. I then made most careful inquiries at the Board of Admiralty and the Treasury Board, and I was told that the story was a myth from beginning to end. No such application was ever made, and, therefore, no such application could have been refused. The whole thing, as I say, is a myth. But, as the hon. and learned Member must know, that is not the way in which the expenditure of large sums is settled by any Government. No doubt, small charges are settled by correspondence between the two Departments; but all questions affecting large sums are settled by the Cabinet, of which the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War are Members, and, when approved, are afterwards discussed in detail, where details are involved, between the Board of Admiralty and the Treasury Board. I am glad to have this opportunity of telling the House that there is no foundation of any kind for the rumour or "open secret" to which the hon. and learned Gentleman referred. And now to revert to the general question. I have been asked more than once to explain again the financial effect of the present proposal. Clearly, as my hon. Friend (Sir Thomas Brassey) stated it, I think it has not been understood in every quarter of the House. It is this. It is proposed to add to the regular expenditure what may be called the normal expenditure on shipbuilding £3,100,000 in the next five years. Of this, £800,000 will come in course of payment and must be provided for in the Estimates of the year 1885-6 in addition to the normal Estimate. The Estimate for shipbuilding of the following financial year will also show an increase of £800,000.

During the remaining three of the five years an addition will be made of £500,000 a-year. That is the first proposal. The second proposal is, that there should be added to the expenditure on guns for the Navy—the charge for which appears in the Estimates of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War —the sum of £1,600,000 spread over five years; and out of that £1,600,000, in the first year, 1885-6, provision will be made for £400,000 in excess of the expenditure of the present year, 1884-5, for the same purpose. It is also proposed that a sum of £825,000 should be expended out of the Imperial Treasury during those five years on the defence and armament of our coaling stations beyond what is contributed by India and the Colonies. My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty went on to say that, in addition to that expenditure, Her Majesty's Government would consider before the commencement of next Session, and communicate to Parliament, what ought to be done with reference to the defence of our commercial harbours and the completion of the armament of our military ports, and that on the decision of what was to be done in these respects would depend the further increase which it may be necessary to make in the Naval and Military Estimates of next year and the following years. On this question we have nothing more to say at the present time. Besides these arrangements for 1885-6 and subsequent years, the Admiralty will expedite armoured shipbuilding in the Dockyards, postponing to it other and less urgent work; and this would commence without a day's delay. I hope I have now made it clear what the proposal is that we have made to-night. I should like, with the permission of the House, to reply also to the suggestions which have been made that in this matter we have been actuated by some sudden panic, and that the Admiralty and the War Office, which are concerned in this expenditure, have not brought it before Her Majesty's Government as a matter deserving consideration on its own merits. Let me remind the House how we stand with respect to the expenditure of this country and foreign countries on shipbuilding in years past and now. I hope I shall not be thought egotistical if I go back to the year 1869-70, when I was myself First Lord of the Admiralty, and when we determined what, in our opinion, ought to be the rule as to the tonnage of ships built from year to year. We laid down the rule that the number of tons of shipbuilding in each year ought to be about 12,000 armoured and 7,500 unarmoured, or, in all, from 19,000 to 20,000; and I find now, from the accurate accounts we have got of the actual tonnage built by this country and by Foreign Governments, that in that year—1869-70—the expenditure of this country on shipbuilding was £1,330,000, whereas in France it was £412,000. In the following year the proportion was about the same. Our knowledge of this was one of the reasons which weighed with us in fixing the amount of tonnage to be built in each year. Again, in 1874, it fell to my lot—after we had ceased to hold Office, but when a very important naval debate, in which the sufficiency of the English Navy was strongly contested, was taking place—to again make very careful inquiries as to the relative amounts of shipbuilding going on in this country and abroad, and I found that at that time the amount being spent on shipbuilding by the Government of this country was more than double that which was being similarly spent by France for the French Navy. At that time the expenditure on the Italian Navy and the Russian Navy was small, and the increase of the German Navy was not of much importance. I spoke to this effect, giving full detail, in April, 1874, and the figures of my speech were accepted both here and abroad. Now what followed? On the part of the French Admiralty there was a considerable advance in shipbuilding, and from 1875 to 1880 no corresponding advance on our part; and I find that in 1879 the English expenditure on shipbuilding was £1,350,000, whilst the French expenditure was £1,585,000. When we came into Office in 1880 we at once began to increase very largely the amount of armoured shipbuilding, and our expenditure on additions to the Fleet rose to £1,900,000 a-year, at which it stands now, while the French expenditure has remained almost constant, having been £1,505,000 in that year and in the present year £1,511,000. If hon. Members have carefully followed these figures, they will see that what we now propose is carrying to a certain degree further the policy we always felt ourselves bound to adopt—namely, to increase our expenditure on shipbuilding to the point at which we decided that it should be brought in 1879. When we take guns also into consideration, the figures are still stronger. In 1879-80 and 1880-1 we were spending on ships and guns about £100,000 a-year less than the French, whereas at the present time we are spending £2,690,000, as against £2,160,000 spent by the French. Therefore, if the House has followed my figures, it will be evident how constant our efforts have been, since we took Office, to make up lee way in shipbuilding and gunmaking; and our proposals now are strictly in harmony with that policy—namely, to increase the expenditure in building ships by contract, so as to place our Navy in the relative position with regard to those of other Powers in which it stood 10 years ago. That is the whole case; and much as I regret, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, to have to ask Parliament to find the money next year which we propose to expend in excess of the normal Estimates, I believe we are doing right, and that even my Friends below the Gangway will, I hope, on carefully thinking over the figures I have explained, be less disposed to attach blame to us than they seemed to-night. I have only one or two words more to add upon points in reference to which I have been asked questions. My noble Friend opposite (Lord Henry Lennox) asked me whether I could undertake to do anything to improve the administration of the Dockyards. I cannot concur with him that the gentlemen at the head of the Construction and Dockyard Departments of the Admiralty are at all deficient in ability or in the success of the work they have taken in hand. The administration of the Dockyards has been a very sore subject to many who have had to deal with it. I am not the First Lord of the Admiralty, and I have no wish to burn my fingers with what does not directly concern me; but I believe great reforms have been made in the last few years, both by the late and present Boards of Admiralty, in improving the administration of the Dockyards. I have been asked by a noble Lord who is not now in his place—the Member for West Kent (Viscount Lewisham)—whether the Government have sufficiently considered the force which will be necessary to man our coaling stations under the new plan of defence. No subject, I believe, has received more attention. It has been most fully considered by the Secretary of State for War, and the exact number of men required when each station is properly armed has been settled. I can assure the noble Viscount that he need be under no anxiety upon this point. I have also been asked a question by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) as to the diminution in the number of our seamen. I have looked at the Returns, and I find that, after no change for a long series of years, the first reduction was made in the year 1868-9, at a time when the right hon. Gentleman was himself in Office. Therefore, I think the question the right hon. Gentleman has put to me is one which he ought to have asked of himself.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I referred to the reduction of 2,000 which has been made within the last two years.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I thought the right hon. Gentleman referred to the reduction generally.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: No; only to the reduction made recently.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): At any rate, the first blow was struck by the right hon. Gentleman himself. I am afraid to trouble the House at this late hour with further remarks upon points of detail; but perhaps the House will allow me to conclude by laying down what, in my judgment, ought to be the outcome of this debate in regard to the principles which ought to guide the Government in regard to shipbuilding. I repeat what I more than once said in 1869, when I was responsible for the administration of the Board of Admiralty. The first principle or canon would be to build a steady amount of tonnage of each class, varying as little as you can from year to year, and so avoiding those disastrous fluctuations which destroy both economy and efficiency in administration. The second is, when there is a doubt about patching up or selling a vessel, give the turn to selling her, and, instead of patching her up, build a new ship. The third is, when you have settled the plans of a ship, whether she is to be built in a Dockyard or in a private yard, build her straight off and leave improvements for the next ship. It requires, I admit, a little nerve to resist the pressure of scientific improvers, but I am convinced that this course is the best. The fourth principle is one which, I think, will not be quite approved by the Members for Dockyard towns—namely, while building ships of new and experimental types at the Government Yards, to go as far as possible in putting into the hands of private builders contracts for ships of old and well-recognized types. By going in that way to private builders, you will encourage them to keep up their establishments, which will always be capable of expansion on an emergency, while the Dockyards should be kept at as even a strength as possible from year to year. I am much obliged to hon. Members for the patience with which they have listened to my remarks at so late an hour.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (FURTHER POWERS) BILL.

On Motion of Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, Bill to confer further powers upon the Metropolitan Board of Works with respect to applications to Parliament and legal proceedings relating to the Supply of Water in the Metropolis, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, Baron HENRY DE WORMS, and Mr. BRYCE.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 44.]

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 1) BILL.

(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney.*)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he did not propose to trouble the House with the Motion he had placed on the Paper upon the third reading of this Bill. He had been unfortunate in not finding a convenient occasion for bringing forward the Motion; but he would take the most convenient opportunity he could find, early next year, for bringing the question of the massacre at Berber before the House.

Bill read the third time, and *passed,* with a New Title.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 3rd December, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1).*

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 1) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be read 2ª *To-morrow.*—(*The Earl Granville.*)

House adjourned at a quarter past One o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 3rd December, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered — First Reading*—Metropolis Management Elections (Ballot)* [46]; Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister * [48].

Ordered—First Reading—Second Reading—Committee—Report — Third Reading — Yorkshire Registries Act (1884) Amendment [47], and *passed.*

First Reading—Law of Evidence Amendment * [45].

Second Reading—Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) [19].

QUESTIONS, &c.

——o——

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, REDISTRIBUTION, BILL.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: Owing to the very peculiar circumstances under which the second reading of the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill is to be brought forward to-morrow, and the pressure of time, and also with reference to the Notice given yesterday by the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar), I beg to give Notice that at the proper time I shall move—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that, instead of adding to the number of the House, they have power to disfranchise boroughs in England and Wales having, by the Census of 1881, fewer than 25,000 inhabitants, and to take one seat from each of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge."

I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether there are not errors—or, at any rate, one error—in the printed copy of the Redistribution of Seats Bill with reference to one of the boroughs in England?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that was the case. The Bill was printed so rapidly that at the last moment the borough of Warwick was found to be omitted from the list of boroughs which were to lose one Member. It was proposed to unite Warwick with Leamington, so that it should return one Member. That, he believed, was the only mistake which had been discovered up to the present time in the Bill; but in the print of the letter from himself to the Home Secretary, containing the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners, the word "intersect" had been misprinted "intercept."

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Return which he promised yesterday in reply to my noble Friend the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) will be laid on the Table in dummy before the adjournment, so as to be circulated as soon as possible after the second reading; and whether the Return will be accompanied by the map which he promised?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Certainly, Sir, the Return will be laid on the Table; but, as to the map, I can give now no decided answer as to whether it will be included in the Return until I communicate with one or other of the Boundary Commissioners as to the form in which the map should be given. The noble Lord has promised to communicate with me privately on the subject; but he has not yet done so. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will also communicate with me, as I am not quite clear what it is that is wanted.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Then I understand that a map will be presented with the Return.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have no objection whatever to present the map asked for; but it is extremely probable that the Boundary Commissioners may wish their Report to be accompanied by a map in certain cases.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: With regard to the instructions of the Boundary Commissioners, there appeared to be power to appoint Sub-Commissioners; but I presume the intention is that the boundaries are to be considered by the Commissioners themselves, upon whose responsibility they will be decided?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Certainly; there can be no doubt upon that point.

DR. LYONS: I wish to ask whether Sligo has been omitted by accident from the list of Irish boroughs that will have the right to return a Member? I am aware that the right of the borough has been suspended; but I do not think the seat has been abolished by law.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I think it will be found that Sligo was disfranchised by law, and that it stands in that respect in the same position as Cashel, Beverley, and Bridgwater.

DR. LYONS said, Cashel was mentioned in the list, while Sligo was not.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

ELECTIONS IN COUNTIES (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.—[BILL 19.]

(*Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Cochran-Patrick.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he need not detain the House for more than one or two minutes in explaining the nature of the measure. It consisted of one operative clause, which spoke for itself. The object of the Bill was to extend the hours of polling in counties to the same length as they had been already extended in boroughs. It was difficult to see what were the objections that could be brought against the measure. It was impossible to conceive that this House or the other House of Parliament, or that any body of persons who were favourable towards giving the franchise to citizens on a large scale, should not also be favourable to their exercising the franchise thus given them with the greatest convenience to them. When the House considered the changes that had already been brought about in the law with regard to the exercise of the franchise, and which were in the course of being brought about at the present moment, they would see that there was more necessity than ever for extending the hours of polling in counties. One change in the law had been made by the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, which prevented payment for the conveyance of voters to the poll. The effect of that was that voters must find their own way to the poll; and it was a very hard matter where voters had to go considerable distances that they should have to present themselves at the poll during hours when they were very probably bound by their contracts to be at work. It was, therefore, most essential to the poorer classes of voters in the counties that they should, if it could be done, be enabled after working hours to betake themselves to the poll. There was another great and important change in the course of operation at the present moment in the Franchise Bill, which they hoped would very soon receive the Royal Assent. The effect of that measure would be to admit a very large number of voters to the franchise, a great many of whom would come under the service franchise, and would be in the position of labourers working for hire, and to some extent under the control of their masters. It was of the greatest importance that they should be able to exercise the right which Parliament had given them freely, and without the permission of their employers. He did not think it was his duty to anticipate the kind of objections that might be made to the Bill. He would have some difficulty in doing so, because he did not know what they would be. It might possibly be said that with regard to large divisions of counties it was unreasonable to apply the same rule as to boroughs, where the voters were conveniently situated together; but he submitted that that argument went in favour of the counties and against the boroughs, because it was easy for the borough voter to take his walk to the poll, whereas it was very inconvenient in the case of the county voter. They must remember that a great change as regarded counties was to be brought into operation. The extent of the county constituencies in a great many instances was to be reduced, a policy which, he submitted, after what had taken place, both Parties were equally bound to go in for. If it appeared to the House, when they got into Committee on the Bill, that it should be desirable to postpone its operation until January, 1886, he, for one, would be perfectly willing to accept such an Amendment; but he could not say he regarded with any approval the Amendment of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope). There was really nothing to inquire about. They knew the whole of the circumstances. They could express their opinions "yes" or "no;" but it would be nothing but a waste of time to refer the matter to a Select Committee.

MR. COCHRAN-PATRICK seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. A. R. D. Elliot.*)

MR. E. STANHOPE, who had on the Paper a Motion to refer the Bill, after second reading, to a Select Committee, said, he thought some hon. Members had ground of complaint at this Bill being brought on at so short Notice, because if there was one thing the Government ought to desire in this matter it would be to obtain the opinion of county Members. Owing, however, to the extreme shortness of Notice, there were hardly any of the county Members present, and whatever might be the result, the discussion must be, in some respects, unsatisfactory. There could be no doubt that when the new voters were admitted to the franchise, some greater facilities should be given to them for voting. The Opposition did not for a moment dispute that, or desire to put the smallest obstacle in their way. On the contrary, they wished that these voters should have every reasonable facility that could be given for recording their votes, and he would, therefore, support the second reading of the Bill. He thought, however, the House would recollect what the President of the Local Government Board told them last Session—namely, that in regard to the extension of hours of polling in boroughs, it was an old question which had been examined by a Select Committee, and that the facts were thoroughly well known, and everybody practically agreed on the subject; but that with regard to the counties it was a perfectly new question which had never been investigated. With regard to its application to counties, there were one or two things which escaped the notice of his hon. Friend who moved the second reading of this Bill. It would be an absolute absurdity if in all county districts the poll were kept open from 8 to 8. He did not suppose his hon. and learned Friend was aware of some remote districts in England where there were only 100 voters; and if an election took place in the winter months, every one of them would have finished his work by 4 o'clock. ["No, no!"] Well, all he could say was that in his county (Lincolnshire) they did not work after dark. The unfortunate officials who would be concerned would, under this Bill, have to stay at the poll from 8 in the morning until 8 at night. That really was not wanted. There was no necessity for the poll being open for so many hours; and he was certain that if an arrangement were made by which it would be open a certain time in the morning and a certain time in the evening, every facility would be given for every man to record his vote. He had put down on the Paper a suggestion that this matter should be investigated by a Select Committee. He believed that would be the best means of inquiry; but if the House thought there was a better he should not object to it. He contended, however, that it should be investigated, and that the county Members should have an opportunity of saying by what means the voters should best have the opportunity of recording their votes in their respective localities. With regard to the observation of his hon. and learned Friend that the Bill should not take effect until January, 1886, he thought that was a perfectly reasonable course, and he was quite sure it would commend itself to every Member of the House.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, that when the hours were extended in boroughs there was a great deal of dissatisfaction in the rural districts because the measure was not extended to the counties. That feeling, however, had been very much lessened by the knowledge, amounting almost to a certainty, that at the first opportunity the Government would rectify an omission which was then owing solely, on technical grounds, to the fact that due Notice had not been given. The principle of the Bill was agreed to, not only for boroughs but for counties, and it was acknowledged that the same facilities should be given to rural voters as to voters in boroughs. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. E. Stanhope) had complained of short Notice with regard to this Bill; but, in reality, the whole question involved in the measure was discussed in the former debate, and was then settled. It was quite certain that unless this Bill was adopted, while they would, on the one hand, enfranchise the labourers in the rural districts, they would, on the other, disfranchise them unless this were done, because it was perfectly clear to all who knew the occupations of those in the rural districts that men could not during the day record their votes. As a rule, he admitted a good deal was gained in the majority of cases in referring Bills to a Select Committee; but in this case there was positively nothing calling for such a course. Everything had been threshed out already. This was one of the simplest acts of justice which could be imagined, if they were to give effect to the enfranchisement of the rural population. The question was one which primarily affected the county voters. Any inconvenience which was suffered by officials must be borne for the public service. He did not think the hon. Gentleman had advanced a single argument that would bear investigation against the proposal that rural labourers should enjoy the same advantages as were enjoyed in the urban districts.

MR. STAVELEY HILL heartily accepted the Bill, and said, he was very glad that it had been brought forward, if it would come in as a complementary measure to the others, and come into operation on the 1st of January, 1886. There was no difficulty in keeping the poll open till 8 P.M., and nothing was to be gained by reference to a Select Committee. The Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act had put additional difficulties in the way of the agricultural labourers, inasmuch as their employers could neither lend them a conveyance to take them to the poll nor allow them time to vote without making a deduction from their wages, without the risk of bringing themselves within the penalties of the Corrupt Practices Act. The House ought not to take away from the agricultural labourer with the one hand what it gave with the other, and unless the agricultural labourer could vote between 5 and 8 in the afternoon, he would, in many cases, not be able to vote at all.

MR. DUCKHAM said, he thought the object of all the present legislation was to equalize the position of voters in towns and counties. If they retained a distinction in regard to the hours of polling it would not be so, and it would debar the best of the agricultural labourers from exercising the franchise, for the best agricultural labourers were those in charge of live stock, which could not be left during the day. He saw no reason why the Bill should not be accepted.

Mr. WARTON said, he felt the force of the objections of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope). In the first place, the Bill ought to be a Government Bill, and if the Government supported it, they ought to have made the Bill relating to boroughs applicable also to counties. The contemplated division of the counties into small single - Member constituencies was an argument against the Bill. The Bill was the most cruel satire on those most anxious voters, because it seemed to assume that the 2,000,000 new voters would not take the trouble to go without their dinner, or put themselves to any inconvenience, to discharge this high Constitutional right which they were told they were burning to exercise. It appeared to be very inconsistent to extend the hours of polling needlessly just after a stringent measure had been passed to keep down the expenses of candidates. He considered that no case of hardship arose under the existing law.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Warton) had expressed opinions which, he was thankful to say, were not those of the great majority of the House, judging from the present debate, in the course of which speeches had been made from the other side generally approving of the Bill. He did not think anyone would agree with the hon. and learned Member in asserting that there was no hardship under the present law regulating the hours of polling, nor could it be said that electors were unwilling to make the slightest sacrifice. It was a notorious fact that there were many electors who were unable under the existing law to record their votes, and the number would be enormously increased by the Franchise Bill, particularly among two classes in the counties—namely, agricultural labourers and suburban residents. It was in view of the special claims of the new voters that the hon. and learned Member in charge of the Bill had wisely consented to introduce a clause providing that it should not come into operation before the 1st of January, 1886. The two classes who were obviously greatly inconvenienced by the present hours were agricultural labourers proper, especially in the summer time, and the large class of suburban voters. In the whole of the Home Counties and in the counties adjoining large towns like Manchester and Liverpool there were a great number of business people unable to vote in the first hour between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning. At present this was a time of great pressure at the poll, and the pressure would be greater with the increase in the number of the voters. He was not speaking of very rich men, but of small clerks and others employed in various ways, who had to leave for work too early to enable them to vote between 8 and 9 in the morning, and then they were not back in time to vote in the afternoon. In regard to rural voters, he agreed with the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) as to the impossibility of their being able to record their votes within the hours fixed by law during the summer months. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport attacked the Government for not having made up their minds; but there was no foundation for such a charge. Opinion in the House on this subject had ripened very suddenly; at least, there was no foundation for the charge as regarded himself, for many years ago he advocated a universal extension of the hours in town and country alike. Of course, as a Member of the Government, he had to have regard to the general feeling of the House, looking not only to his own opinion. He thought that last year there was a great deal of doubt as to the expediency of the extension; but the fact of having that doubt was no argument that the Government did not support the Bill. During the discussion of the borough extension, county Members did not express any strong feeling in favour of extension. There were strong speeches in favour of it from the Liberal, but very little of the kind from the Conservative side. But that day the expression of opinion in favour of an extension came from both sides of the House, and that showed how public feeling on the subject had moved along.

Everybody admitted that the extension of the franchise would have an important bearing on the question, and Members, regarding the proposal in a new point of view, favoured the proposal when they did not do so before. On this ground there could be no charge against Members of the Government or anybody that they had changed their view too suddenly. On behalf of the Government he supported the second reading, and hoped it would be read without a Division, and he suggested that the Committee should be taken early after Christmas. Meantime he would try and gather opinions from county Members whether they accept the Bill in its present wide form coming into force on January 1, 1886, or whether there were limitations that would prove acceptable to a majority of the House. He would do his best to gather the general opinion, and when the Bill reached Committee he would state the view of the Government in regard to the Amendment.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH said, this was no Party question. They all agreed in desiring to give all reasonable facilities to electors to exercise their vote. If this were a question of the extension of the hours of polling in counties under the present franchise he should have a good deal to say against the extension in what were called the agricultural counties, because in those constituencies there were hardly any voters under the present franchise who would require it. There was force in the argument of the right hon. Gentleman as to the claims of the suburban voters on account of their being detained during business hours. It would be possible, however, to meet their claims by a measure applying solely to communities containing this class of population. But the case was entirely altered by the Franchise Bill which was now under consideration; and he cordially agreed with those hon. Members who had spoken of the absolute necessity of extending the hours of polling under the new franchise in the counties. But he did not quite agree with the remarks of the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) as to our paying no regard to the convenience of those who were engaged in taking the poll. It would be absurd in a district containing 100 voters to keep open the poll 12 hours, employing clerks, agents, and other persons, and delaying the declaraction of the poll merely for the sake of more conveniently recording three or four votes. That would be carrying consideration for the convenience of voters to as great an absurdity as if during harvest, when the hours of agricultural labour were from sunrise to sunset, they were to keep open the poll to 10 or 11 o'clock in order to enable men who were at work till 8.30 or 9 P.M. to vote. It was admitted they could not carry consideration for the convenience of voters to that extent, and they must have some regard for the convenience of others. It was not impossible that in some places, if the poll were open from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M., the taking of votes might be suspended for a time in the middle of the day, during which, at present, the Presiding Officer and the clerks had to sit doing nothing; and it was possible that some difference might be made between winter and summer. He agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) that legislation on this subject ought to be undertaken by the Government. The Bill of last Session was introduced by the Government. This was merely a Bill introduced by a private Member, in order to meet a special want, and it did not deal finally with the subject. From the Act of last Session constituencies counting fewer than 3,000 votes were excluded. If this Bill were to become law the few boroughs of that size left would have the old hours of polling, while other constituencies would have the extended hours of polling. That was an anomaly that ought not to be sanctioned. Let them have the same hours of polling fixed for the whole country—for counties and boroughs alike, so far as was consistent with the requirements of the population. If the Act of last Session were repealed and a Bill introduced dealing with the whole question in the light of the experience gained by its working, that would be a more satisfactory conclusion than could be effected by the passing of the present Bill.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had made an appeal to Her Majesty's Government, not merely to take this Bill into their own charge, but had asked his hon. and learned

Friend (Mr. Elliot) to withdraw his own Bill, and that then the Government should be prepared to bring in a Bill of their own dealing with the whole question. If the right hon. Gentleman had made a more moderate request and had asked that the Government, up to a certain point, should take the full responsibility for this Bill — which, no doubt, was one of very great interest and very great importance—he would have made a request which would have met with general approval. He was able to state, on behalf of the Government and his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, who had already spoken, that, after the House met again early next year, or, at any rate, after the Motion for going into Committee had been agreed to, the Government would be prepared to take the practical charge of the Bill, and to consider with Members representing counties and rural districts what Amendments could be introduced into its provisions.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was very glad to hear the remarks of the noble Lord, because he was quite certain that in regard to a Bill of this kind, taken in connection with the Franchise Bill at that moment in "another place," they ought to have a general measure for the regulation of polling hours throughout both boroughs and counties. Whatever was said about the difficulty of withdrawing the measure of last year, it must be admitted that to encumber the Statute Book with a variety of Acts on the same subject would be an unwise proceeding. The explanation of the noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) did not remove the difficulty. What was wanted was one Bill to deal with the whole of the question. He was quite sure that that would be more satisfactory than having a Bill dealing in one part of the subject in relation to boroughs, and then another Bill dealing with the rural constituencies. There was another point to which he would call attention. It arose from a remark made by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings), and had reference to the employers of labour giving their labourers a half-holiday on the polling day. It had been said by some that that would come within the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practice) Act; but he saw two legal authorities opposite, and he should like them to state what was the law on the point. Nothing was more common than to pay the men for Christmas Day and Good Friday when they did no work; and if they allowed the labourers to go to the poll and did not deduct from their wages the time lost, surely they would not be bribing them within the meaning of the Act. They would not ask for whom the men were going to vote; they would not make that a condition; and, therefore, it would be drawing the line a little too fine to call that a corrupt practice. Perhaps the Judge Advocate General, or the Lord Advocate, would give an answer on this point. He thought his hon. Friend (Mr. E. Stanhope) would see that it was unwise to press his Motion any further. He was, however, very much obliged to the hon. Gentleman for the point he had raised, as there were differences of opinion among the county Members on the subject. He had only to add that he thought it would be more satisfactory if the Bill before the House were a Government measure, dealing with the whole question.

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan) explained that if an employer gave his workmen a half-holiday on condition that they voted for a particular candidate, that might constitute an offence under the Corrupt Practices Act; but merely to give the half-holiday for the purpose of enabling the men to vote without any condition would not constitute any such offence.

Mr. CROPPER said, it should be remembered that throughout the country there were people who worked the same hours every day all the year round, and it would lead to great difficulties if the House did not extend the hours of polling in the counties. He thought that the feeling in the country in favour of an extension of time as proposed by the Bill was unanimous.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

YORKSHIRE REGISTRIES ACT (1884) AMENDMENT BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

The JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. Osborne Morgan), in moving for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the forty-third section of "The Yorkshire Registries Act, 1884," explained that the Act was intended to provide that all deeds executed in Yorkshire before the 1st of January, 1885—the day of the commencement of the Act—might be registered under the new Registry, as under the old law; but, unfortunately, either by a slip of the printer or of the draftsman, in one single place in the Act out of some 30 or 40 pages, the words "Before the passing of this Act" were inserted instead of the words "Before the commencement of this Act." The Act was passed on the 7th of August last; and the result of this mistake was that any deed executed between the 7th of August last and the 1st of January next, but which had not been registered before the 1st of January next, could not be registered at all. The error occurred in the 43rd section; but even in the marginal note, and in every other part of the Act, the intention of the framers was correctly stated. His object, therefore, was simply to effect a clerical alteration, and he was anxious that the present Bill should become law this year, so as to avoid the inconvenience which would be caused if deeds executed before the 1st of January next could not be registered.

COLONEL GERARD SMITH said, there were several Amendments required in the Act to which he trusted the right hon. and learned Gentleman would give attention with the view of embodying them in the present Bill. A deputation of Yorkshire bankers was that very day waiting upon the Lord Chancellor to draw his attention to very strange anomalies in the Act which affected Yorkshire bankers very seriously. At a later stage he would undertake to bring these points to the notice of the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, that the Bill now introduced dealt with a purely clerical error; but the matters referred to by the hon. and gallant Gentleman were matters of principle, and could not possibly be dealt with in so a short time. This Bill ought to be in operation before January next.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill to amend the forty-third section of "The Yorkshire Registries Act, 1884," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN and Mr. STUART-WORTLEY.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 47.]

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) said, he hoped the House would, considering that it was important that the Bill should be passed as soon as possible, allow the measure to be read a second time.

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) appealed to the House to pass the Bill through its remaining stages.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he had no objection to offer to the Bill itself; but it seemed to him that the House was establishing a very dangerous precedent. Unless it was important that the Bill should pass he did not see why the usual course should not be followed.

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) assured the noble Lord that the Bill was one of serious importance. He wished to pass it through that House as soon as possible, in order that it might go up to the House of Lords at once, so that the Royal Assent might be given before Parliament adjourned.

MR. WARTON said, he had often protested against the rapid way in which Bills were forced through the House; but, under the peculiar circumstances of this case, he did not see any objection to the course proposed, provided the House had the ruling of Mr. Speaker that it was in the power of any Member to stop the different stages of a Bill from being taken in this way.

MR. SPEAKER: What is required is the general assent of the House; but where a personal injury would be inflicted, as I understand would be the case if this Bill is not passed, the House has generally taken a lenient view and allowed one or more stages to be taken. It does not require the unanimous assent of the House.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, his protest was only raised because what was being done might become a precedent; but placing confidence in the watchfulness of the Speaker, and having regard to the circumstances that had been described, he begged to withdraw that protest.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, when this Bill was brought before the House he was not enamoured of it, nor of any Bill for the registration of deeds; but, under the circumstances, as the Bill did pass last year, and as the present proposal was simply intended to correct an error which it was necessary to correct in order to prevent injury to individuals, he regarded the case as one of an exceptional character, and would not oppose the proposal of the Judge Advocate General.

Bill *considered* in Committee, and *reported* without Amendment; read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTIONS.

——o——

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT ELECTIONS (BALLOT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Eugene Collins, Bill to amend the Law in regard to Elections under the Metropolis Local Management Acts 1855, 1856, and 1862, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Eugene Collins, Sir Thomas Chambers, and Mr. Daniel Grant.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 46.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to legalize Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Causton, Sir Thomas Chambers, Mr. Eugene Collins, Mr. Alderman Cotton, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Puleston, and Mr. Jesse Collins.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 48.]

House adjourned at Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 4th December, 1884.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Yorkshire Registries Act (1884) Amendment* (14).

Second Reading—Committee negatived—Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*.

Committee — Report — Representation of the People (5).

Third Reading — Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act Amendment* (8), and *passed.*

Lord George Hamilton

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.—(No. 5.)

(The Earl of Kimberley.)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee."—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

The Earl of WEMYSS said, he did not rise to oppose the Motion, but he rose to make a few remarks. Their Lordships were about to go into Committee on a Bill which was to add 2,000,000 of voters to the electorate of the Three Kingdoms. Taking this Enfranchising Bill in conjunction with the very drastic Redistribution Bill which had been introduced in "another place," then he thought they could only characterize the change to be thus effected as nothing short of a peaceful, but great, revolution. A very great change was being made, and he noticed, with anxiety and some apprehension, that the effect of those two measures, in the long run, would be practically to disfranchise the middle classes who were enfranchised by the Act of 1832; and he, for one, looked upon that change with all the greater anxiety—he would not say alarm—on account of the Socialistic tendencies of the times, evinced not only as regarded foreign countries, but more or less in the case of our own country. They had only to look on the legislation of the last 14 years or more to see how many Acts of Parliament had been passed, bearing a Socialistic stamp. It was a well-known fact that some of the ablest writers looked with grave concern upon this new development of ideas; and he could well recollect a conversation which he had in 1881 with one of the most thoughtful and able statesmen, whose recent loss, without distinction of Party, every Englishman deplored—he meant the late Postmaster General. In 1881, before the introduction of the Irish Land Bill, he had a conversation with Mr. Fawcett on this subject, in the course of which he (the Earl of Wemyss) said that, from what he had seen, the measure was likely to be one of a very drastic and Socialistic character, and one that would seriously affect the rights of property, if not property itself. What was Mr. Fawcett's reply? He said—

> "Do not suppose that I approve of this kind of legislation. I believe it to be wrong; I believe it can lead to no good."

Then he went on to use these remarkable terms—

> "Depend upon it, the days of the old Party distinctions between Whig and Tory, Liberal and Conservative, have for ever gone by; and that the next great division of Parties in this country will be into Socialists and Anti-Socialists."

As somewhat confirming that view, he (the Earl of Wemyss) had recently read, in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, an account of an interview with a rising statesman of the Conservative Party—he meant Lord Randolph Churchill — and what he gathered from the interview was, that, in the opinion of the noble Lord he had mentioned, the Conservatism of the future might possibly be, so far as the noble Lord was concerned, of a Socialistic and Communistic character. Conservative Communism was certainly a startling anomaly—he might even call it a hybrid monster—and, he hoped it would never receive the approval of the Conservative Party; but, at a time like the present, he might be allowed to point out that there was a regular Socialistic organ in this country. It called itself *The Organ of the Social Democracy*, and, in a heading of a paragraph, in a copy which he held in his hands, in large letters, he read—

> "Send your shillings and pence for the propaganda fund to Mr. Wm. Morris."

In the same journal, he saw a paragraph which he would commend to the notice of the noble Duke on the Liberal Benches (the Duke of Argyll). It referred to the crofters, and was headed "The Campbells," not "are coming," but "are going." He pointed to that, to show the Democratic-Socialistic tendency of the age. He should like the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) to take that paper and study it; and he could assure him that he would find it contained, if not very amusing, at least very instructive literature. He (the Earl of Wemyss) was bound to add that if the old Whigs could only realize what was going on in the ranks of Society in England, they would hesitate before supporting any more of this kind of legislation that had lately been passed, and would fall back upon the lines of Adams, Smith, Ricardo, M'Culloch, and other writers on political economy, whose teachings he hoped had only temporarily fallen into oblivion. They might be recalled from Jupiter or Saturn, to which he trusted they had been only temporarily relegated. If they did so, he thought the result would be that they would put their foot down against any further application of Socialistic doctrines. The question they had now to ask—and it was why he introduced these remarks on this occasion—was, How would the great body of new voters think and act? When this new division of Parties took place, would all the new voters place themselves on the side of the Socialists, or of the Anti-Socialists? He hoped not on either, but that there would be a division of opinion among them as there was among their Lordships. Indeed, he knew that amongst the working classes there was, already, a marked division of opinion, and that they met and argued as Socialists and as Individualists. Having said this, he had only to add that both existing Parties were agreed in regard to the Bill now before them. There were no difficulties as to the extension of the franchise—the only difficulty had been in regard to procedure; and as to procedure—as one of those who had last Session been very anxious for compromise—he could only express the great satisfaction which he, in common with many others, felt at the arrangement which had been come to, and that a great Constitutional crisis had been thereby avoided. The events of the last three weeks were certainly of a novel character. During that time they had seen trial by jury, to a great extent, abolished by the Judges, and Parliament superseded by a Caucus of ex and in-Cabinet Ministers; they had seen Party Leaders setting Party interests aside in the interest of the common weal. He himself was not a strong Party man, and he was very glad to find that for the interest of the public good Party interests could, if necessary, be set aside. The arrangement was certainly as startling in its novelty as any transformation scene, and what its effect would be on the Constitution he did not know, and could not pretend to say; but he thought that there were occasions on which it would be most desirable that Party should be set aside in the interest of the country, and that a Cabinet Caucus might advantageously deal, for example, with great questions of national defence, and other matters affecting the unity and strength of the Empire. The difficulty in which they found themselves placed upon questions connected with the national defence often arose because the Leaders of both Parties knew perfectly well what was required, but they were afraid to come down and propose it, because they dreaded that the other side would immediately say that they asked them to support a Vote for bloated armaments, and perhaps they would be told that they were advocating a Jingo policy. Where questions of Imperial importance were concerned, he thought they could not do better than enter into some such combination as had been entered into with regard to this question of the extension of the franchise and the redistribution of seats. It was not, however, for the purpose of obtruding himself upon their Lordships that he gave utterance to those candid remarks. They were making history now, and he was anxious that he should not be misunderstood, as he had been last Session. What he had suggested then was very much what had been done since. He found that some of his Conservative Friends were under the mistaken impression that, last Session, he had wished their Lordships to pass the Franchise Bill right off before they actually had the Redistribution Bill before them. He hoped, however, that he had made it perfectly clear last Session that, although he was anxious to go on with the Franchise Bill, he would not consent to pass it into law without their Lordships having some hold or other upon the Redistribution Bill. He only wished them to proceed to Committee in order that the Redistribution Bill might be introduced at a later stage. After the Bill had once been rejected, he had seen that it was impossible that it could not be accepted in the Autumn Session without conditions; and, speaking in his own county on a public occasion, as early as August, he said it appeared to him impossible that English gentlemen having acted as their Lordships had done, should take the Franchise Bill as if it had been presented to them at the point of the sword; and he added that, if their Lordships were asked simply to accept the Bill without any condition as regards redistribution, their Lordships could only give one answer, and that was—"Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" But, fortunately, the difficulty had happily ended; they had got a spirit of compromise which had led to this union between the two Parties and an arrangement of their difference. He rejoiced that a grave Constitutional crisis had been happily avoided; and as a humble occupant of the Cross Benches, he desired to express his heartfelt thanks to the Government and the Leaders on both sides, for the spirit of conciliation and compromise which they had shown. While saying that, however, he was bound to add that the fact that a crisis was imminent, and to a certain extent had arisen, was due to the way in which the Government had at first endeavoured imperiously to force through Parliament an incomplete measure of Reform, and was not due to the Constitutional action of their Lordships' House.

Lord BRABOURNE said, he would leave his noble Friend (the Earl of Wemyss) to settle his differences with his Conservative Friends, and would ask leave to say two or three words before their Lordships went into Committee. By this measure 2,000,000 persons were about to be enfranchised; and so far as he was concerned, and, he was sure so far as the great majority of their Lordships were concerned, it was with the most hearty goodwill on their part that they saw this enfranchisement about to take place. He thought that when this was the case, it was a great pity to talk about Socialistic tendencies, and to speak of these new voters as if we were afraid of them. He had no doubt they would make quite as good electors as those who had already been admitted to the franchise; and he was of opinion that in admitting those persons to the franchise the less their Lordships prophesied of evil from that admission the better it would be for all parties. When this franchise measure was last before the House, he stated with pain that he was compelled to vote in favour of the Amendment to postpone the further progress of the Bill until the whole scheme of the Government had been produced. On that occasion he was subjected to a very severe attack from the noble Earl who hailed from Mid Lothian (the Earl of Rosebery). He regretted the absence of his noble Friend. On that last occasion of this Bill being before their Lordships, that noble Earl referred in a sarcastic tone to his (Lord Brabourne's) position in that House, and made an allusion, the irreverence of which was probably excused by the House on account of its wit. Had his noble Friend been present that night, he (Lord Brabourne) would have offered him his sincere condolence; for he perceived, by the ordinary channels of information that morning, that his own coronet had, since making that speech, become so painful to him that he was willing to abolish the hereditary principle sooner than that so intolerable a burden should descend to his children. He (Lord Brabourne) understood that it had been stated that the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition would vote against the Amendment of a noble Lord on his own side (Lord Denman) dealing with the subject of woman suffrage. If that was so, he (Lord Brabourne) was inclined to believe that the noble Marquess would not be against the principle of that Amendment, but that he merely wished to express the opinion that it was not an opportune moment to bring the question forward. That, he thought, was an intelligible standpoint to take up. The question, however, was one which had come into great prominence of late years; and he hoped it would not be long before the right of admission of duly qualified women to the suffrage would be recognized. If, therefore, he and others forebore to press their views upon this and other points at this moment, they must not be precluded from doing so at a more favourable opportunity.

EARL FORTESCUE said, as a consistent Liberal, it did not seem to him to be a desirable thing that a measure of this great importance should be settled, not by Parliament, but by private arrangement between the Leaders of the two great Parties in the State. The compromise on this matter reminded him of what was said of the Peace of Amiens—"It is a Peace of which everyone is glad, but of which no one could be proud." He spoke as a consistent Liberal, for he defied anyone to cite any vote, speech, or publication of his inconsistent with his life-long attachment to the great principles of civil, religious, and commercial liberty. Indeed, as regarded the measure before them, he had, as long ago as 1867, years before the conversion of the present Government to it, pressed upon their Lordships the justice and expediency of extending to the agricultural labourers, as, at least, equally deserving of it, the franchise, which they were then widely conferring upon the householders and lodgers in the boroughs. He had then shown from official statistics how little lower in education, and how much better as regards crime, immorality, and drunkenness, the agricultural labourers, on the average, were, mainly, no doubt, from their being so much more decently lodged than the inhabitants of towns, hundreds of thousands of whom had, with their families, only a single room to live in by day as well as sleep in by night. He congratulated the Government on their doubtless sincere, but somewhat tardy, recognition of the agricultural labourers' just claims to the franchise, and congratulated the noble Marquess and his Friends on their still tardier, but doubtless equally sincere, conversion. As a consistent Liberal, he earnestly hoped that the Liberal Governments of the future would not convert this compromise into a precedent for superseding the deliberate action of Parliament, and preventing the discussion and amendment of the Bills brought before them. Measures might hereafter be rushed through the House, as he feared was likely to be the case in regard to this measure, with defects in the wording. It would, he thought, be a great misfortune if this Bill were passed without any verbal Amendments, because the want of clearness of expression in legislation would lead to difficulty and doubt, and to much costly litigation.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, he had not intended to say anything on the Motion for going into Committee; but a few words had fallen from the noble Lord on the Cross Benches (Lord Brabourne), who, he believed, had correctly interpreted the views of his noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury), which made him feel that, personally, at all events, it was desirable that he should add a *caveat* to the remarks of the noble Lord. He was quite aware that it was desirable, on all accounts, to pass the Bill substantially in the same condition in which it had come before their Lordships; and for that reason he, for one, would be averse to suggest the introduction of any new matter which might endanger the Bill; but he agreed with those who thought that the time was rapidly approaching when the claims of a very important section indeed of the community—namely, duly-qualified women—must receive the attention of Parliament; and it was no use putting the question aside by a bad joke. He considered all the arguments that had been used, whether logical or practical, really pointed to the admission of duly-qualified women. There was very little, indeed, to be said on behalf of the large class they were now about to enfranchise that could not be said with equal effect on behalf of duly-qualified women. In making these remarks he did not wish to raise any discussion, but simply to express his own opinion in consequence of what had fallen from the noble Lord, and he should make no Motion on the subject.

Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly.

Preliminary.

Clause 1 (Short title of Act) *agreed to.*

Extension of the Household and Lodger Franchise.

Clause 2 (Uniform household and lodger franchise).

LORD BRAMWELL, who had on the Paper a Notice to move, in page 1, line 13, the insertion of the words "not in a borough," said, that the object of the intended Amendment had been to clear up a doubt arising from its having been forgotten that all boroughs were in counties; and so a voter in a borough might claim to vote for a county, which could not have been intended. But there was no question of principle. After a certain amount of litigation, and an Act or two to amend, a meaning would be put on the clause. He meant his Amendment for the good of the Bill; but as the Government objected he would not move it. The noble Earl on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) was quite mistaken in supposing that the learned Judge had done anything contrary to law. What he had done was quite in conformity with the practice.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he would point out to the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) that it was provided that the word "county" should bear the same interpretation as it did in previous Acts dealing with the Representation of the People; and these previous Acts expressly excepted the boroughs that had Parliamentary representation of their own.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that the explanation might be right, but that it would be better that the clause should be so worded as to need no explanation. With reference to a remark made by the noble Earl on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) with reference to the action of a certain learned Judge, that that learned Judge had done what had been done not only hundreds, but thousands of times before. He (Lord Bramwell) also had some personal interest in this matter; because he had done the same at least 150 times himself.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that, as their Lordships no doubt anticipated, the Government were not disposed to agree to the insertion of this large Amendment on their scheme of enfranchisement. He should, however, follow the example of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon), who had just now alluded to the subject, by declining to go into the question. He had only one remark to make with reference to what had been said by that noble Earl. The noble Earl said he saw no reason why duly-qualified women should not be admitted to the franchise. By that he supposed the noble Earl meant that he considered the question as to women who paid rates settled, and that a large and not unimportant section—the women who happened to be married—should have no consideration for their claims. As to the question itself, he did not wish to express any opinion personally, but only to point out the distinction that was drawn between single and married women; and he hoped their Lordships would not agree to the Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, his noble Friend (Lord Brabourne) had correctly interpreted what he had said the other evening, as not implying any unwillingness to consider the principle of female franchise, but simply as an intimation that he would vote against the intended Motion. His own judgment leant certainly to some relaxation of the law in this respect, though he was not prepared to go all the lengths to which some of the advocates of the proposal went. But he agreed with the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Kimberley) that this was not a suitable time—not suitable in the interests of women's franchise itself—to press the Amendment, because the House of Commons had clearly resolved not to agree to such an Amendment; and if it were inserted, when the Bill went back to the House of Commons, many would be compelled to vote against it, who otherwise might not be disposed to do so. Therefore, there was no advantage to be gained by pushing the Amendment; and the effect of so doing might rather tend to injure the chances of success of the movement for the extension of the franchise to women.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Tenure of house by office or service not to invalidate vote) *agreed to.*

LORD DENMAN, who had given Notice of the insertion of new Clauses A, B, C, and D, on the first being read, said, he could only propose this clause as the House was pledged (by Speech from the Throne, June 1859) to pass a well-considered measure, and the late Lord Lyttelton proposed such a clause in 1867. It was said that his Lordship did not write a legible hand himself; but he (Lord Denman) had great respect for some men who could neither read nor write—their memory was so good. A huntsman named John Shirley, quite illiterate, saved Sir Richard Sutton much money by keeping 30 horses and 90 couples of hounds at Burton for the same that 30 horses cost at Lincoln. Such men, for the sake of a vote, would soon learn to read and write; and he had seen, in a school on the borders of the county of Tipperary, in 1836, a man aged 60 learning to read and write. Since the last harvest he had had two letters from men who worked for him in County Galway, written in the best possible handwriting, and expressing the best possible sentiments. Voting papers might be used generally if this clause were carried; but to avoid delay he would withdraw it.

Moved, after Clause 3, to insert the following clause:—

(Disqualification for inability to write.)

"Clause (A.) From and after the expiration of six months after the passing of this Act, no one shall be entitled to vote at the election of a Member of Parliament who cannot write a legible hand.

"The Lords of Her Majesty's Privy Council are hereby authorised and required to frame and issue, within three months after the passing of this Act, regulations to carry the last preceding enactment into effect."

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that it was impossible to agree to clauses of this kind. The noble Lord proposed, for instance, that no one should vote who could not write a legible hand. He (the Earl of Kimberley) had in his official capacity considerable experience of illegible handwriting, and he could wish that people could be made to write legibly. But he thought the application of the clause would be very much wider than was contemplated by the noble Lord.

Clause *negatived.*

"Clause (B.) No person who has been three times convicted of drunkenness shall be entitled to be registered as a voter in the next election after the last of such convictions."

LORD DENMAN said, he had tried to carry it in 1867, as some persons were many times convicted of drunkenness; but he would not press it.

Clause (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

"Clause (C.) During the continuance of the Contagious Diseases Acts no person receiving a registered woman or women as a lodger or lodgers shall be entitled to vote during the continuance of the harbouring of such registered woman or women."

LORD DENMAN said, the clause was framed to prevent the franchise from being in bad hands; but it was rather the subject of such a Bill as passed the House of Lords as to brothels last Session, so he would withdraw it.

Clause *negatived.*

"Clause (D.) All women not legally disqualified who have the same qualifications as the present (or future) electors for counties and boroughs shall be entitled to vote for knights of the shire and burgesses for boroughs at every election."

LORD DENMAN said, the clause was framed because, in the Bill in "another place," a marked exclusion of married women existed, and in cases where a woman was ill-used, as in the case of "Greenhill *v.* Russell," alluded to in the debate on the Custody of Infants Bill, 1859, July 10. Sufficient time might have been given to insert this clause, and if it had been rejected for it to have been reinstated by this House, and to have been made the subject of a free conference between the two Houses of Parliament, Lord Fitzgerald's Infants Bill might, in the Select Committee, deal with the subject. In the 43rd year of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth Parliament met on October 27, and sat, with short intervals, till December 19; but the noble Marquess, whose ancestor had, in 1605, been on a Committee of this House for public piety, had pledged himself to expedite this measure, on the principle of which all their Lordships were agreed, therefore he would not press it.

Clause (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Prohibition of Multiplication of Votes.

Clause 4 (Restriction on fagot votes) *agreed to.*

Assimilation of Occupation Qualification.

Clause 5 (Assimilation of occupation qualification), *agreed to.*

Supplemental Provisions.

Clause 6 (Voter not to vote for county in respect of occupation of property in borough); Clause 7 (Definition of household and lodger qualification and other franchises, and application of enactments relating thereto); and Clause 8 (Definition of "Representation of the People Acts," and "Registration Acts,") severally *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Definition and application of Rating Acts).

Lord BALFOUR, in moving an Amendment with the view of providing that in Scotland householders paying less than £4 of rent should not be put on the Valuation Roll, but should be enumerated in a separate list, said, he objected to the proposed inclusion in the County Valuation Rolls of Scotland of persons whose holdings were of less value than £4. They would run the risk of being rated, which they were not at the present time; besides, that would be adding the trouble and expense of keeping a Roll made for purely local purposes to the inconvenience of those who had to deal with it, and doing it not for local, but for Imperial purposes. If the clause were carried as it stood, the expense of preparing and printing Valuation Rolls would be largely increased. It would not be fair to throw on local funds what ought to be an Imperial burden. The insertion of householders under £4 would lead to a great deal of inconvenience and expense, and would not serve any purpose that could not be equally well served by a separate list. In connection with the subject he had received a letter from one of the Assessors of Aberdeenshire, in which he pointed out that there were at present 25,000 names on his Roll, and that this Bill would require the addition of 12,000 more names, which would be of no use for rating purposes.

Amendment *moved,* in page 6, line 11, after ("book") insert ("in Scotland a separate list, instead of a separate column, may be added for such entries.") —(*The Lord Balfour.*)

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he was unable to follow the technical arguments of the noble Lord, because he was not personally acquainted with the mysteries of Scotch valuations. A similar Amendment, however, had been brought forward in the other House, where it had been fully considered and negatived without a division. He understood there was a difference of opinion among hon. Members from Scotland on the subject, some thinking it would be better to have a separate list and others not; but, after considering all the circumstances, the Lord Advocate had come to the conclusion that it was better that all the names should be given in the Valuation Roll. He might simply add, as reference had been made to the Assessor of Aberdeenshire, that the Assessor of North Lanark had written a letter in which he expressed the opposite opinion.

Lord BALFOUR said, his Amendment was only permissive; and therefore, even if it were accepted, the Assessor of North Lanark could still follow his own course.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Saving); Clause 11 (Construction of Act); Clause 12 (Repeal of certain superseded sections); and Clause 13 (Commencement of Act) severally *agreed to.*

Schedules *agreed to.*

Bill *reported* without Amendment; and to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—RESOLUTION.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL who had the following Resolutions on the Notice Paper:—

"1. That in the event of two or more Lords rising to address the House at the same time, the Lord Chancellor or Chairman of Committees, whichever then presides, shall call on one of them to speak, and the Lord so called upon shall speak, unless the House do order otherwise:

"2. That Private Bill Committees shall consist of three, and that all applications to Lords to serve upon them shall be in writing, and delivered at their residences:

"3. That the House be lighted always at the commencement of Public Business and continue lighted until the adjournment, unless the Lord Chancellor or Chairman of Committees gives a different instruction:

"4. That no Lord who has a Motion or Bill upon the Paper shall rise to bring it forward out of its precedence:

"5. That where the House permits reply to any Lord upon his Motion or his Bill, the debate shall on no pretence be continued after the reply is over:

"6. That a false roof be introduced, similar to that in the other House of Parliament, to correct the present difficulty as to hearing,"

said: My Lords, I rose 10 days ago to explain these Resolutions, when I was stopped by the noble and learned Earl upon the Woolsack, on the ground that the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees (the Earl of Redesdale) was unable to attend. The noble and learned Earl did not inform me, at the same time, that, if my Notice stood first another day, the Government would put on important Business to precede it, or I might not so readily have yielded to him. The present hour may be thought inconvenient; but it will, perhaps, enable us to dispose of one Resolution without proceeding to the others. Let me meet at once the question which arises; whether the juncture is a proper one for considering the Standing Orders, or amending them. My Lords, on more than one ground it is specially a proper one. In the course of last Session a noble Earl now absent (the Earl of Rosebery) moved for a Committee on the modes of adding to the efficiency of the House. He did not carry a majority, in some degree because his Motion became entangled with the question of Life Peerages. But his remarks, which were most animated, elicited an obvious disposition to listen to, and even act upon, the views which he brought forward. Before the effect of that speech has died away, since nothing in the way of Parliamentary exertion is immortal, the subject ought, if ever, to recur. In the next place, during the autumn there has been a vehement commotion, in order wholly to supersede this House, or radically alter it. Periodicals, before remarkable for talent, have abounded in schemes which rival one another in their crudeness and audacity, but which have still disturbed and exercised the public mind upon the subject. There is something further. Within a fortnight, a Motion highly adverse to the constitution of this House has been debated in "another place," and sustained by a minority of 70. No one who has watched the history of our age will deem that minority an unimportant one. The principle which I submit is that a threatened institution should correct itself, remove irregularities or blemishes, bring order into its arrangements, and thus destroy the pretexts for attacking it. Internal changes which are just may be the best security against external changes which are mischievous and violent. But even if, as some maintain—to-night I offer no opinion on that point—external changes are desirable, it is well to see what definite improvements are attainable without them, so that they may not be invoked for work which easier and safer as well as quicker operations can accomplish. Now, the gravest charge preferred against the House, by quarters whose criticism is of value, is the inadequate attendance, except on Party conflicts and remarkable occasions. It is observed that the Roll is about 500, the number generally present about 50. All these Resolutions are more or less directed to remove the causes by which such absence is produced, or by which it can, in some degree, be justified. These general expressions may suffice to explain and to uphold the general position I have taken. I will now confine myself to the 1st Resolution. In June, 1870, it was brought by me before your Lordships, in terms very similar to those I have adopted. It was supported powerfully by the noble Marquess who now leads the Opposition (the Marquess of Salisbury). It was supported by the late Lord Clanricarde, who had no little weight in this Assembly, not only as the son-in-law and representative of Mr. Canning, but as a statesman of rare acuteness, eminent ability, considerable patriotism, and whose acquaintance with the Business of the House where he had sat from early youth was perfectly unrivalled. The Lord Chancellor of the day, who had not long been nominated, and rather underrated his capacity to preside over the House, was not inclined to favour it. It was withdrawn, to be renewed; but I was much blamed by some for not having divided. It would long ago have been renewed, had it not appeared desirable to connect it with other propositions kindred in their nature and identic in the object which they aim at. Now the evil is undoubted. The House will not require pictures which everyone can draw himself, or has already glowing on his memory. Not long ago the noble Earl the Leader of the House (Earl Granville) and the noble and learned Earl who occupied the Woolsack under the late Government both rose together. After much confusion the House had to divide. One vote determined the priority. We were all placed in the invidious necessity of publicly arraying ourselves against one of the competitors. It is to avoid necessity of this kind—as well as upon other grounds not now before us—that noble Lords are tempted to be absent. The only point which merits even slight discussion is the remedy. The noble and learned Earl who sits upon the Woolsack is well acquainted with the House and with its Members. He entered Parliament in 1847. He would inspire confidence in the decisions he arrived at. The new procedure would begin under the most favourable auspices. The fact is, no loss or injury could accrue to anyone. If he is called on he speaks; if he is not called on, he is nearly certain to speak later. In that case he has a better chance of guiding the division. In both Houses we look for the greatest efforts of persuasion about midnight. Should the Lord Chancellor be led into an erroneous choice, by the last words of the Resolution, to which the noble Marquess opposite attached great importance in 1870, the House might supersede his judgment. But that, of course, would rarely happen. If we have no confidence in the Lord Chancellor, he ought not to preside at all; if we have, he ought to be entrusted with at least a portion of the attributes essential to the function of presiding. No doubt the Lord Chancellor may be considered as appointed by a Party. But the Speaker of the House of Commons is appointed by a Party, although the process is more hidden. Have we not heard of the great conflict in 1885 between Mr. Abercromby and Mr. Manners Sutton, when all the resources of the Government and Opposition were exerted to secure the victory of one over the other? The defence of the proposal is that there is no other remedy for a striking inconvenience. Freedom of debate does not exist, when noble Lords can only take a part in it under humiliating circumstances, at the risk of yielding when they ought not to yield, or of insisting on their claims when those claims ought not to be insisted on. The actual system may have been adapted to a former age, when the House was far more limited in number, and when there may have possibly been usages for settling precedence of this kind which have not been transmitted to us. It ought not now to be endured, and would not be endured in any other Chamber. I will now conclude by moving the 1st Resolution.

Moved to *resolve,*

"That in the event of two or more Lords rising to address the House at the same time, the Lord Chancellor or Chairman of Committees, whichever then presides, shall call on one of them to speak, and the Lord so called upon shall speak, unless the House do order otherwise."—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he wished, in a few words, to state his objections to the proposal of the noble Lord. The noble Lord had made a comparison between their Lordships' House and the House of Commons; and he endeavoured to show that the Speaker of the House of Commons was in the same position as the occupant of the Woolsack. To his (the Earl of Redesdale's) mind, there was a great difference between the position of the Speaker and that of the Lord Chancellor. The latter was nominated by the Queen; while the other was elected by the Assembly over which he presided. The Speaker was the Representative of the House, and was shut out from taking any part in the proceedings of the House of Commons; and as he could not take part in any debate, he was, therefore, in the Chair as an impartial judge to decide between one side and the other, whereas the Lord Chancellor had as much right to discuss any question which came before the House as any other Peer. These were points which required great consideration. The noble Lord had also proposed that the same power should be conferred on the Chairman of Committees. He would admit that the same objection did not apply in that case, because the Chairman of Committees was appointed by the House, and, as Chairman, could not take part in a debate in Committee. He thought, however, that it would be very awkward to have different powers on the Woolsack and in the Chair. Then, again, by the Resolution proposed, other persons who might be in the Chair would have the same power, which would thus be given to a very wide body. The occasions on which the grievance mentioned by the noble Lord arose were extremely rare. It occurred once last Session; but for a very long time before there had been no case of the kind. He could not, therefore, support that proposal.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, it often happened, in important debates, that a number of noble Lords rose at the same time to address the House, and no one knew who was to speak, or who was to decide the point of precedence. There was, therefore, a real inconvenience attending the present practice; and it would be more consistent with the dignity of the House to amend it. The present proposal was about the mildest remedy that could be devised; and, on the whole, he thought the balance of argument was in favour of the change suggested by the Resolution. He thought their Lordships should be not only ready, but anxious, to accept changes which public opinion seemed to prompt.

EARL BEAUCHAMP said, he thought that, on the whole, things worked very well in respect to that matter at the present. They heard a great deal in the present day of the principle of natural selection and the survival of the fittest; and the Rules of their Lordships' House might, therefore, find considerable favour among modern philosophers. The position of the Lord Chancellor in that House was entirely different from the position of the Speaker of the House of Commons. Not only was the Lord Chancellor appointed by the Crown, but he might possibly be called upon to exercise the power proposed to be vested in him by that Resolution before he had acquired any experience of the House. It would, therefore, be unfortunate if their Lordships hastily adopted the Resolution.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, he did not consider that the inconvenience which had been specially referred to was of so marked a nature as to require interference by the proposed Resolution. At the very moment when his noble Friend (Earl Beauchamp) rose, he (the Earl of Longford) himself rose with him; but he had no difficulty in yielding, that he might have the pleasure of listening to his noble Friend's remarks. But there were some real defects, such as the want of a proper writing-room; and if the noble Lord would include them in a future Motion it would have his support.

Earl GRANVILLE and Earl FORTESCUE both rising together, the former gave way.

EARL FORTESCUE, in supporting the Resolution, said, he did not think that any noble and learned Lord who attained the dignity of the Woolsack was likely to have any difficulty in soon mastering the Rules and procedure of the House. Notwithstanding the personal courtesy of Peers to each other, inconvenience arose when a number of them got up at the same time, many of them quite unconscious of the fact that anyone else had risen, perhaps from a Bench behind them.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that, upon the whole, he was opposed to the Resolution, and the more so in consequence of the arguments which had been made use of in the course of the evening. The noble Lord who moved the Resolution (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) had alluded to the considerable number of the minority who voted the other day on a Motion respecting the House of Lords. He (Earl Granville) did not, however, think that that minority, whatever was its number, was influenced in any degree by the consideration whether one Peer—as, for example, himself (Earl Granville)—should be heard first, or afterwards. No doubt the motive they had was that they thought the House of Lords, from its constitution, was very often found not to be in perfect harmony with what was generally the character of the House of Commons. That might be a great evil, but it was one to be corrected by one of two ways—either by heroic and drastic measures; or, on the other hand, by good sense on the part of both sides of the House, of which they had had a remarkable instance in that short Session. He thought, therefore, they need not trouble themselves with regard to this particular question, and with the proceedings which took place in the House of Commons the other day. He entirely agreed with what had been stated by the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees in regard to the position of the Speaker and the Lord Chancellor being in every way different. The House of Commons elected the Speaker. He was their creature; and, being their creature, they invested him with powers more or less arbitrary, as they thought fit. The Lord Chancellor, on the other hand, was named by the Queen; and there was a natural jealousy on the part of the House—he thought a proper jealousy—to subject itself to the arbitrary ruling of a person in whose nomination they had had no share whatever. A noble Earl had objected to the difficulty which might arise of a Lord Chancellor being appointed who knew nothing of the Orders of the House. He (Earl Granville) owned that this argument did not weigh in the slightest degree with him. He had the greatest possible respect for all the successive Speakers of the House of Commons, and some of them were very remarkable men; but he was perfectly certain that the Speakers in their Lordships' House would not have to give way to them either in ability or in character. They did not get any inexperienced Lord Chancellors in their Lordships' House. There had been no Lord Chancellor within his memory who had not had the greatest possible experience of the Forms in the House of Commons, which was naturally a good training for any position they might take in their Lordships' House. He had not the slightest doubt the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack, or the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns), would be perfectly impartial in executing their duties; but they would be placed in a very difficult position, and in a very inconvenient one, if the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack, having made a most eloquent Party speech in defence of the Government, should be allowed to select the noble Lord who was to answer him. A noble Lord said that it would not cause much inconvenience; but he (Earl Granville) could not agree with him. They had seen two or three noble Lords get up to speak; the House generally called for one. Sometimes, however, there was a division of opinion; but there was almost a unanimity of opinion as to which noble Lord should be preferred. He owned that he sometimes had a suspicion that their Lordships had been lately influenced in preferring a short speaker to one who was exceedingly tiresome. But the general principle of their selection was to select a speaker quite irrespective of Party feeling, and sometimes they saw one Conservative Peer follow another Conservative Peer, all being actuated with the desire that the man whom, on the whole, the House desired to hear was he who would contribute in the most forcible manner to the elucidation of the argument. He, himself, had yielded just now with the greatest pleasure to the noble Earl (Earl Fortescue), who had risen to speak at the same time, and he thought he had not suffered from being obliged to follow him. In reference to the case which had been mentioned as having occurred between himself and the noble and learned Earl opposite (Earl Cairns), he had to say that his experience in their Lordships' House had been considerable, and this was the only instance he remembered of a question of this kind going to a division. The noble Lord (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) said their Lordships were placed in a most invidious and disagreeable position in having to vote either for the noble and learned Earl or for himself (Earl Granville); but he doubted very much whether there was a Peer present who felt that he had been placed in an invidious position for having to vote for one or the other. The matter at issue being a peculiar one, affecting to some degree their personal honour, both he and the noble and learned Earl opposite had a justifiable anxiety to speak first in order to tell their own story, though, as it happened, it did not matter, for both were agreed as to the facts. When, however, the matter went to a division, to his great surprise, he got a majority of 1, and therefore spoke first. But supposing the matter had been settled by the noble and learned Earl on the

Woolsack, with the greatest respect for his impartiality, his suspicion was that, in his desire to be perfectly impartial, the noble and learned Earl would have decided for Earl Cairns instead of for him. He really did not see that they suffered any inconvenience of importance in this respect from the present system. He thought it was most Constitutional; in practice, it was not open to any grave or considerable objection; and therefore he thought it would be better not to agree to the Resolution.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, that some 14 or 15 years ago, in consequence of some scandal that had taken place during one of their discussions, he voted in favour of a similar Resolution in company with the present Viceroy of India, then a Colleague of the noble Earl's. That was about the time of the Irish Church, or the first Irish Land Act; but since then he had been induced by several considerations to modify his former opinions. He agreed with the noble Earl who had just spoken (Earl Granville) that this was not a question of large dimensions. The number of cases in which practical inconvenience had arisen was very small. On the other hand, when they were told of the difficulty about the Lord Chancellor selecting a speaker, because he was new to their Lordships' House, he thought they had found that 11 years had passed away since they had had a Lord Chancellor appointed new to the House. That difficulty could not be regarded, therefore, as one of a practical, or of a serious, character. He confessed that, in listening to the debate, the difficulty which weighed on his mind had been in the consideration that they had altered the character of the tenure of their Speakership very considerably. A good deal had been said about the impartiality of the Lord Chancellor, and it had been said that it would be very difficult for him to select a Peer to answer him in debate. He had no doubt the noble and learned Lord would act impartially; but a still more serious difficulty arose. Suppose the Lord Chancellor desired to speak himself; what was he to say? The position reminded him of what was recorded of Pope Celestine V. Pope Celestine V. was convicted of heresy, and there was a great difficulty to know what to do with him. But he settled the difficulty in the most self-devoted and heroic manner. He said, "*Judico me cremari*"—*et crematus fuit.* Such was the record that was found in books; and he did not know whether every Lord Chancellor would be as self-devoted. He had to remember, however, that, under our present rule, it was not only with Lord Chancellors they had to deal. He saw another noble Lord sitting on the Woolsack (Lord Monson) in conversation with the noble and learned Earl (the Lord Chancellor), whose aid in some cases might be sought as the arbiter in these instances. He did not think the side of the House which got the worst of it would submit to the decision of the Whip of the Party opposite. He thought considerations of this kind made the question one of serious difficulty; and, while not in the least degree believing that those persons who objected to the House of Lords as an institution would be pacified by this Resolution being passed, he thought, on the whole, the present system should be maintained.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL: Before the House divides, I may be, perhaps, allowed to make a remark on what has fallen from the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees (the Earl of Redesdale). The House has formed too high an estimate of the noble Earl to concur in his opinion—that although he merits confidence when he is acting as their nominee, he cannot be depended on a moment when he becomes the organ of the Sovereign. The noble Earl the Leader of the House (Earl Granville) thinks it a matter of deep risk that the Lord Chancellor should call upon the speaker who would follow him. The noble Earl has disposed of his objection by the additional remark that, if the Lord Chancellor had possessed the right in question when he and the noble and learned Earl on the other side (Earl Cairns) got up together, it would have been exercised against the Government with self-denying rigour. As to the noble Marquess who now leads the Opposition (the Marquess of Salisbury), having lately read his speech in favour of this Motion, and to my astonishment to-night heard his speech against it, I can only say that the first is as conclusive as the last is altogether unconvincing. The noble Marquess had really nothing to advance, except a question which was put in the original debate, when he supported me—what would happen if the Lord Chancellor and other Peers all rose together? It was answered then, as it may be answered now, that in such an event, without a Rule or Standing Order, the constant usage of the House would give the Lord Chancellor priority. My Lords, those who lead on either side are so favourably privileged that they cannot judge, in its extent, the inconvenience it is now desired to put an end to. Every noble Lord can form his own opinion on the question. It is not to be determined by authority or Party. I would venture to impress upon the House, and more particularly on the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees, a maxim Mr. Canning has bequeathed to us—

> "Those who resist improvement, because it is innovation, will afterwards submit to innovation when it has ceased to be improvement."

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 8; Not-Contents 46: Majority 38.

Resolved in the *negative*.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) — SCHOOL BUILDINGS IN THE HIGHLANDS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, in rising to ask the Lord President as to the outlay on schools in the Highlands and Islands, said, he did so in consequence of a little incident which occurred the other night, when he directed the attention of their Lordships to the Report of the Crofters' Commission. In the course of that Report reference was made to the question of education; but he then said it was not his intention to analyze that portion of the Report. He had done so carefully since, and he found a great many material errors in it. He did not believe his noble Friend behind him (Lord Napier and Ettrick) was responsible for them, because he believed that that part of the Report was not written by him. For instance, he found that a very large sum, which the Report said was charged by the Department against these poor parishes, did not represent a debt due by them, but, on the contrary, a grant paid to them. There were various other errors of that sort, arising from the fact that the Commission did not examine any persons connected with the Department. What the Report said was perfectly true as regarded the heavy burden laid upon the poor parishes of the Highlands for the administration of the Education Acts, and confirmed his (the Duke of Argyll's) impression that education in Scotland should be administered from there, and not by a Department in London. At the end of his speech his noble Friend the Lord President of the Council (Lord Carlingford) said that—

> "The fact is that these buildings, so far from being the work of the Central Education Department in London which has been assumed by the noble Lord—so far from being the outcome of an English authority, supposed to be ignorant of the state of the country and of its requirements, were from first to last in all respects the work and the outcome of a purely Scottish Board sitting in Edinburgh."

Now, he (the Duke of Argyll) was very much astonished at this statement. He found, however, that that statement was an error, and he had it on the authority of the Scottish Education Board that his noble Friend was perfectly wrong. The facts were these. As he had said, on the occasion referred to, the Scottish Board were responsible for the number and sites and accommodation of the schools built; but the Department were entirely responsible for the style of the buildings; and it was not through them, but only through the Department in London, that these buildings could be sanctioned. It was true that the buildings and the estimates went through the hands of the Scottish Department; and the expenditure had been, to a considerable extent, due to the alleged extravagance of these buildings. Not only was this the fact, but he found that in two or three of the successive Reports of the Scottish Board, they directed the attention of the Department to the effect of the extravagant requirements of the Privy Council with regard to buildings that were to be erected in the poorer parishes in the North and West, where a great number of schools were required out of all proportion to the actual necessity, and he urged that it was alsolutely necessary that any intolerable burden should not be cast on these poor parishes, and that the requirements of the Department, which were quite suitable for other parts of the country, should be foregone in this case. That was what he had to say in contradiction to the statement made by his noble Friend; and he had to ask him whether it was not true that he made a mistake in the contradiction he then gave to his (the Duke of Argyll's) statement upon the subject? Before sitting down, he must say that a subsequent inquiry had convinced him that the burden which rested on the poor parishes in the insular parts of Scotland, and in some parts of the West Highlands, was not entirely due to the Central Department in London, and especially that the burden would be much lighter at present if it had not been that the people in that part of the country showed, unfortunately, considerable indifference to the cause of education, which, in most parts of Scotland, the people did not generally show; and that if their attendance was more sufficient the burden would be less, because they would earn greater allowances. Still, the fact remained unquestionable, as regarded the building of the schools, that the extravagance of Local Bodies was not sufficiently checked by the Department in London as it would be by a Board in Edinburgh.

LORD NAPIER AND ETTRICK said, that when he heard his noble Friend the President of the Council (Lord Carlingford) the other day say that the school buildings in the North of Scotland had been erected in accordance with the standard prescribed by the Scottish Board, and that they had been in every case sanctioned by the Board, he was greatly surprised; but he then found himself in a position in which he was unable to offer a contradiction. He, however, reserved the question for subsequent inquiry; but it was not long before he received a multitude of communications from Scotland, drawing his attention to the inaccuracy into which his noble Friend had inadvertently fallen. Amongst these communications was one from the Chairman of the late Board of Education in Scotland, who requested him to offer a respectful, but very decided, contradiction to the statement of his noble Friend. He was informed by his correspondent that the Scottish Board of Education possessed no standard of school buildings; that it had no authority or option with regard to those buildings; that its functions were the selection of sites and the accommodation of members; but the estimates for the buildings were never submitted to them; and, if they had been, the Board possessed no power to modify or control them. Nevertheless, in the exercise of its discretion, the Board did, on various occasions, remonstrate against the alleged extravagance in these buildings. These remonstrances, which were addressed to the Scottish Education Department, did not seem to have had any effect. They were not listened to; but the Chairman of the Board in Scotland remained to this day under the strongest impression that if local advice had been taken in Scotland, the aggregate expenditure in the Highlands might have been very much smaller. The noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) had observed that there were statistical errors in that portion of the Crofters' Report which referred to education. His (Lord Napier and Ettrick's) attention had been drawn to an alleged error, and he had directed inquiry to be made, and, should it prove to be the case, nobody would regret it more sincerely than he did; but, whatever other statistical error there might be, it would not materially affect the circumstance that there had been a very unjustifiable and extravagant school expenditure in the North of Scotland, and that a fair claim might be based on that fact for assistance hereafter. He agreed that the burden was by no means solely due to extravagant expenditure on the school buildings, but was undoubtedly caused, to a certain extent, by the non-attendance of children; and he thought it right to mention that this circumstance, so justly noted by the noble Duke, was emphatically set forth in the Report.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, he believed a Report had been sent to the Department by an eminent official, as to the state of education and expense in the Hebrides and the North-Western Highlands; and he desired to ask his noble Friend (Lord Carlingford) if he had any objection to produce that Report and lay it on the Table?

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) said, he was glad the present opportunity had occurred, that he might correct the observations he made in a previous discussion with respect to the degree of responsibility which justly lay on the late Board of Education in Edinburgh, in regard to the schools in the Highlands and Islands. He would at once say that, in one respect, those observations were inaccurate—he meant in respect to the responsibility of the Edinburgh Board of Education for the school buildings in the Highlands and Islands, and in

Scotland generally. He believed he said on that occasion that the Edinburgh Board was responsible for the standard of building laid down for these schools. That was inaccurate, beyond what concerned the Edinburgh Board, because there was no architectural standard laid down by any authority with respect to these schools. He was sorry he had made the mistake; but he did not think the inaccuracy was a very unnatural one, as this question, for him, was one of an entirely historical character. All these transactions took place before the accession of the present Government to Office, and the Edinburgh Board of Education was wound up five years before he entered on the Office he now had the honour to hold. He knew, of course, that the Board of Education in Scotland had to deal with the school supply in that country; that it had to decide the questions which governed, he believed, more than anything else, the expenditure that had taken place—namely, the number of schools to be built, and the size of these schools. He knew, also, that it was responsible for the loans which now formed a charge on the rates in these Scottish school districts; and that those loans were obtained on the fiat and sanction of the Edinburgh Board of Education. Judging from these facts, he had been under the impression that it had the control over the plans and specifications of the schools themselves. There he was mistaken, and he gladly corrected the inaccuracy. He found that he was supposed to have made that statement with some deliberate purpose on the part of the Education Department, in order to remove the burden of the responsibility from their shoulders to those of the Board of Education. He could assure his noble Friend (the Duke of Argyll) that there was no such dark design involved in his words. He had spoken on the spur of the moment, and without consultation with the Education Department. He did not, for a moment, venture to say that no errors were made in the course of the great and most difficult task of supplying these poor and most exceptional districts in the Highlands and Islands with the full apparatus of a good education, which they now possessed. That was a most difficult and arduous task, and it was quite possible that more might have been done by the two authorities concerned to keep down the expenditure, and that all the Local Authorities were not as wise and prudent and economical as they might have been; but this strong impression had been made upon his mind after carefully looking into the subject since it was last mentioned—that whatever might have been done in the way of greater economy in these matters, the real and main cause of the expense and of the heavy burdens which now lay upon the school rates in these districts, in spite of the liberality of Parliament, had arisen from unavoidable circumstances—from the circumstances of the cases themselves, and from a number of facts which made it inevitable that this great supply of school accommodation could not be provided under the provisions of the Act of 1872 without imposing heavy burdens on very thinly peopled and poor districts such as these were. Those exceptional circumstances were largely recognized by Parliament; but whether sufficiently or not was a question upon which he could give no opinion, and which would have to be considered by the Government in dealing with the recommendations in the Report of the Crofters' Commission. He felt confident, from inquiry, that they were fully recognized by the Scottish Education Department. It would have been strange indeed if that Department had been ignorant of the requirements of the districts under consideration. It was virtually a Scotch Body, with a distinguished Scotchman as its Secretary, and the Duke of Richmond at its head; it had an accurate knowledge of the circumstances of the country, and was in constant contact with all those schools through its Inspectors. The special interests of the districts were obvious to both authorities in England and Scotland, and they were now obvious to the Crofters' Commission. It was generally supposed that the Report of that Commission was very condemnatory of the Scotch Education Department; but that was not the case. The Report said that the chief cause of the heavy taxation was the building and maintaining of a large number of schools necessary for the scattered population in most of the Highland and Island parishes. The fact was that the main causes of the expenditure in the first instance and the charge now arose out of the circumstances of the case; and as to those main causes of expenditure the Board in Edinburgh was the responsible party, though he was not imputing any blame to it. It was true that its discretion in that respect was questioned by the Scottish Education Department, and also by its own officer—Professor Ramsay—who, in his very able Report on the Orkney and Shetland Islands, made a strong recommendation that the accommodation to be required should be reduced by the Edinburgh Board. That Board, however, he (Lord Carlingford) believed, came to a different conclusion, and that view was generally supported by the school boards themselves, who were not unnaturally anxious to make the most of the opportunity offered to them of obtaining large Government grants, which had to be applied for within a certain time; and, for the most part, both the school boards and the Board of Education were determined to build on a large scale, so as to provide accommodation for the whole number of children of school age between 5 and 13, and more or less to provide for the future. The Report of the Crofters' Commission went on to say that the Highland and Island school buildings were erected under stringent regulations of the Scotch Education Department in a style and on a scale beyond the requirements of the population. But the scale did not depend on the Scotch Education Department, neither did the style. As to the requirements of the Education Department in this matter of school buildings, the truth was that in these cases, as in others, they consisted of certain conditions of a very elementary kind which were considered necessary for the health of the children and for the solidity and duration of the buildings, and it was perfectly possible to comply with all the requirements of the Education Department, and to put up the plainest possible schools. There were many such schools, and it was quite absurd to talk about palaces that had been multiplied in these districts. Most of the schools, he believed, were simple and sensible buildings, though he did not say they were all so. There was no doubt that some of these school boards were ambitious, and desired better looking and more ornamental buildings. Nothing of the kind, however, was imposed upon them by the requirements of the Education Department. That was entirely their own doing; and if the Department were open to any blame, it would be that they had not sufficiently resisted the ambition of certain school boards. The Department, he believed, never interfered to increase the expenditure, but always to reduce it. He would like that some details and examples of the alleged extravagance had been given; but the fact was the Crofters' Commission did not put themselves into communication with any school board or School Inspector, or with the Education Department, and that would account for their making those statements about the action of the Education Department, which appeared to him very misleading. The noble Duke and the noble Lord (Lord Napier and Ettrick) referred to some remonstrances addressed to the Scotch Education Department by the Edinburgh Board on the score of the stringency of their requirements; but he (Lord Carlingford) entirely failed to make out what they meant, they were couched in such vague and general terms. No particular instance was ever given by the Board of Education of these supposed extravagant requirements, and no definite proposal was ever made on the subject to the Education Department. No; there was an exception. Professor Ramsay did make a suggestion, in one of his two able Reports, in favour of relaxing some of the requirements of the Education Department. He recommended that teachers' houses should not be required to be on so large a scale; and that, in the case of small schools, the school itself might be used for the teacher's purposes. Professor Ramsay, in his Report, had also spoken of unnecessary outlay in the case of certain schools, and went on to say—

> "In other cases boards are building substantial schools and houses at considerably smaller cost; and I have before me an excellent plan for a house and school, approved by the Education Department, capable of holding 50 or 60 children, and which an excellent local builder in Lerwick estimates he can build in the Island of Fetlar at some distance from the sea for £660. Now, this is the average size of schools which will be required in Shetland. It is remarkable that the boards have seldom, if ever, taken advantage of the relaxations made by the Department in the conditions as to teachers' houses for poorer districts, as also in the matter of boundary walls. The Department have expressly stated that in Shetland and other poor districts they will be satisfied with smaller houses containing fewer rooms than they require elsewhere; that they will permit one of the

rooms of the teacher's house to be used as a class-room; and, finally, that they do not require boundary walls to be built; and yet in drawing out their plans the boards have not taken advantage of these provisions in their favour."

He (Lord Carlingford) supposed that that had arisen from a kind of rivalry between these boards. He could give many instances of the way in which the applications of school boards had been treated. He would give one. The original cost of the school as proposed by the School Board of Fetlar had been £906, which, acting on the advice of Professor Ramsay, the Education Department had induced the school board to reduce to £605. Then came the question of the Parliamentary grant; and under the terms of the Act £400 had been paid down, leaving only £205, while of this balance, again, one-half was paid by the Department, making in all a grant of £502 10*s*. As to those general remonstrances which were addressed to them, he thought under a misapprehension, by the Edinburgh Board, the Scottish Education Department, in reply, used these words—

> "With reference to the comments of the Board of Education on our administration of the building grants for the Highlands and Islands, we think it right to observe that the Board do not appear to have acquainted themselves with our practice in dealing with these districts. Grants have been awarded to them on a much more liberal scale than that recommended by the Board, and in aid of the erection of schools on plans which would not have been approved in other districts."

He would repeat his conviction, after looking carefully into the history of the matter, that whatever might have been done to reduce the expenditure which had taken place either by the Scottish Education Department, or the Board in Edinburgh, or the school boards themselves, who could have done much more in this direction than either of the two authorities, still the real and main cause of the expense and of the pressing burden on the rates arose out of the circumstances of the districts themselves, the scattered population, and the great cost of materials and labour. Further, a large number of the schools had to be built at a time of general prosperity, when everything was dear; but beyond that, and above all, these districts were some of the most thinly populated and poorest to be found in the United Kingdom, a state of things which rendered what would have been a light burden, in any ordinary parish in the Lowlands of Scotlands or in England, a very heavy one for them. The school rates were, certainly, in many of these parishes, very painfully heavy. It must not, however, be supposed that the repayment of the building loan formed any great proportion of these rates. Much the largest part of them was incurred for the purpose of maintenance, and that undoubtedly would be very largely relieved if the school boards would bring about that great improvement in the attendance of children which ought to take place. That was a very grave and crying evil in these districts. The inadequacy of school attendance produced a loss of school fees and Government grant; and, in addition, it deprived those schools of the special provisions made in their behalf by Parliament—the extra grant which followed on a certain average attendance. He had the matter worked out in a number of school districts where it was evident that, if the school attendance could be brought up to a reasonable standard, the increase both in the ordinary and extra grants would be so large that it would go very far to relieve those districts from the heavy burden of rate which lay upon them. Nevertheless, he fully recognized that heavy burden which lay upon these poor districts, which greatly deserved their sympathy; and while it was not his business to express any opinion, or make any announcement on this occasion with respect to the recommendations of the Crofters' Commission, those recommendations would, of course, receive the most careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government. In reply to the latter question of the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) he would say that the Report to which it referred was made in the autumn for the Education Department for their own information; but, as he thought it could only do good, he should be very glad to lay it on the Table. In doing so, however, he must say that the Report did not bind the Department to any opinion — it was simply given for the purpose of information.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY, as speaking for the Education Department under the late Government, said, he had to thank his noble Friend opposite (Lord Carlingford) for the ample way in which he had vindicated the action of the Scotch Education Board. It had been presided over by his noble Friend (the Duke of Richmond), and had had the advantage of the assistance of Sir Francis Sandford, who had probably a greater knowledge of Scotch requirements than anybody else. They had taken the opinions of leading Scotch Members on various occasions; and, with regard to economy, they had frequently had occasion to entreat school boards in these poor districts to be moderate in their demands as regarded plans and buildings; and, in response, they had been remonstrated with for meddling with them, when they were dealing with their own rates. In fact, there had been a constant endeavour on the part of the Education Department to reduce the cost of the school buildings; and, unless his memory very much misled him, to reduce the rates; the school boards had constantly struggled to be allowed a greater expenditure, and the Department had had remonstrances against the Department's proposals to reduce the cost from Members representing the districts.

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 4th December, 1884.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Richard William Blackwood Ker, esquire, *for* Down County.

SELECT COMMITTEE—*Report*—Agricultural Labourers (Ireland) [No. 32]; Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1869, &c. [No. 33].

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution [40]; National School Teachers (Ireland) [11], *debate adjourned.*

Committee — Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) [19]—R.P.

QUESTIONS.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND)—COLLECTION OF COUNTY CESS—CLARE CO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to recent Resolutions of the magistrates and associated cesspayers of the barony of Ibricane (Clare), and of the Corofin, Killadzourt, and Limerick Board of Guardians of the poor, protesting against the action of the Clare Grand Jury in raising the poundage paid to barony constables for collection of County Cess from nine pence to a shilling, whilst the Poor Rate, a charge more difficult to collect, is collected all through Clare for a poundage of six pence, Whether the Government will urge the Grand Jury to act on the suggestion made in the several Resolutions, by advertising for tenders for the collection of County Cess, or whether, alternatively, the Judge of Assize will refuse to sanction a higher rate of poundage for the collection of County Cess in Clare than is paid for the collection of Poor Rate in that county; whether the increase in poundage lately voted by the Grand Jury exacts a tribute of £660 per annum from the cesspayers of the county, and the difference between the poundage for Poor Rate and County Cess is annually twice that sum; whether the Grand Jurors, in their capacity of *ex officio* Guardians, fix the poundage for the collection of the Poor Rate, to which they contribute, at six pence, whilst voting a shilling in the pound for the collection of County Cess, to which many of them do not contribute at all; whether the work of the barony constable is usually done by a deputy, at a remuneration of three pence or four pence in the pound; whether the barony constables are generally connections of Grand Jurors; and, whether, in one case recently, a Grand Juror having appointed a barony constable, a near relation of his own, to be his land agent, the Grand Jury immediately raised the constable's poundage from nine pence to a shilling?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The law fixes the amount of the poundage which the Grand Jury is empowered to give for the collection of County Cess, and it is not suggested that the legal limit has been exceeded. The Government has no control in this or the other matters referred to in the Question. The appointment of deputy collectors is expressly permitted by the Grand Jury Act.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—BECHUANALAND.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for the

Colonies, Whether the Cape Government have entered into any engagement with the Imperial Government to pay any, and, if so, what portion of the expenditure now being incurred for the Expedition to Bechuanaland; and, whether there is any truth in the report that the Representative Ministers of the Cape Government have entered into an arrangement for settling the difficulty; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government intend to ratify it?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he should like to ask whether Her Majesty's Government had received any information as to the very contradictory rumours from South Africa—namely, on the one hand, that an arrangement had been entered into between the Cape Government and the Freebooters, which had been referred to Her Majesty's Government and declined by them; and, on the other hand, that Mr. Upington, the Premier of the Cape Colony, had addressed a most extraordinary speech to the Freebooters?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: In reply to the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms), I have to say that the Cape Colony will not be expected to pay any portion of the expenditure directly connected with Sir Charles Warren's Expedition. In reply to the second Question, the Cape Ministers who proceeded to Bechuanaland have reported by telegraph certain conditions on which they will be able, they say, to settle the present difficulties. Those conditions, as a whole, could not be accepted as at present understood by Her Majesty's Government; and Her Majesty's Government will require further explanations; but they do not expect to be able to arrive at any conclusions until after Sir Charles Warren has arrived in Bechuanaland. That will answer the first portion of the right hon. Baronet's Question also. As to the second portion of the right hon. Baronet's Question, I have to state that we have received no information about the speech of Mr. Upington; and in a telegraphic message received to-day from Sir Hercules Robinson about other matters he does not allude to it; but we have sent a telegram to the High Commissioner, asking him what is the truth of the matter about that speech.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Will the hon. Gentleman communicate any reply that may be received in reference to this subject before the House adjourns for the Recess?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes, Sir; to-morrow, if received in time.

THE WEST INDIA ISLANDS—REPORTED FIRING ON COOLIES AT TRINIDAD.

MR. A. PEASE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government have any information as to the firing upon the Coolies by the military and police in Trinidad on October 30th, whereby twelve were killed, five mortally wounded, and eighty-eight were wounded so that they had to be taken to the hospital?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that a great slaughter of East Indians has occurred in Trinidad, in a collision with the police, about sixteen being killed and eighty-six wounded; whether the collision occurred in consequence of a new police regulation prohibiting the passage of a popular procession hitherto permitted; whether Indian labourers have recently been discontented, in consequence of an alteration in the scale of payment to them upon the plantations; whether they were under five-year contracts, made and attested in India and enforced by penal Laws, under the supervision of the Government; whether a change, to the disadvantage of these compelled contract labourers, and without their consent, was sanctioned by the Governor and Protector of Immigrants, or whether they took any measures to protect the Indians against such a breach of contract; and, whether a full inquiry will be made?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: For many years the celebration of the Mohurrum Festival has been attended with more or less disturbance among the Coolies in Trinidad, collisions having taken place between the bands from different estates, resulting in bloodshed. In 1882 an Ordinance was passed, based on a British Guiana Ordinance, which, under similar circumstances, is said to have worked well, giving the Governor power to make regulations. In the earlier part of this year such regulations were issued by which the processions were forbidden to enter the towns of the Port of Spain or San Fernando, or to use any high road without special permission. It was fully explained to the Indian population that the regulations were merely intended to preserve order, and in no way to interfere with the celebration of their religious festival. Notwithstanding this, the Coolies marched, on the 31st of October, in large numbers, estimated at 1,000, armed with hakka sticks and cutlasses, and attempted to force their way into the town of San Fernando. I may say that at the Port of Spain the regulations were attended to. The police were drawn up across the roads, 10 in one place and 20 in another, with a small number of soldiers behind them. The Coolies continuing to advance after having been repeatedly warned, the Riot Act was read by the magistrate present, and the police fired. Thirteen Coolies were killed, and 31 were taken into the hospital, out of a total of 102 killed and wounded. The Inspector-Superintendent of Police stated that they fired in self-defence; and in his opinion, and that of the officer commanding the troops, they would have been overwhelmed had they not done so. We are awaiting the results of the inquests which are being held as well as the Attorney General's opinion. But considering the great loss of life, the Secretary of State considers that an inquiry by an independent person will be desirable. We have no information of any discontent among the Coolies in consequence of alterations in the scale of payments to them. From a Table in the last Report of the Protector of Immigrants it appears that less than half the Coolies in Trinidad were under indentured contracts. I am not in a position either to affirm or deny that the conditions of the contracts have recently been more strictly enforced; but I cannot conceive that there is any possibility of any breach of contract having been sanctioned.

In reply to a further Question by Sir George Campbell,

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that the Coroner was a European. He could not, without Notice, say whether there would be a jury, and he could not say whether they would be European or not.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE —NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

Mr. ALBERT GREY asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether the recent outbreak of Foot-and-Mouth Disease at Newstead Abbey has been traced to the importation of that disease from Ireland or any Foreign Country?

Mr. KENNY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I would ask him if he is aware that Ireland has been free for several months from foot-and-mouth disease; and that on every occasion on which it has broken out in that country the outbreak has been directly traced to infection from Great Britain?

Mr. TREVELYAN: It is certainly the case that Ireland has been free from foot-and-mouth disease generally for a very long time, and it has been entirely free from any outbreak for several months. I am quite sure that nobody will acknowledge that more readily or freely than my hon. Friend who has asked this Question; because his interests are precisely the same as those on behalf of which the hon. Member asked the Question. The outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease at Newstead Abbey was investigated by an Inspector of the Privy Council; but no facts were ascertained which threw any light on the origin of the infection. There is not the slightest reason to suspect that the outbreak was due to the importation of the disease from Ireland or any foreign country. The last cargo in which there was a case of foot-and-mouth disease landed at any port in the United Kingdom was as far back as February.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE NEWSPAPER PRESS—RECENT ARTICLES IN "UNITED IRELAND."

Mr. M'COAN rose to put the following Question to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland:—If his attention has been called to a series of extracts from recent articles in *The United Ireland* newspaper, which appeared in *The Times* of Wednesday last; whether Charles Stewart Parnell, Justin M'Carthy, and Joseph Gillis Biggar are the registered proprietors of *The United Ireland*, and William O'Brien its responsible editor; and, whether such writings are not incitements to disaffection and crime, and calculated to bring the Government of the Country and the administration of the Law into contempt amongst the masses of the Irish people; and, if so, whether it is the intention of the Irish Executive to permit the continued publication of such appeals to popular ignorance and passion, even although those who derive trade profits from them are Members of this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: Before the hon. Member puts this Question, I must call his attention to the fact that the last two lines contravene the Rule of this House which applies to Questions, inasmuch as they contain a statement of fact which, I understand, is disputed, and also a matter of opinion as to the interpretation to be put upon the articles in question, which he states to be "appeals to popular ignorance and passion." Following the Rule which applies to Questions, I must ask the hon. Member to be good enough to omit that portion of the Question.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I rise, Sir, to Order. I wish to ask you, whether under the same Rule you will not request the hon. Member to omit the words in the Question "incitements to disaffection and crime?"

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a statement of fact. The opinion which the hon. Member wishes to elicit is whether the Irish Executive think it necessary to interfere, in consequence of the publication of these articles.

Mr. M'COAN: I, of course, Mr. Speaker, bow at once to your suggestion. I had hoped that the slight conveyance of opinion on the question was a perfectly legitimate one, and would have commended itself to your mind. Of course, I will leave out the words you mention, and substitute the words "such writings" instead of "appeals to popular ignorance and passion."

Mr. O'BRIEN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I will ask him also to say whether, so far from inciting to crime, one of these articles headed "A Warning," from which a garbled extract was given in *The Times*, was not a vehement denunciation of agrarian crime, and an exhortation to the people to hunt it down themselves, and whether these articles were not published with the object of obtaining a public investigation into grave and specific charges against certain public officials therein named of taking away innocent lives, screening infamous officials —[*Cries of* "Order!"]—corrupting the course of justice by packing juries, employing perjured witnesses, using the detective police for the purpose of organizing crime, and seducing convicts to give false evidence—[*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is contravening the Rule which it was my duty just now to lay down. If the hon. Member desires to make anything like a personal explanation, he is at liberty to do so.

Mr. O'BRIEN: I was simply explaining, Sir, what the writings which the hon. Member stigmatizes as "incitements to crime" really aimed at, and I was setting forth, as far as possible, the specific charges which these articles contain in reference to the administration of the law in Ireland. The only other thing I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman is whether, if the incriminated officials feel aggrieved, and are prepared to justify themselves before a jury, the Courts of Law are not open to them in the ordinary manner for that purpose?

Mr. SEXTON: I have also to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in consequence of incitement said to be of an incendiary and revolutionary character, a newspaper which the hon. Member who put the Question (Mr. M'Coan) edited in the Levant was not several times suppressed by the Government of the country?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The last Question put by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) is not, I presume, intended to be answered. The other Questions put by the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) enter into matters of argument and opinion to which I can hardly be expected to reply. The attention of the Irish Government has been called not only to the extracts recently published in *The Times*, but to the original articles as they appeared from time to time in *United Ireland*. I have no precise information as to the actual proprietors of that newspaper, but I believe those who have been named by the hon. Member are or have been connected with it. I can assure my hon. Friend that, although the fact that some of those concerned are Members of Parliament may increase the importance attached to the paper in the eyes of some of its readers in Ireland, it will not influence the Government in deciding upon the course they may think proper to adopt in the matter. The character and tone of many passages in those articles are such that they must be regarded with repugnance and condemned by all who value the maintenance of public order, and especially by those who appreciate most highly the existence of a free Press as a field for fair and reasonable political controversy. But the point we have always to consider is whether the harm which might unfortunately be done by the circulation of such articles might not be intensified, if any legal proceedings taken against a newspaper gave it a fictitious importance in the eyes of the more ignorant classes. This is, and always will be, a very difficult matter to decide. Its decision, as occasion arises, must be left to the Executive Government, which on the one hand is disposed to disregard these violent articles so far as they profess to be criticisms of their own conduct, but on the other hand they are fully alive to the effect which such publications may have on the general community.

MR. O'BRIEN: As I am to some extent interested in this matter, I wish to say that neither the good nor the evil opinion of the right hon. Gentleman is anything to me.

MR. SPEAKER: That is not a statement compatible with the Rules of the House. The Question has been answered. I must call upon Mr. Justin M'Carthy (who had the next Question on the Paper).

MR. O'BRIEN, who rose amid cries of "Order!" said: Sir, an attack has been made upon me, and I hope I may be allowed to reply to it. ["Order!"]

MR. CALLAN: Move the adjournment.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member wishes to make a personal explanation, the House will grant its indulgence.

MR. O'BRIEN: I simply wish to say that whatever may be the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman—[*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: That is not in the nature of a personal explanation. I call upon the hon. Member who has the next Question on the Paper—Mr. Justin M'Carthy.

MR. O'BRIEN: I bow to your decision, Sir; but it is a singular exhibition of British fair play.

ARMY—THE MEDICAL STAFF.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Captain of Orderlies C. Cook, "late" Army Hospital Corps, has authority to exercise the prerogative of command within the Medical Staff and the Medical Staff Corps respectively, in the like manner and to the same extent as, by virtue of his commission, he had within the "late" Army Medical Department and the "late" Army Hospital Corps; whether the rate of pay which this officer is now in receipt of, viz. 10*s.* a-day, is considered a fair and reasonable compensation for the duties and work performed, or adequate remuneration for any officer of the Medical Department or Medical Staff who has over eleven years' commissioned service; and, whether it is a fact that Captain of Orderlies Cook is the only officer now serving in the Army who has risen from the ranks for whom no increase of pay is provided; and, if so, whether the Secretary for War will take this exceptional case into consideration?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER, who replied, said: The officer referred to exercises the same command in the Medical Staff Corps that he exercised prior to the issue of the recent Warrant in the Army Hospital Corps. He has the pay assigned to his rank by former Royal Warrants, which Warrants did not provide for an increase of such pay; but it is open to him to accept the terms first offered in 1881, in which case he would attain to the same rates of pay as the other officers who were his contemporaries as Captains of Orderlies, and who have accepted the new terms.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION (SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—SITTINGS AT LONGFORD.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, In reference to a reply to a Question put on the 24th November, why the Sub-Commissioners could not hear, at the December sittings at Longford, more than 44 cases, listed, considering that several of these cases are already settled; whether, in the event of more than 100 cases transferred last March, at the landlord's instance, from the County Court to the Sub-Commission, not being heard and decided before the 1st May 1885, the landlord may, after that date, insist on prompt payment of a full year's rent, from May 1884, at the old rent, though the judicial rent would commence at that date if fixed by the County Court last March; and, whether, in such case, the tenants could recover the rent paid in excess, if any; and, if not, how can the suitors be saved from suffering by the delay?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is the practice of the Commissioners, in fixing the number of cases to be listed for hearing at a particular sitting, to allow a margin for probable settlements out of Court. With regard to the problematic part of the Question which follows, the Commissioners' Rule No. 65, which is already before the House, appears to afford an answer.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TRIAL OF THE NEWRY RIOTERS.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, With regard to the trials of six men for having, at Newry, on the 8th of June last, the occasion of the National meeting there, fired out of the Orange Hall, with intent to kill, what course the Crown intend to pursue in these cases, having regard to the great delay already permitted, and to the undertaking given on behalf of the Irish Government that these cases would not be locally tried; and, why the cases were not put forward at the last Commission in Dublin?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker), in reply, said, the cases would be tried at the Winter Assizes in Belfast.

Mr. SEXTON asked, whether the Winter Assizes were not intended for prisoners in custody; whether these men were not out on bail; and, whether it was not absolutely certain that every Orangeman tried in Belfast would be acquitted?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, he had no reason to think that the Belfast jurors would return an improper verdict in these cases.

INTESTATE, &c. ESTATES (IRELAND)—ESTATE OF THE LATE MRS. HELEN BLAKE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, With reference to his statement that £19,000 out of the estate of the late Mrs. Helen Blake had been paid away by the Treasury under the head of "intended legacies," to whom these payments were made, what was the amount in each case, and what was the nature of the evidence by which the Treasury was satisfied of the intention of the deceased in regard to the legacies in question; and, whether a Copy of such evidence will be laid on the Table?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, who replied, said: The legacies referred to were paid as being specified in an unexecuted and incomplete will, which, so far as it went, expressed Mrs. Blake's latest wishes. They comprise a gift of £6,400 to the National Lifeboat Institution; £3,000 to Trinity College, Dublin, for a Scholarship in Irish History; £2,000 for the benefit of Irish Railway *employés;* £1,000 each to a Society for the protection of life from fire and for shipwrecked fishermen; £2,000 each to The O'Conor Don and to the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), whose public conduct she admired; and various smaller legacies to old friends. There seems no reason for laying the documents in question on the Table.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether, as this unexecuted will had no legal authority, the Government thought it was right, or in accordance with justice, to distribute £19,000 of this lady's money in the way stated without placing a small portion of her funds at the disposal of persons who have a *primâ facie* case for showing that they are her nearest relatives, and who, therefore, have a right to share in the inheritance?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE: Perhaps the hon. Member will give Notice of the Question.

LAW AND POLICE—THE SALVATION ARMY AT WORTHING.

Mr. LODER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he received, on the 10th of September last, a communication from a committee appointed by the peaceful inhabitants of Worthing, calling his attention to the proceedings of the Salvation Army in that town, and suggesting a means of preventing the disturbance arising out of such proceedings; and, if so, what course he proposes to take in reference to the matter?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have received a communication on this subject. I am aware of the inconveniences which have been caused, and the documents referred to proposes certain methods of dealing with these and other processions; but that is a very delicate and difficult matter, and I confess I do not see my way to do anything upon it. Speaking generally, I do not think it is a good thing to legislate for particular cases which have caused temporary inconvenience. The wisest thing very often is to expect what generally happens—that it will blow over.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—THE STAFF.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that the majority of the thirty writers recently discharged from the Local Government Board Office were employed for several years on clerical duties of a nature more responsible than mere copying; whether vacancies created by the discharge of these writers have been filled up by Upper Division Clerks with salaries commencing at £200 per annum, and Lower Division Clerks with salaries ranging from £95 upwards; whether some of the Lower Division Clerks employed by the Board have received duty pay of £30 and £50 respectively per annum for performing precisely the same duties as those performed by writers at 10*d.* an hour; whether this change will result in an immediate increase in the Estimate for the Department; and, whether, in view of the writers having performed duties of a superior and responsible nature for several years, he will propose to the Treasury that some compensation be given to those whose places have now been filled by Established Clerks?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: In accordance with a scheme for the reorganization of the clerical staff of the Local Government Department, which was rendered necessary by the large amount and character of the work devolving on the officers of the Board, the number of writers has been considerably reduced, and an addition has been made to the number of Lower Division Clerks. Many of the writers had been employed on work other than mere copying, and some on duties which properly belonged to Clerks of the Lower Division. The most efficient of the writers have been retained. In no case has a vacancy caused by the discharge of a writer been filled up by the appointment of an Upper Division Clerk. As already stated, Lower Division Clerks have in some instances taken the place of writers, and the Board believe that this change will be beneficial to the Department. No Lower Division Clerks are receiving duty pay for the same duties as those performed by writers at 10*d.* an hour. It is not anticipated that the reorganization will occasion any increase in the Estimates for the present financial year. The Board understand that the regulations under which the writers are employed expressly provide that no service shall confer any claim of superannuation or compensation allowance.

POST OFFICE—POSTAGE STAMPS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has any objection to state the names of the experts who form the Committee now sitting on the designs and manufacture of postage stamps?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Committee is composed of officers of the Post Office and the Inland Revenue Department possessing considerable experience on the subject—namely, Mr. Jeffery, Controller of the London Postal Service, Mr. Page, a principal clerk in the Secretary's Office, and Mr. Mulock, Director of the Confidential Inquiry Branch, for the Post Office; Mr. Purcell, Controller of Stamps, and Mr. Bokenham, Second Assistant Controller of Stamps, for the Inland Revenue?

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE SHANNON.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the serious loss incurred by a number of farmers residing on the banks of the River Shannon, in the vicinity of Carrick on Shannon and Jamestown, county Roscommon, by the neglect of the keeper at Jamestown to open the flood-gates in proper time, and the consequent flooding of the neighbouring district; and, whether steps will be taken to prevent a recurrence of this neglect?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE, who replied, said: Attention has been called to the complaints referred to by the hon. Member. Every possible care was taken at the time to minimize the effects of the floods, and the efforts in this direction will not be relaxed on future occasions.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MAJOR TRAILL, R.M., TRIM PETTY SESSIONS.

Mr. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that Major Traill, R.M. in a case heard at Trim Petty Sessions in February last, in which the Inland Revenue, through Mr. M'Donagh, supervisor, Drogheda, prosecuted a man for carrying arms without a licence, and to which charge the man pleaded guilty, illegally dismissed the prisoner, and that, when Mr. M'Donagh remonstrated with Major Traill on his action, Major Traill ordered the police to arrest the supervisor and remove him out of Court; whether the supervisor was kept in custody in the hall of the Court House before the public on a market day, and afterwards liberated without any charge being made against him; whether it is true that, on appeal by the Inland Revenue, Major Traill's decision in the case was reversed; and, whether an application has been made by Supervisor M'Donagh to the Lord Lieutenant for permission to bring a civil action against Major Traill for illegal arrest, and whether such permission has been granted to him; and, if not, on what grounds is Mr. M'Donagh debarred from exercising his Constitutional right?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The statements in the first paragraph of the Question are substantially correct. There is a conflict of testimony on the point whether the Supervisor was kept in custody. Major Traill's decision was reversed on appeal. Under all the circumstances, the Lord Lieutenant thought it right to express to Major Traill his disapproval of his conduct on the occasion. No application has been made to the Lord Lieutenant by Mr. M'Donagh for permission to bring a civil action. I am informed he made some such application to the Board of Inland Revenue, but they expressed an opinion that, having regard to the disapproval of Major Traill's conduct expressed by the Lord Lieutenant, the matter should be allowed to drop.

Mr. Herbert Gladstone

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. MACARTNEY PORTER, J.P.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (for Mr. O'Kelly) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that Mr. Macartney Porter, J.P. Clogher, is brother to the District Master of the Orange Lodge of the district, and that one of the men (William Mills), accused of waylaying and assaulting Mr. Hynes, is in the employment of Mr. Porter, J.P.; whether the statement made by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant in reference to the assaults committed on Messrs. Hynes and Mackey at Clogher and Killyfaddy are based on information supplied by the police and magistrates, whose failure to protect the Catholic inhabitants of the district is the matter of complaint; whether he adheres to the statement that the waylaying and assault of Mr. Hynes in Clogher is not "serious;" and, whether, in view of the distrust felt by the Catholics of the Clogher district in the impartiality of the local magistrates, the Irish Government will send Resident Magistrates to try the cases, which are set down for hearing on the 9th instant at Clogher?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware whether the statement in the first paragraph is correct or not, nor do I know that I am called upon to inquire. It has been reported to me by the police that the magistrates did not consider the case of assault sufficiently serious to take up. The man referred to was himself summoned for waylaying and assault. It was open to him to take proceedings against his alleged assailants. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the information supplied to me. At the same time, I have asked the Attorney General for Ireland to give special consideration to the reports as to any of the cases pending, in view of seeing if they disclose any reason why any of them should be heard at Petty Sessions under the Prevention of Crime Act.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883 — THE BALLYRUSKIN SCHEME—ENNISTYMON UNION, CLARE. CO.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, as the result of a scheme for the erection of six labourers' cottages, under the Act of last year, in the electoral division of Ballyruskin, union of Ennistymon, county Clare, the Local Government Board, after inspection, sanctioned two, and whether nothing has since been done in respect to those two except the transmission by the Local Government Board of a bill of costs of over £20, or over £10 each cottage, to be levied on the electoral division; and, whether, with a view to facilitate the working of the Act, the Government will cause the cost of Local Government Board inquiries to be brought down to a more moderate figure?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The result of the inquiry held as required by the Act showed that three out of the five proposed sites were objectionable. The Local Government Board were prepared to proceed with regard to the remaining two; but the Guardians requested them to postpone action pending anticipated legislation. As regards the costs of advertising and services of a reporter incidental to the local inquiry, the Local Government Board are bound to recover the amount, the sums paid being merely advanced by them for the Guardians' convenience. The shorthand writer is paid at a scale fixed by the Treasury. The expenses of the Inspector who conducts the inquiry are not charged to the Union.

PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX—INCOME FROM LAND AND HOUSES.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, in view of the estimate of the First Lord of the Treasury in his Budget Speech of 1853—

> "That one-fourth of the gross income derived from lands and houses goes into the pockets of mortgagees, annuitants, and others who receive under settlements,"

whether, upon inquiry, he can confirm or vary that estimate; and, whether he can separately estimate the proportion of the gross rents of lands and houses engrossed by the encumbrancers?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): My right hon. Friend the present First Minister, it is true, made such an estimate, as will be seen in *Hansard's* report of his speech; but he prefaced his remark by saying that it was a "conjectural estimate." I am not in a position either to confirm or vary that estimate, as there are no Returns or Records available to me Departmentally—and I know of none in my private capacity—which would afford any definite information upon the point. I should imagine that my right hon. Friend relied for his estimate upon his wide experience, fortified possibly by those of some leading conveyancers, landowners, and land agents, who would have a much better knowledge of these matters than the officers of the Revenue.

EGYPT—EGYPTIAN EXILES.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay upon the Table Copies of Correspondence relating to the Egyptian Exiles?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; the Correspondence will be laid upon the Table.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—THE HIGHLANDS.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether Mr. Craik, of the Education Department, was sent to examine into the state of education in the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland during the summer, and to report; and, if so, whether his Report will be laid upon the Table of the House and distributed to Members?

MR. MUNDELLA: Immediately after the Report of the Crofters' Commission appeared I instructed Mr. Craik to make the inquiry referred to, in order that we might ascertain the best means of promoting education in the Highlands, and of relieving the local burdens complained of by the Commissioners. The Report has been completed within the last few days, and will be at once presented to Parliament.

CROFTERS AND COTTARS OF THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—EVIDENCE OF MR. JOHN CRAWFORD.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to the evidence of Mr. John Crawford, factor, given at Bonar Bridge before the Royal Commission, in which that gentleman, in reply to question 39,595, said—

> "There has been a considerable reduction made to large tenants, and, instead of making a reduction to the small tenants, the Duke has

> expended £515 this year in providing seed, corn, and potatoes for them. He has also given me £500 to lay out in works of trenching and improving their lots;"

if he is aware that Mr. Crawford is now threatening summary proceedings before the Sheriff for the recovery of the cost of the seed, corn, and potatoes said to have been given instead of a reduction of rent; and, if the crofters have any legal remedy against this claim?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): The passage quoted in the Question does occur in the evidence of Mr. John Crawford. He states that the seed was not given as a gift, but on the distinct stipulation and condition that it should be paid for, though the term of payment was deferred, and he has addressed a communication to the tenants demanding payment. If the allegation that the seed was given upon an obligation for payment is disputed, and it is asserted that it was given as a gift, the matter can be decided in the same way as any other disputed question.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I wish to ask a further Question—whether Mr. Crawford does not dispute the accuracy of the Question, but says that the seed potatoes were given as a gift? Mr. Crawford took credit before the Commissioners for the gift.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I must point out that the words of Mr. Crawford's evidence did not express what the hon. Member puts to me. It may be that is the interpretation of them; but, of course, no matter stated *ex parte* in this way would effect a contract, if there was a contract.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I beg to give Notice that on the earliest occasion I will call attention to this question.

THE MAGISTRACY—BREWERS AS JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

Mr. ONSLOW asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is a fact that the Lord Chancellor has written to the Lords Lieutenant of the various counties requesting them in future not to submit to him the names of any brewers for the Commission of the Peace; whether brewers are not already precluded by Law from adjudicating on licensing questions in order not to disqualify them altogether for the Magistracy; and, if so, why the Lord Chancellor has, on his own responsibility, fettered the discretion of the Lords Lieutenant; and, whether he is within his Constitutional right in so doing, and thus precluding a specified class of the community from the magisterial service without considering each special case?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, he had made inquiries on the subject from the Lord Chancellor, who, he found, had a rule, that when brewers' names were submitted to him for the office of licensing magistrates, with the names of other persons who were large owners of property in boroughs and counties, his Lordship left out the names of brewers.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—COST OF COUNTY ELECTIONS.

Mr. H. TOLLEMACHE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, in view of the proposed assimilation of the County and Borough Franchise, and the contraction of electoral areas in many counties, the Government contemplate any modification of the scale of expenditure for county elections laid down by the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, that, as far as he knew, the Government had not considered this question. It was not intended to legislate on the subject until a General Election had given them some experience.

CENTRAL ASIA—TRADE WITH THIBET.

Mr. RICHARD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government claim the right, under existing Treaties and Conventions with the Government of China, for British merchandise to enter into Thibet; and, whether the right to introduce opium is included in such claim?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Treaties and Conventions between this country and China do not stipulate for the entrance of British merchandize into Thibet.

SCOTLAND—THE CRINAN CANAL COMMISSIONERS — RATES ON VESSELS AND GOODS.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to the rates levied by the Canal Commissioners for vessels and goods passing through the Crinan Canal, and to a Petition upon the subject, the receipt of which was acknowledged by the Secretary to the Commissioners on the 24th of October; and, if he is able to say if any decision has been arrived at, and if any reduction is to be made in the dues complained of?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): The allegations in the Petition to which the hon. Member refers have been for some time under consideration by the Commissioners of the Caledonian Canal, by whose directions careful inquiries have been made in regard to the rates levied at other ports; and several amendments in the table of rates at present in force on the Crinan Canal are in contemplation.

CENTRAL ASIA—AFGHAN FRONTIER COMMISSION.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can give the House any information as to the progress made by the Afghan Frontier Commission, and as to the steps which Her Majestys Government have taken in consequence of the occupation by Russian troops of some positions on the frontier which were within the disputed territory?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, Whether the Russians have lately occupied Pul-i-Khatun, on the Perso-Afghan frontier, 60 miles beyond Sarakhs, and 160 miles nearer to India than Merv; where the British Boundary Commission now are; where the Russian Commissioner is at present; and, whether the British Government accept the occupation of Pul-i-Khatun by the Czar's troops in breach of the engagements of the Russian Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The British Commissioner, according to the most recent information, was on his way to Panjdeh; but the work of the Commission cannot begin until the arrival of his Russian colleague, whose departure from St. Petersburg was delayed, so that he cannot arrive at Sarakhs, the meeting-place of the Commission, before the latter part of January. The British and Russian Governments are in communication, with a view to defining a zone of territory within which the frontier line shall be traced; and Her Majesty's Government have pressed for the withdrawal of any troops which have been advanced beyond Sarakhs, pending the meeting of the Commission.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE CONGO.

MR. SALT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If England has acknowledged, or is about to acknowledge, the independent authority of the International Association of the Congo; whether steps have been taken for the due protection of British trade on the Congo and in the Countries adjacent; and, whether the International Association of the Congo is under the control or protection of any European Power that assumes a responsibility for its actions; and, if so, of what Power?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The question of the recognition of the authority of the International Association is now a matter of negotiation at Berlin. Her Majesty's Government hope that the steps which they have taken, and are taking, at the Conference will secure the due protection of British trade on the Congo and in the adjacent countries; and I may add that the increase of the Consular staff is under consideration. So far as Her Majesty's Government are aware, no European Power has assumed any responsibility for the actions of the International Association.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—PRESS MESSAGES.

MR. ECROYD asked the Postmaster General, If it is the fact that, during the past few months, an extra charge has been imposed upon newspaper proprietors in certain towns for the receipt of Press messages after the ordinary hours during which the telegraph offices in the towns are open to the public; and, whether such charge is not precluded by 31 and 32 Vic. c. 101, s. 16?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: It is the case that within the last few months the proprietors of the newspapers at Bolton and Preston have been required to pay the cost of late attendance for the receipt of news; and this is in accordance with the usual practice elsewhere. The charge is not contrary to the Act quoted by the hon. Member.

EXCISE LICENCES—RAILWAY REFRESHMENT ROOMS.

Mr. A. PEASE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether licenses to sell intoxicating liquors granted to railway refreshment rooms entitle the holders to hawk spirits in bottles in every part of the station?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers), who replied, said: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question; and, so far as the Revenue Departments are concerned, I have to say that the Excise licence for the sale of liquors at a railway refreshment room is, in fact, a publican's licence, based on the certificate of the magistrates under the Act 9 *Geo.* IV. c. 61, Schedule C; and as this permits the liquors to be drunk or consumed in the house, or on the premises thereunto belonging, the supply of liquors to passengers on the railway platform seems to me to be within the meaning of the Act.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — CLAUSE 19—LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

Colonel COLTHURST asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will call the attention of Boards of Guardians to the necessity of carrying out the orders for the erection or repair of labourers' cottages, under Clause 19, Land Act, 1881, seeing that only 250 out of a total of 518, have been put into operation up to the 30th June 1884?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I think it would be very desirable that this matter should be pressed upon the attention of Boards of Guardians; and I will communicate with the Land Commission and the Local Government Board as to the best means of doing so.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—MARTIN DONNELLY, ATHLONE UNION.

Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, With reference to the proposed dwelling for a labourer named Martin Donnelly, of the Union of Athlone, Ireland, whether he will state the name of the employer who offered him "a house, kitchen garden, and rood of land, provided he would take service with him;" whether the Local Government Board has made or will make inquiries whether such offer was ever personally or *bonâ fide* made; whether he is aware that the labourer, Donnelly, absolutely denies it; whether the Kiltoom (Athlone Union) Sanitary Officer has expressed himself as satisfied with the sanitary arrangements of labourers' cottages in Donnelly's vicinity; and, whether, under "The Labourers' (Ireland) Act, 1883," Donnelly is in any way deprived of his free option to labour for the employers of a district at wages agreed upon in preference to working for one individual?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I am informed that the name of the employer who made the offer is Mr. J. B. Greene, of Lecarrow. I am not aware of the precise circumstances under which the offer was made, nor does it appear necessary to inquire. The Committee of the Guardians who had the matter before them had the testimony of the Guardian of the division and several cesspayers. There is nothing in the Labourers' Act requiring a labourer provided with a house to work for any particular individual; but the view that the Sanitary Authority seem to have taken of the matter is, that as they understood Donnelly could obtain a suitable residence otherwise, it was unnecessary to provide one for him under the Labourers' Act.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CLARE COUNTY—MESSRS. M. F. RYAN AND E. POWER.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Lord Chancellor has yet come to a decision with regard to recommendations made him to appoint Messrs. M. F. Ryan, of Clonakilla House, and E. Power, of Erribul, to the Commission of the Peace for the county of Clare? I also beg to ask, If the Board of Guardians of the Mohill Union did in May last recommend the names of several gentlemen for appointment to the Commission of the Peace; if two of those gentlemen, Messrs. Quinn and Maguire, are owners of property in Leitrim and other counties, and the former coroner for South Leitrim; and, if, considering the small number of Catholic magistrates in that county, the Government will fulfil their promise of remedying this state of things by appointing the two gentlemen named to the Commission of the Peace?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Lord Lieutenant of the county of Clare has refused to recommend either of these gentlemen to the Lord Chancellor, and the Lord Chancellor, having fully considered the matter, declines to overrule the decision of the Lieutenant of the county. With regard to the second Question of the hon. Gentleman, the two gentlemen named were recommended by the Mohill Guardians; but the Lord Lieutenant of the county of Leitrim declined to adopt such recommendation, and, in the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, not unreasonably.

MR. KENNY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Lord Lieutenant referred to is an Orangeman and Protestant, and that he repeatedly refused to recommend to the Commission of the Peace any persons not of his own way of thinking in politics?

[No reply.]

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—EXTRA POLICE, COUNTY MAYO.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether an extra police force of four constables is maintained at Kilkelly, county Mayo, for the protection of Mathias Lydon, of that place, against his will; whether the District Inspector of Constabulary, on being remonstrated with by Lydon and asked to withdraw the force, advised Lydon to write to the County Inspector, and whether, this being done, that official threw back the case into the hands of the District Inspector; whether the district is chargeable with the cost of the extra force; and, whether the protection will still be compulsorily applied to a man who declares that he has never been threatened, that he is in fear of no one, and that the guard upon him is injuring his trade?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is not the case that four extra police are maintained at Kilkelly for the protection of Lydon. The station is strengthened by one man only, and there is no charge on the district occasioned thereby. Protection will not be forced on Lydon; but the local police having reason to believe that it is necessary, will do their best to insure his safety. With regard to the correspondence with the County Inspector, Lydon appears to have been under a misapprehension as to what the District Inspector suggested to him.

MR. SEXTON: Will the extra constable be withdrawn now?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; the police consider it necessary.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—BUGBROOKE SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether his attention has been called to the action of the School Board at Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire, with respect to a boy named Lester, whose parent was informed, on his being suspected of stealing a cap, that he must either submit to a flogging, or to a prosecution for theft; and, whether it is open to a School Board to submit such alternatives to the parents of children attending Board Schools?

MR. MUNDELLA: There has been an investigation of this case by the magistrates at the Northampton Petty Sessions, where the schoolmaster was summoned for assaulting the boy Lester. The case appears to have been fully inquired into—both parties being represented by counsel—and the magistrates dismissed the charge. The mother having consented to the flogging, it was administered in the presence of the Rev. J. Harrison, the Chairman of the Board and Rector of the parish. The matter having been decided by the magistrates, I do not see that there is any case in which I can interfere.

PROPERTY AND INCOME TAX—BUILDING SOCIETIES.

MR. M'LAREN asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that many Building Societies have been in the habit, notwithstanding the provisions of the Income Tax Acts, of claiming and receiving from their mortgagees or borrowing members full interest on advances without any reduction in respect of Income Tax, and also to the hardship thus inflicted upon large numbers of the thrifty working classes; and, whether it is within the power of the Treasury to enforce against such Building Societies the penalty of fifty pounds for each offence, under section forty of the Act of 1853, in case such Building Societies do not refund to their borrowing members the moneys thus wrongfully received?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): In reply to the first Question of my hon. and learned Friend, I have to say that the refusal by Building Societies to allow any deduction in respect of Income Tax from interest on advances made to their mortgagors or borrowing members has frequently been the subject of complaint to the Board of Inland Revenue. Such refusal, where persisted in or defended in any way, is, upon inquiry, usually found to be based upon the difficulty which is alleged to exist in ascertaining how much of each payment made to the Society represents the interest on the sum advanced. It is apparent, however, that in any properly constituted Society the amount to be repaid must be arrived at by an actuarial calculation of how much will suffice to make good the sum originally advanced, together with interest at a certain rate per annum. When a complaint has been made, the Board of Inland Revenue have explained to the Society that upon making each payment, monthly or otherwise, a member is entitled to deduct Income Tax at the current rate upon so much thereof as represents interest, and the result has been generally satisfactory, the deduction claimed being allowed. There would be difficulty in proceeding under the 40th section of the Act of 1853, where, from ignorance of the law, or inability on the part of the borrower to ascertain the proportion of interest included in the payment, the deduction sought to be made has exceeded that which the complainant is entitled by law to make. In reply to so much of my hon. and learned Friend's last Question as is not met by what I have said, I may add that the penalty of £50 does not attach to a refusal to refund, but is confined to a refusal to allow. I will look further into this matter during the Recess, and I shall be glad of any assistance which my hon. and learned Friend can give me; but the question is one of a highly technical character, and surrounded with practical difficulties.

CITY OF LONDON LIVERY GUILDS COMMISSION.

Mr. BRYCE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, In what state of preparation are the Papers which still remain to be issued by the City of London Livery Guilds Commission, and when it is expected that these Papers will be laid before Parliament?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the remaining two volumes of the Papers were in the press, and he expected would be delivered in about three weeks.

EGYPT (THE EXPEDITION UP THE NILE)—LORD WOLSELEY'S PROCLAMATION.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has received a copy of the General Order of Lord Wolseley, published in the newspapers, offering a prize of £100, to be paid after their return to Egypt—

> "To the Battalion of the Nile Force that shall make the quickest time with the fewest accidents between Sarras and Debbeh, and will do all he can to give the place of honour to the Battalion which wins the prize;"

whether he approves of the terms of that Order; and, whether he will, taking into account the extra labour involved, and the harassing and unusual service on which the troops are engaged, favourably consider the question of an increase, under proper regulations, by way of working-pay, to the pay of the general body of troops employed on the Nile Expedition?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I have not yet received a copy of the General Order referred to in the hon. Gentleman's Question; but, judging from the telegraphic summary of it given in the newspapers, I should not be disposed in such a matter to interfere with the discretion vested in the General commanding the Expedition. As to the second part of the Question, having in view the rule laid down in the Queen's Regulations as to the liability of soldiers to be employed on every kind of labour during service in the field when a field ration is allowed, I am not prepared, as at present advised, to sanction the issue of working pay.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACTS)—THE MAIL SERVICE TO CYPRUS—THE PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL COMPANY.

Mr. MARRIOTT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he would state whether the prosperity of Cyprus has greatly increased under British rule; whether the Turkish tribute of £95,000 a-year has been regularly paid, and half of this sum retained by England to meet her share of the interests of the war, guaranteed jointly by this Country with France; whether, notwithstanding this heavy tribute, the annual deficits have decreased from, in 1882, £92,000; in 1883, £30,000; and this year, £13,000; and, whether, in the face of this increasing prosperity, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, for the pupose of saving £7,000 a-year, to terminate the postal contract made with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Company, and so deprive the inhabitants of their weekly mail service, and render even the fortnightly delivery dependent upon the Austrian Lloyd's Company steamers?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The preamble contained in the first three paragraphs of the hon. and learned Member's Question is substantially correct. But the Imperial postal revenue has lost nearly £50,000 by the mail contract, the amount received for postage being only about £150 a-year, while the subsidy is £7,000. It has been decided to allow the mails to be carried by the Austrian Lloyd's Company as an experiment; but the Secretary of State, at the same time, has invited the opinion of the local Legislative Council on the subject, and on the question whether, assuming funds to be available from local revenue for the renewal of some subsidy, it would be desirable to do so.

NAVY (SHIPS)—SOUTHAMPTON DOCKYARDS.

Dr. LYONS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, in the event of any extension of works under the Department being in contemplation, he will take into consideration the state of things in the Southampton dockyards, in one of which, under dearth of employment, the number of workmen has been reduced from 2,500 to 500 now only under pay, with consequently great distress amongst this class of operatives and families?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Two firms at Southampton are on the Admiralty list for ships of moderate size, and they will be considered when it is proposed to put out new work to contract.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—SCHOOL BOARDS IN SKYE.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If any of the Board Schools in the Island of Skye are now being used as barracks for Her Majesty's troops; and, if this is true, what other accommodation is provided for the children?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The following telegram has been received from the Procurator Fiscal at Portree:—

> "Marines quartered during night only in Board School at Uig; no interference with children who are taught in said school during the day; no other school used."

In reply to a further Question,

Mr. MUNDELLA said, the School Board could loan a school for any purpose if it did not interfere with its educational purposes.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he wished to ask a Question arising out of the answer. A school was loaned to him for a public meeting at night. An action was taken against the School Board for doing so, and judgment was given against them at Edinburgh. Would the right hon. Gentleman say whether the judgment was a lawful one or not? What he wished to ask was, whether a School Board could be guilty of any irregularity in so loaning a school?

Mr. MUNDELLA replied, that the Question did not arise out of the answer, and he asked that Notice should be given of it.

LAW AND POLICE—CHARGE OF SHOOTING WITH INTENT, &c. AT WELLINGTON COLLEGIANS.

Viscount CRICHTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is true, as stated in the newspapers, that a farmer, on Saturday last, discharged a loaded gun at some boys of Wellington College; whether several of the boys were wounded; and, whether any steps have been taken to make the person guilty of this outrage amenable?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have received a Report of this outrage. A farmer, finding some boys who belonged to Wellington College engaged in a paper-chase, and going across his meadows, shot at them with a gun loaded with No. 7 shot, and wounded a number of them. In these circumstances the matter was taken up, in the first place, by the Chief Constable for Berkshire; but according to the technicalities of the English law, it being discovered that the offence was committed in Hampshire, the procedure had to be transferred; but I will take care that the matter is properly pursued, in order that an outrage of this kind may be duly punished.

FRANCE AND CHINA—FRENCH VESSELS AT HONG KONG.

MR. CROPPER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If it be true, as stated in *The Pall Mall Gazette* of the 2nd instant, that—

> "The Government of Hong Kong, which was ordered to enforce the Foreign Enlistment Act by the Colonial Office, has allowed four French vessels under Admiral Lespès, which are actually engaged in hostile operations against China, to provision in the harbour?"

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: We have no information about the matter as yet; but we have inquired by telegram of the Governor of Hong Kong.

INLAND REVENUE—SECRECY OF INCOME TAX RETURNS.

MR. FINCH-HATTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to the following words, which occur in a circular dated 20th November 1884, and issued by the Inland Revenue Office to Surveyors of Taxes in England and Wales as instructions to them for giving effect to the Resolution of the House of Commons of 17th November, adding an additional penny to the Income Tax, viz.:—

> "In cases in which the collector's duplicates have been completed by the clerk, and have been handed to you for examination, you may arrange with the clerk for the insertion of the Duties specified being made in your office, and, in order to enable you to enter the Duties without loss of time, I am directed to authorise you to draw upon the nearest Collector of Inland Revenue to lend you at once the services of one Assistant of Excise;"

whether he has taken any steps to prevent the authority thus given for placing the Returns under Schedules A and B within the knowledge of persons unpledged to secrecy as to their contents; whether such an authority is not, in the case of Schedule D, in direct contravention of the Income Tax Act, 5 and 6 Vic. c. 35, and subsequent Acts; whether any Assistant of Excise, acting under such authority, will render himself liable to a penalty of £100 under the provisions of those Acts; and, whether he will at once withdraw the circular?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Secrecy only attaches to returns and assessments under Schedule D, and a violation of secrecy in connection with that Schedule would undoubtedly be in contravention of the Income Tax Acts. But as it is already matter of strict instruction to Surveyors of Taxes not to allow any information under that Schedule to pass through the hands of a person not sworn to secrecy, and as the Board of Inland Revenue have every reason to believe that their instructions in this respect are rigidly adhered to, it was unnecessary to repeat the injunction, and no necessity whatever exists for withdrawing the Circular referred to. The Assistants of Excise employed in connection with Schedule D are invariably sworn to secrecy. As regards Schedules A and B, although secrecy is not imposed by law, it is not the practice of the Board of Inland Revenue to allow their officers to permit the inspection of the assessments by any unauthorized person.

IRELAND—THE CORPORATION OF LIMERICK—EXTRA POLICE TAX.

VISCOUNT CRICHTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps the Irish Executive are taking to levy the extra police tax from the Limerick Corporation; what is the cause of the delay; whether any proposal has been made by the Corporation to arrange the matter; and, whether the Government made any recent offer or suggestion of compromise?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: On the application of the Irish Government a *mandamus* was issued by the Court of Queen's Bench directing the Corporation of Limerick to levy the extra police tax, which it is their statutable duty to collect under the Constabulary Act of 1836, as amended in 1851 and 1866, and finally in 1874. The Corporation have, however, refused to obey the order of the Court. The Government have, therefore, been obliged to consider whether they should apply to have the members of the Corporation who took part in this proceeding committed for contempt. I need not say that it had not been contemplated that a responsible public body such as the Limerick Town Council would thus deliberately refuse to obey the law. No such case has, I believe, ever before occurred. However much they may reprehend the conduct of the Town Council, the Government are unwilling to take the extreme step of applying for an order to imprison those members of the Corporation who are responsible for the disobedience, which is the only procedure provided by the law for enforcing obedience to the order of the Court. They are influenced by the consideration that such a step would not necessarily secure the main object—namely, the recovery of the money legally due. What they intend to do is to apply to Parliament for power—in cases of default on the part of the local rating authority—to collect by direct means a tax such as this, which Parliament has already by Statute made it the duty of the Irish Executive in certain cases to impose. There have been no communications such as are alluded to in the last two paragraphs of the noble Viscount's Question.

MR. TOTTENHAM: Will the powers to be obtained be retrospective?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir.

MR. SEXTON: Does the answer mean that there is no legal power to enforce payment, and that the Government are obliged to apply for fresh powers? Did not the Corporation request the Lord Lieutenant to send down a Commissioner to investigate the merits of the case, and did he not refuse to do so?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have already answered several Questions on the latter point. It would be quite impossible to accede to the proposal referred to. I did not say that the Government have no legal power; but that there is no means open to them expect those which they are very reluctant to take.

MR. O'BRIEN: Has the right hon. Gentleman observed that at the recent elections of Town Councillors not a single member who voted for the payment of the tax has been returned?

[No reply.]

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Would the right hon. Gentleman kindly state what return has been made to the writ?

[No reply.]

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS III.—THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. BIGGAR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Estimate for Constabulary in Ireland in present financial year is £1,440,095, against £1,097,192 in 1879-80; and, whether, in framing his Estimates for the coming year, he will endeavour to bring the expense under this head to its former standard?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes, Sir. The comparison which the hon. Member draws between the Estimates for 1879-80 and 1884-5 for the Irish Constabulary is correct. This increase of charge arises mainly from carrying out the provisions of the Acts of 1882 and 1883, especially 46 & 47 *Vict.* c. 14, which revised and considerably augmented the rates of pay of the Constabulary. It is not I or the Treasury who frame the Estimates for the Royal Irish Constabulary; our function is confined to criticizing them; and I am always glad to receive suggestions for practical economy.

MR. BIGGAR: Arising out of this Question, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he was disposed to recommend the introduction of a Bill into Parliament to bring down the rate of pay to what it stood at under the late Government?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Before entertaining such a proposition I would like to know the foundation for it.

IRELAND—THE NATIONAL LEAGUE—MR. SLATTERY.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the police at Bodyke, county Clare, have instructions to watch Mr. Edmund M. Slattery of that place, and follow him almost wherever he goes; whether the constable in charge of the barracks cautioned him that whenever Mr. Slattery had occasion to go any considerable distance from home he should give notice of his intention to the police; if such annoyance is given to Mr. Slattery because he is President of the local National League; and, if this watching of Mr. Slattery will be discontinued by order of the authorities?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is not the fact that the police at Bodyke watch Mr. Slattery, as stated, or that they have direction to do so; nor did the sergeant in charge give him any such caution as is mentioned. The sergeant has recently prosecuted Mr. Slattery for drunkenness, and he was fined at Petty Sessions 5*s.* and costs for the offence.

MR. KENNY: Is the information of the Chief Secretary supplied from the sergeant of police; and will he be prepared to receive the affidavit of Mr. Slattery contradicting the statement of the police constable?

[No reply.]

STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION, KILMOON, COUNTY CLARE.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the police hut at Kilmoon, county Clare, is stationed there for the protection of the person who took an evicted farm in that place; if he is aware that Lane, the person who is stated to have taken the farm, lives five miles away, and if it is true that he also has surrendered the farm; and, since there has been no violence nor threat of violence in the locality for a very considerable time, and that a police barrack is only about a mile distant, whether the police hut will be finally removed?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Lane has not surrendered the farm, and I am informed that he intends to reside near it. He has placed stock on it, and when doing so he was threatened. The police are considered necessary to prevent violence, and will not be removed at present. Their cost is not charged to the locality. The nearest permanent police barrack is nearly three miles distant—not one, as stated in the Question.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS, DUNFANAGHY UNION.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can give a Return for circulation showing all Papers, as well as all Correspondence with the Local Government Board, touching the election of Poor Law Guardians for the Dunfanaghy Union, county of Donegal, during the past two years?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think that any useful object would be gained by such a Return. I understand that the Correspondence relating to the elections throughout the Union is very voluminous, and that much of it relates to mere matters of routine, which could have no public interest. If the hon. Member will specify any particular electoral division in the election for which he is interested, the propriety of giving the Return for that division will be considered.

REGISTRAR GENERAL'S OFFICE, IRELAND.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the clerks in the Record Branch of the Registrar General in Ireland have recently been compelled to remain in the office till 6 P.M., and deprived of the Saturday half-holiday, on the representation of the Secretary that a portion of the work of the Branch was in arrear; whether the clerks who are practically acquainted with the work in question unanimously deny that any arrears exist; and, whether it is in the power of a head of a department, in such a case, to extend the office hours of a particular branch without superior authority; also, whether the post of Chief Clerk to the Registrar General in Ireland was abolished as unnecessary, and the post of Secretary created with the same salary; and, whether the abolition of the former post was decided upon on the representations of the gentleman who is now Secretary; and, whether it is a fact that a gratuity or bonus of £1,000 was given to the Secretary of the Registrar General in Ireland in connection with the work of the Census Returns; what was the period estimated as necessary for the completion of the work in respect of which the gratuity was awarded; and, what was the time actually found necessary?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have been asked to answer these Questions, which deal with matters in which the Irish Government is concerned. The Registrar General informs me that the work of the Record Branch of his Department is in arrear. He is the judge of this, and he is certainly acting within his powers as Head of the Department in requiring his subordinate officers to work off the arrears in the manner stated. In 1877, after an inquiry held by the Treasury Remembrancer, the Chief Clerkship and one of the first-class clerk-ships in this Office were abolished, and the office of Secretary created, with a salary the same as that formerly attached to the Chief Clerkship. These changes were made by the then Lord Lieutenant with the consent of the Treasury, and not at the instance of the gentleman who now fills the office of Secretary. The sum of £1,000 was given to the Secretary for work performed in connection with the Census of 1881. The time originally estimated for the work was four years. The Secretary was actually engaged for about three and a-half years. The Registrar General attributes, in a large measure, to the efficiency of the Secretary, the success of his efforts in bringing the work to a comparatively early close, whereby great economy was effected.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—TREATMENT OF PATRICK BYRNE, A CONVICT.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will cause inquiry to be made by some independent authority into the state of health of Patrick Byrne, a convict prisoner in Maryborough Gaol, and into the treatment to which he has been subjected since his removal from Spike Island Prison, and especially into the punishment to which he was subjected on the 9th, 10th, and 11th October last, and the effect of the said punishment upon his health?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have received very full Reports as to the case of this man, and find that, with the exception of one month in October last year, he has been treated in the convict hospital at Maryborough since May, 1883, and has received every care and attention. The medical officer reports him to be phthisical, strumous, and spare, and generally of unsound constitution; but now in fair health for a man of his constitutional tendency. The convict was not subjected to punishment on any day in October last; but in October, 1883, when out of hospital, he was subjected to 24 hours' reduction of diet for a prison offence. The medical officer states that this could not have affected his health. I do not think that there is any ground for further inquiry in this case.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman state whether special inquiries will be made as to the general condition of the prison?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he had received a Report; but would like to go further into it.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Will the right hon. Gentleman also inquire as to the amount of work executed by the officials, especially that of ordinary warders, as distinguished from convict warders?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Yes.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CAPTAIN WHELAN, A RESIDENT MAGISTRATE.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it a fact that the inhabitants of Portadown, Lurgan, Banbridge, and Dungarvan, without distinction of creed, have sent Memorials to the Lord Lieutenant protesting against the suggested removal of Captain Whelan, R.M.; whether, on the occasion of the recent riot, Captain Whelan was ill, and therefore unable to be present; and, whether, before deciding on the removal of Captain Whelan, R.M., from his present district, they will accord a full inquiry into any allegations that may have been made or insinuated against him?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir; such a Memorial has been received; but it has not been replied to—beyond an acknowledgment of receipt—pending an inquiry into the state of Captain Whelan's health. The most immediate question for consideration is whether, owing to the state of his health, he is able to discharge the duties of a Resident Magistrate. It is the case that he was ill and absent on that account from duty on the occasion of the recent riot; and there is no occasion for any except a medical inquiry.

THE PATENT OFFICE, DUBLIN—INDEXES.

MR. BIGGAR asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has any objection to supply to the National Library, Kildare Street, Dublin, for convenience of those classes of the public interested in patents and inventions, an index covering the whole period represented by the copies of specifications deposited in the library (to which index the needful additions might hereafter be continually made), and thereby save a great deal of the time and money spent in searches; whether he is aware that only the indices for the years 1880-83 have been supplied to the Public Record Office, Dublin, in fulfilment of his recent undertaking; and, if the indices of previous years are out of print, whether he will cause them to be reprinted and supplied to the Dublin Office, in order to enable any person resident in Ireland to ascertain whether any previous patent affects a contemplated patent of his own without being compelled to come and make a search in London, or pay a large fee to a London patent agent or solicitor?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The Patent Office is now engaged in preparing revised consolidated indexes of specifications; but there is a very considerable amount of labour involved in this task, and some time must consequently elapse before these indexes can be published. When published, copies shall be sent to the National Library, Kildare Street, Dublin. The hon. Member states that, in spite of my promise to the hon. Member for County Sligo (Mr. Sexton), the indexes for the years 1880-3 only have been forwarded to the Public Record Office, Dublin. My information shows that indexes for the years 1875-83 have been forwarded, with the exception of one alphabetical and two subject-matter indexes which are out of print. As there is a complete set of indexes at the National Library in Kildare Street, there can be no necessity for an Irish inventor to visit London for the purpose of searching for a patent.

CIVIL SERVICE COMPETITIONS AND THE IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether under the rule of the Civil Service Commissioners declaring members of the Irish Constabulary force admissible to compete for certain situations in the Civil Service, any member of the Constabulary force who so desires can present himself for examination; or whether, before doing so, he is required by any rule or practice of the force to ask the leave of the Inspector General, and must, in order to qualify himself, obtain the leave in writing; whether, if this be the rule or practice, the Inspector General can either give or refuse the leave at his pleasure, and, in the latter case, is not obliged to show any cause for his refusal; upon what principle, if it exists, is it founded; and, whether it will be discontinued?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is a rule of the Civil Service Commissioners, adopted at the instance of a late Inspector General of Constabulary, that members of the force of under 12 years' service should resign their position in the Constabulary before competing for a Civil Service ppointment, unless they obtain the Inspector General's permission to do so. The Inspector General has not, as a rule, refused to allow a man of good character to compete, even though his service was less than that named; but he can do so if he thinks the public interest require it. The principle upon which the rule is based is that young men upon whose police training much time and public money have been expended, should not, as a rule, be encouraged lightly, or at too early a period of their service, to seek other employment. I understand that the power is seldom exercised; but the rule seems a good one, and I see no reason why it should be rescinded.

INLAND REVENUE—LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—STAMPS ON APPEALS.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, At what date the Inland Revenue Department first began to challenge the notices of appeal under the Irish Land Act for not having a shilling stamp thereon, and what then drew their attention to the subject; if instructions have been given not to exact the penalty if the Court of Appeal decides that the notices either do not require stamping or can now be stamped; how many notices of tenants, to fix fair rents, have been issued and served, on unstamped forms, since the passing of the Land Act; and, how many of such last-mentioned notices were allowed to be afterwards stamped, without question or penalty?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): In reply to the first Question I have to say that these notices of appeal have not been challenged by the Inland Revenue Department. The question is one of fee stamps as distinct from revenue stamps proper;

and it is for the Land Commission to decide whether notices which have been served without stamps can be rendered valid by being subsequently stamped. The fact that any question had been raised was first reported to the Inland Revenue Board in London on the 28th of October last; and their practice since has been, and will continue to be, pending the decision of the Land Commission, not to require any penalty in connection with the stamping of these documents. I regret that the shortness of the Notice prevents me from answering the two last Questions. I should imagine that, if the hon. Gentleman thinks it necessary, a Return of these notices might be obtained; but it does not concern the Treasury?

METROPOLIS—FREQUENCY OF FIRES—PUBLIC INQUIRIES.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, considering the frequent occurrence of fires, he will take into consideration the possibility of introducing a measure providing that public inquiry or inquest shall be held into the cause and origin of such outbreaks when they occur?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, no doubt this would be a very desirable thing, and he should be glad to do anything to encourage it. But the real opposition had been on the part of the Local Authorities, not unnaturally, for these were very expensive inquiries, involving a very heavy charge upon the rates. It would be extremely difficult to compel the Local Authorities to undertake such a task. He was happy to say the Metropolitan Board of Works had expressed a desire for an inquiry of this character in London.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—ESTATE OF LORD INCHIQUIN—CASE OF THOMAS MALONY.

MR. KENNY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If the attention of the Irish Land Commission has been directed to the case of Thomas Malony, a tenant on the property of Lord Inchiquin, who was evicted for non-payment of rent; if he offered the landlord three-fourths of the amount due, which was refused and the tenant dispossessed; if within the period allowed for redemption the tenant sold his interest for an amount which would enable him to pay the landlord in full, and leave a considerable balance, but the landlord refused to accept the purchaser as tenant; whether Lord Inchiquin's agent arranged with the tenant to have the value of the land fixed by the Court in order that the tenant might receive the amount to which he would be entitled after deducting the sum due for rent, but that the value has not yet been fixed; if, in addition to that, the growing crops of the tenant were seized upon and appropriated by Lord Inchiquin, who refuses to account for their value; and, if the tenant is entitled to any redress under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," seeing that he has been dispossessed from his holding and his property nearly three times in excess of his liability taken possession of by the landlord?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER), in reply, said, the Government had no means of obtaining the necessary information on the subject.

MR. KENNY: What I want to know is, if the landlord has the right to refuse to have a value put on a farm in order to ascertain the amount of money which is due to the tenant over and above the claim to arrears of rent due?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): That is an abstract question, and impossible for me to answer on an *ex parte* statement.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—THE EXPEDITION TO SKYE.

MR. PRESTON BRUCE asked, Whether Papers will be laid upon the Table before the Adjournment of the House, or issued soon after, relating to the Military and Naval expedition to Skye, and explanatory of the grounds upon which the Government have taken that measure?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes, Sir; Papers will be laid to-day, and will, I hope, be in the hands of Members to-morrow or Saturday.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCES—PUL-I-KHATUN.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, Whether the Russians have lately occupied Pul-i-Khatun, on the Perso-Afghan frontier, 60 miles beyond Sarakhs, and 160 miles nearer to India than Merv; where the British Boundary Commission now are; where the Russian Commissioner is at present; and, whether the British Government accept the occupation of Pul-i-Khatun by the Czar's troops in breach of the engagements of the Russian Government?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he had already answered this Question.

ALLOTMENTS EXTENSION ACT, 1882—NOTICES TO TRUSTEES.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If the Charity Commissioners have sent out notices, or taken any steps to inform the Trustees of Charity Lands throughout the Country, of the provisions of "The Allotments Extension Act, 1882," and of the duties of the Trustees under the Act?

Mr. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, he was informed by the Charity Commissioners, that they had not sent out such notices, the Act not requiring them to do so.

UNION RATING (IRELAND)—LEGISLATION.

Mr. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is his intention to introduce a Union Rating Bill for Ireland this Session?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Government are fully aware of the importance of this question, and are desirous of dealing with it; but I am not in a position to make any promise regarding proposals of legislation during the current Session.

Mr. GRAY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the late Chief Secretary did not give what, in fact, amounted to a pledge that a Bill dealing with the subject would be introduced?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; I think he made the same answer that the Government were very anxious on the matter; but he made no pledge.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, REDISTRIBUTION, BILL—THE BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners preclude the possibility of their recommending the extension of the limits of any existing borough constituency; and, should this not be the case, and should they recommend such extension as would bring a borough constituency at present scheduled for total or partial disfranchisement above the 15,000 or 50,000 population limit, what course Her Majesty's Government will propose to take in such cases?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he would also like to inquire, in connection with this Question, whether the Boundary Commissioners would be empowered, in the case of boroughs above 50,000 which retained two Members, to inquire whether the boundaries of these boroughs should be extended so as to include an urban population which, in the words of the instruction, ought to be incorporated in these boroughs?

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH wished to know whether any supplementary instructions to the Boundary Commissioners would be laid on the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The answer to the last two Questions will be in the affirmative. In reference to the Question of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. H. S. Northcote), I have to say that the instructions to the Commissioners, which must be read in connection with the Bill, are not intended to embrace boroughs under 15,000, as they are all scheduled to be merged. The instructions, however, do not preclude an inquiry into the boundaries of the boroughs between 15,000 and 50,000 limits; but no extension of them is likely to increase the population above that of many much larger boroughs with only one Member. If the second Member were allotted to those boroughs, it could not be done without injustice to others with much stronger claims.

EGYPT (BRITISH OCCUPATION).

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can give an assurance that Her Majesty's Government will not commit themselves to any arrangements, involving a prolonged occupation of Egypt, without first consulting Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am under the impression that I answered a corresponding Question very lately, which was put by the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms). Her Majesty's Government, I have always said, will be very careful of their duties and obligations to this House and to Parliament generally, and at no time more seriously than when they are in communication with any Foreign Powers. But it is impossible to say that we will not enter into any engagement with a Foreign Power without first consulting this House, because it would simply be handing over our whole responsibilities to Parliament.

PARLIAMENT—RULES OF PROCEDURE —QUESTIONS.

MR. D. GRANT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, with regard to the greatly increased number of Questions placed on the Paper, and the waste of public time consequent upon answering the same, If he would consider whether in future the replies to all Questions might be printed, excepting those which, in the opinion of the Government, would be best answered in the existing mode, or those which may be of immediate and pressing importance?

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked, Whether, during the adjournment of the House, the Prime Minister would consider the propriety of acceding to the Motion for the appointment of a Select Committee on the subject, Notice of which he had given, and which he proposed to bring forward when he had an opportunity?

MR. SEXTON asked, Whether the right hon. Gentleman had observed that 73 Questions, dealing with matters of great public interest, and a number of subsidiary Questions, had been answered that evening in the space of an hour; and, whether an hour could be put to better use?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had not observed that the Questions referred to had been put in the space of an hour; but he thought that there had been considerable despatch on some recent days, and he wished that that despatch were the general rule. He did not wish to exclude the appointment of a Committee on this question, or any other matter of procedure, if the House should see its way to a beneficial result; but he would rather not bind the Government upon the subject until the matter was regularly brought forward for discussion, nor was it possible to give an affirmative reply to one particular mode of dealing with the subject. He should commit himself too hastily if he did so. Undoubtedly, the matter did call for some attention; but he did not think that any reply that he could give in answer would advance the question.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked if it would not be possible for the Questions to be systematized, so that, for example, all Questions relating to Ireland or to foreign affairs should follow each other?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he supposed that might be done; but whether it would entail much difficulty he did not know. It was, however, a matter entirely within the discretion of the ordinary authorities of the House.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, REDISTRIBUTION, BILL—THE DISFRANCHISED BOROUGHS.

MR. CREEMER CLARKE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If it is the intention of the Government to make disfranchised boroughs, as far as possible, the head of county divisions?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; my hon. Friend has rightly understood the Bill. It is intended to do as he supposes.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—SUSPENSION OF THE SINKING FUND.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that the International Tribunals have condemned the suspension of the Sinking Fund which the Egyptian Government effected under the advice of Her Majesty's Ministers, as a breach of the Law of Liquidation; and, whether the Tribunals have declared the Khedive's officials responsible for the money thus withheld; and, if so, what steps Her Majesty's Ministers propose to take to relieve the Egyptian officials of this onerous responsibility?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am quite at a loss to know what is the authority upon which this Question has been put. My impression is that it is some rumour picked up by a newspaper correspondent, who is not in any way to be blamed for mentioning it. But I think the hon. Member must recollect that these rumours are very much connected with the operations of particular persons; and that to put Questions founded upon them in this House gives them an importance which they would not otherwise possess. The facts are not as supposed in the Question of the hon. Member. The facts, as far as we know, are these—that, no doubt, there is a lawsuit of the Caisse against the Egyptian Government; but judgment has not been given in that lawsuit, and the information sent to us is that it is likely to be given on the 9th instant. When execution will take place, if judgment goes against the Government, I am not able to say. That will depend, I imagine, upon what may happen on the 9th. And with regard to the question of the responsibility of the Members of the Egyptian Government, that, I think, is altogether premature; and no official information has been conveyed to us upon it.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that he gave Notice of the Question on Tuesday, and that the statement appeared in all the evening papers of that day.

PEACE OF EUROPE—DIMINUTION OF ARMAMENTS.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, before making final arrangements for the proposed costly increase to our Naval Armaments, he will consider the feasibility of consulting the Naval Powers of Europe as to some proportional basis on which the diminution of European warlike forces might be arranged?

Mr. PULESTON asked, if it was not a fact that final arrangements had already been made?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The question whether any steps have been taken by the Admiralty in anticipation of the judgment of this House is one which I could not answer without reference to the Admiralty. But I should suppose undoubtedly that, speaking generally, final arrangements have not yet been made for giving effect to the important statement by my hon. Friend the Secretary to that Department. With regard to the Question put by my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle, I think that is a subject of very great importance and very great delicacy, which cannot receive the kind of reply to which it is entitled in answer to a Question. It is impossible to conceive a matter of greater delicacy. I remember only one definite proposal for partial disarmament, it was in the year 1870—either 1869 or 1870, I am not quite sure. It received whatever support my noble Friend Lord Clarendon, who was then Foreign Secretary, could give it; but it took no effect. I remember also that so far back as the year 1842, when the military establishments of the European Powers were, I suppose, nothing like half so advanced as they are now, Sir Robert Peel spontaneously declared to this House his sense of what he thought a great public mischief, and expressed a fervent hope—at least, not a fervent hope so much as a fervent desire—that the Powers would reduce them. These general views are views which I think every Government would be glad to forward; but I have no positive assurance to give, and, further than that, I should be doing no good to anybody by undertaking to give any pledge.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, REDISTRIBUTION, BILL—INSTRUCTIONS TO THE BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been directed to that portion of the instructions given to the Boundary Commissioners, by which they are directed in forming the divisions of the different new County constituencies to exclude the population of the Parliamentary Boroughs; whether the practical effect of such an instruction will not be to disfranchise the existing County voters whose qualification (under section 10 of the Representation of the People Act) is a freehold within the limits of Boroughs; and, whether, in accordance with his distinct promise that the Franchise Bill should not be a disfranchising enactment, he will cause the instructions on this point to be so revised as not to disqualify this class of County voter?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The instruction does not touch the county voters having freehold qualification for the county in boroughs, who will still be entitled to vote for the division of the county in which the borough is situate. The population is only excluded for the purpose of determining the area of the county divisions of the county proper; but, where the county voters are numerous in a borough, some account of their numbers may properly be taken in determining the extent of the county division.

MR. NEWDEGATE wished to ask whether, in case of freeholders voting for divisions of counties from freeholds in towns, the Boundary Commissioners would have power to assign to the holdings the places in which they were to vote?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: They will assign the divisions; but not the voting places.

MR. CHAPLIN asked, whether the Government had entered into any pledge to consider the maintenance of any specified points in connection with the Bill as vital to that measure and to the existence of the Government; and, if so, whether he would state to the House the particulars on which they had given any such pledge?

MR. GLADSTONE: I must, with regret, repeat my expression of inability, consistently with my duty, and, I think, consistently with Parliamentary usage, to make any statement as to the points in the Bill for the redistribution of seats, which, in the course of discussion, the Government may or may not consider vital. I cannot, therefore, make any statement now. With regard to the rest of the Question, I have only to say that the responsibility of the Government to the House with regard to the Bill is precisely the same, as full and as absolute, as with regard to any other Bill they have ever submitted to the House, and the House will feel itself equally free to deal with any proposition in that Bill as in any other measure ever brought forward.

MR. CHAPLIN inquired whether the Report and recommendations of the Boundary Commissioners were to be considered final by the Government, or were to be open to any modification by the House of Commons?

MR. GLADSTONE: In the view of the Government, and, perhaps, in the view of the House, the most important of the duties in connection with the Boundary Commission is the selection of the names; and on that ground I was careful to state to the House the names which had been chosen in regard to England. It is obvious that great confidence ought to be placed in the Report of such a Commission, if the names of the Commissioners are such as will recommend themselves to the approval of the House. Well, Sir, the Government certainly are inclined, from the selection that has been made, from our knowledge of the experience, trustworthiness, and ability of the gentlemen who have been chosen, to place very great confidence indeed, by anticipation, in the results of their inquiries, and I am unwilling to suppose that they will not give satisfaction to the House; but, at the same time, when one considers the details into which these things may go, I quite admit that it is impossible for the House to preclude itself from a freedom of judging of these recommendations. It is impossible to say anything absolutely on the subject of their finality.

MR. GORST asked if it were intended that a Select Committee of the House of Commons should be appointed to revise the Report of the Commissioners, as was done in 1868?

MR. GLADSTONE: Certainly not. I should think it a very great misfortune if the House entered into any such measure, and I can promise that the Government will be no party to it.

MR. O'DONNELL: With regard to the explanations of vital or non-vital points in the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill, may I inquire if the period of consultation with the Leaders of the non-responsible Opposition is definitely closed; or whether there are any points upon which the Government will still have from time to time to consult the Leaders of the Opposition; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will in all cases state to the House the points upon which they are engaged with the Opposition?

MR. GLADSTONE: The statement which I had the honour to make in introducing the Bill to the House supplies the House with sufficient information for the present. I am not able to make any addition to it.

SIR JOHN HAY: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the names of the Boundary Commissioners for Scotland?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The work, such as in England will be done by Major Tulloch, Mr. Pelham, and Mr. Henley, will in Scotland be done by Major General Bailey, of the Royal Engineers; but the Commission—virtually the English Commission—will receive his Reports. That Commission will consist of himself, Sir John Lambert, the Chairman of the English Commission; Sir Francis Sandford, Mr. Donald Crawford, advocate, Secretary to the Lord Advocate: with the same Secretary as for the English Commission—namely, Mr. Howel Thomas.

Dr. CAMERON: The right hon. Baronet mentioned the other day that the grouping of boroughs in Scotland was not to be entrusted to this Commission, and that that was to be left open to the consideration of the House. I wish to ask whether the Government have any scheme for re-arranging the Scotch boroughs?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I said in the House that we thought the grouping of the Scotch boroughs was one that ought to be threshed out before the whole House. If the Scotch Members could agree amongst themselves in advance, that would greatly facilitate the matter. What we have found is that, although there is a great deal of dissatisfaction in regard to the existing grouping, there is no agreement as to the principle upon which the re-grouping should proceed.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: Referring to the instructions of the Boundary Commissioners with respect to the division of boroughs, I want to ask what is the meaning of the following sentence:—

> "In the arrangement of the divisions special regard should be had to the pursuits of the population."

I wish to know whether that means that the boroughs are to be divided upon class, or sectional, or social pursuits?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: If I were a Member of the Commission I should understand that as being a general direction to have regard to the varying nature of the representation. I do not think I can give any fuller answer.

Mr. GRAY inquired whether the Government were still open to consider the desirability of including on the Irish Boundary Commission some gentleman or gentlemen of a non-official character, who would inspire general confidence?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, this was a question which had been carefully considered, and it was almost impossible to find a man in Ireland who would inspire general confidence. But really there was very little boundary work to be done in Ireland.

THE CIVIL SERVICE (PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURE)—SIR W. BRAMPTON GORDON.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers), referring to the Parliamentary candidature of Sir William Gurdon, a senior clerk in the Treasury, said, that he had promised to make a further statement on the subject. He might now say that Sir William Gurdon had informed him that he was no longer a candidate.

ARMY—BRIGADE MAJORS AND GARRISON INSTRUCTORS.

Mr. DALRYMPLE asked the Financial Secretary for War, Whether it is the case that Majors holding Staff appointments as Brigade Majors or Garrison Instructors only draw the allowances of Captains; and, if so, whether he will consider the hardship inflicted on such officers, who are denied the allowances of their rank because they hold Captains' appointments?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER: Sir, the relative rank of Captain is attached to the Staff appointments referred to. If officers, who are Regimental Majors, accept them, they do so with a full knowledge of the conditions. I may add that the present aggregate pay and allowances of a Brigade Major or Garrison Instructor exceed considerably, under ordinary circumstances, those of a Regimental Major.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Sir DONALD CURRIE: I desire to make a personal explanation. During the debate upon the Navy, and while I was in the Lobby for a brief interval, the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand) contradicted one of the statements in my speech. He is reported in *The Times* to have said—

> "The hon. Member for Perthshire stated that the Government had never sent (guns) to Hong Kong until after the appearance of an article in *The Pall Gazette*. But they had sent these guns long before—viz., last June."

Mr. Speaker, I said nothing whatever about guns. What I did say was this—

> "Hong Kong was only ordered to be fortified when *The Pall Mall Gazette* sounded the first note of warning as to the state of the Navy in September last. The instructions to fortify were then despatched by telegraph."

Now, this is confirmed by the following extract from a letter, written by *The Times* Correspondent at Hong Kong on the 17th of September last, three days after the first article in *The Pall Mall Gazette* on the state of the Navy—

> "During the week a telegram has been received from England ordering the immediate commencement of the works already sanctioned for the protection of Hong Kong."

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I engaged on Tuesday to give such indication as I could to-night with regard to the Business of the House. I believe, Sir, the important Business of the House which we have to transact is, in the first place, to deal with the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill on its second reading; and, in the second place, to meet for the purpose of attending the other House upon any occasion when Her Majesty may be pleased to give Her Royal Assent to Bills that may have passed through both Houses. At present there are two questions urgently demanding the attention of the House, and with which it is disposed to deal before the adjournment. Of course, it is a question of interest and importance to consider for how long the adjournment shall take place. We ought to recommend to the House, as we believe the House will desire, that the adjournment should be for what I may call a liberal length. But I ought to remind the House that the adjournment does not, in all circumstances, imply absolutely the cessation of Public Business. That is to say, that if an emergency arose, or, short of an emergency, if any serious occasion arose, upon which it was desirable to have an immediate reference to Parliament, Her Majesty is invested by Statute with power, where either House has adjourned for more than 14 days, of summoning them together, with the advice of the Privy Council, with an interval of not less than six days. That being so, and considering the serious demand that has been made on the time and patience of Members at these Autumn Sittings, we think the House, when it rises—if it rises—on Saturday next, may adjourn, with a tolerably good conscience, until the 10th of February. [*Loud cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Longer!"] I see that that requires explanation. I do not know whether it is that the rigour of the conscience of the House is alarmed and offended, or whether it is, on the contrary, that an equitable view of the circumstances leads the House to think that it might adjourn to a still later date. I need hardly state to the House that the view of the Government is to meet the general desire of the House, and that the announcement is not absolutely written in letters of iron until the Motion comes to be made. With regard to the mode of proceeding, we depend partly, and in a considerable degree, upon the proceedings of to-night. I do not know whether it will be the pleasure of the House to terminate the discussion on the second reading of the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill to-night. If I may presume to form an opinion, I believe that lengthened discussion might probably be advantageously reserved till the Motion is made that the Speaker do leave the Chair. Assuming that the debate closes to-night, I would move that the House, at its rising on Saturday, should adjourn to the day I have named, unless I should have a clear indication that the House wishes for a longer period. In that case I should propose that the House, at its rising to-night, should adjourn until Saturday; and I am not aware that in that case there would be any necessity to tax a large number of Members for the purpose of appearing on Saturday. If the debate goes beyond to-night, I should to-morrow night make a similar Motion with regard to the adjournment on Saturday.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, REDISTRIBUTION, BILL.—[Bill 40.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, the Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, if I could have entirely consulted my own inclination, I should not have intervened in the debate in this early and prominent manner; but the representations of many friends to whom I felt I ought to pay deference, and whose arguments appeared to me to have great force, made me feel that it might not be deemed by the House an unfitting sequel to the action I took early in the week if I began the debate this evening, and that the House would not deem me unduly obtrusive if I occupied its attention at the commencement of this discussion. Perhaps, Sir, I may be permitted, before dealing with the merits of the Bill, to refer to some private remonstrances which I have received with reference to the step I have taken. Of course, so far as those remonstrances are based on the provisions of the Bill itself, my answer must be contained in the speech I am about to deliver. It must be the purpose and aim of that speech to express to the House my opinion of the Bill, and any suggestion that I should have delayed my resignation of the Office I had the honour of holding on account of a false impression of the Bill on my part is necessarily irrelevant. But there have been other objections made that whatever my opinion of the Bill might be I might have waited until some question arose when I might be called upon to vote inconsistently with that opinion. It has been said to me by more than one that a subordinate has no responsibility for anything conceived or proposed by the Ministry until it ripens into an act, and until by some action on his part he becomes a party to it—and until by a vote in the House of Commons he has committed himself to an absolute concurrence of opinion with the judgment already formed by his superiors. I confess, Sir, I cannot entertain that conception of the duty of a Member of Parliament. It appears to me that silence has its responsibilities as well as speech, and that to abide in the Government because you are a subordinate Member of it when proposals are made which, in your judgment, are vicious and ought to be condemned, is to derogate from your duty as a Member of this House—derogating from a duty you owe not only to your constituents, but to the House itself. I might have been urged to remain where I was if there had been any probability held out that in the progress of this Bill the particular features to which I most strongly object would have been removed—especially any probability that they would have been removed before I had by silence become a party to them. But I foresaw no such prospect. Other circumstances that came to my knowledge seemed rather to imply that the Bill as presented to the House of Commons would remain in its original form and pass, but little modified, through this House, unless there was a vigorous and united action to which I did not at that time look forward, and to which I could not myself contribute. Although by retiring from the Government I may not aid in the smallest degree to increase the strength of criticism—although my efforts may be absolutely unavailing to influence any Member in the House or anyone outside it to change their opinions on the merits of the Bill, still I felt that I could not remain without making an effort to produce that change, although the effort might be ineffectual. With one further remark I will pass from this personal matter. The Prime Minister himself—and I hope I am committing no indiscretion—urged and appealed to me in tones of kindness, which I hope I shall ever remember, to remain where I was. Nothing but the strength of the conscientious conviction I had formed would have upheld me in resisting his appeal; and in departing as I have done from the Government let me take this the first opportunity of public speech to tender my most hearty thanks to him for the kindness he has ever exhibited, to make my acknowledgment of the honour I acquired in serving under him, and to say that in parting from him I feel my attachment to him to be increased rather than diminished. Why is it that I so solemnly protest against the creation of these new single-Member constituencies? It is because it is a new departure from the old lines of the Constitution. It is not only a new departure, but, in my judgment, it is a new departure in a wrong direction. In my opinion, the principle of single-Member constituencies is contrary to the Constitutional idea of representation in Parliament. Of course, I am aware that there were single-Member constituencies existing before this Bill was placed upon the Table—indeed, I think there were single-Member constituencies existing in the Constitution even before the time referred to by the Prime Minister in his speech the other night. My strong impression is that when Wales was incorporated with the Parliamentary system of this country there was a creation of single-Member seats. Again, under the great change which was effected by the Reform Act of 1832, a number of single-Member constituencies came into existence by reason of one Member being taken away from double-Member constituencies which were not deemed to be of sufficient importance to retain the privilege of returning two Members to Parliament hitherto enjoyed by them, and by reason of a single Member being given to such new constituencies as were not entitled to a greater share in the representation. At that time counties were divided into two-Member divisions, and the authors of the Reform Bill of 1832 rejected the notion that the country should be parcelled out into single-Member constituencies. If a county was not large enough to be divided, and yet was too large to remain with two Members, a third Member was added to it. But we have an historic example which goes to a much greater length. The City of London is to be shorn of half its representation; but the fact is, that the City of London has throughout long generations returned four Members to this House, although it was divided into wards each of which had its Alderman for municipal purposes, which shows that the tradition of Parliamentary representation was not the division of the country into single-Member constituencies, but the maintenance undivided of that representation which the importance of the different constituencies entitled them to demand. And the same principle was carried out in the Reform Bill of 1867. Under that Bill, for the first time, boroughs received a third Member, and so became three-Member constituencies. It may be said that the political action resulting from the creation of those boroughs was subsequently very materially modified by the clause introduced relative to voting in three-cornered constituencies, and that was so. But the Government of the day, in submitting their scheme to the country, did not think of dividing up the boroughs without respect to whether their increase of population required that the additional representation should be given, neither had they any thought of resolving them into single-Member constituencies. I think, therefore, that I have shown that this Bill does for the first time introduce the principle—be it good or bad—of attempting to obtain the representation of the people in Parliament by cutting up the country into areas each returning one Member only. That I assert to be a novelty in our Parliamentary representation. If as I hope, and think I shall be able to show, it is a new departure of the utmost seriousness as it affects the character of this House and the political life of the country, then I think I shall have made out some case in support of the action I have taken. I should like to take this opportunity of putting an end to a misapprehension with regard to what took place elsewhere yesterday at a meeting of the Proportional Representation Society to which I belong. The report of that meeting, which was published, was made the subject of a leading article in *The Times*, in which our action was commented upon with some severity; and we were charged—and certainly as far as appeared from the report not unjustly charged—with desiring to prevent the division of the large towns outside the Metropolitan area into single-Member constituencies, while we were willing to allow the constituencies within the Metropolitan area to be turned into single-Member constituencies, and it was justly said that such a course would be absurd. I may remark that the meeting of this society was a private one, and it was with some surprise that I saw a report of the proceedings in the newspapers. I was there, and I certainly saw no reporter taking notes of the speeches which were being made. Speaking, as it were, therefore, somewhat *in camerâ*, and not for a moment thinking that we were addressing the outer world about this important point, we may not have been as careful in the choice of the exact language used as we might otherwise have been; but there was no mistake upon the point among the members of the society present. We were speaking with reference to what action it might be necessary to take with regard to this question in the House of Commons; and it was pointed out that the first clause to be attacked would be Clause 8, which provided for the representation of populous towns, and that upon that clause it might be necessary to raise the first issue; but it was never for a moment intended by us that, having repudiated the single-Member system in connection with the large towns outside the Metropolitan area, we should abandon the Metropolis itself to that system. If we have an objection to the single-Member system being applied anywhere, we should have the strongest objection to its being applied to the Metropolis, with its different forms of life and its various forms of industries. We were agreed that we should not object to the clause in the Bill which disfranchised the small boroughs in Schedule A, nor to that which took away one Member from the constituencies in Schedule D, nor to that which related to areas which were to be allowed to retain two Members; but we were declaring that we should raise the first issue on Clause 8. We, however, never intended to stop there, and I hope that if we succeed in obtaining a reconsideration of Clause 8 we shall be equally successful in obtaining a reconsideration of that portion of the Bill by which it is intended to divide the Metropolis into single-Member constituencies. I will now proceed to ask what are the objections to be made to the system of single-Member constituencies. My first objection to it goes to the very root of the object of Parliament. Why is it that we are met together in Parliament? Is it not primarily to obtain an indication of the balance of the judgment of the people with regard to questions which have to be determined? But this method of single-Member constituencies gives us no means of securing that first object. I crave the indulgence of hon. Members if I appear to enter into details which may seem wearisome, but I do so with the greater earnestness, because I remember not very long ago a right hon. Friend of mine, a Member of the Cabinet, laid it down to me in conversation, as an incontestable proposition, that if we divided up the country into constituencies of equal populations and had one Member elected by each such constituency, the judgment of the Members so elected must correspond with that of the electors. [Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Hear, hear!] My hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy thinks that is inevitable; but I hope to prove that that proposition is one of the grossest fallacies; in fact, its falsity has been proved by experience over and over again. Let me put the simplest case to the House—one that shall be as clear as A B C. You have in a town three wards of equal population, and one Member elected for each. They are found to be two of one opinion and one of the other. Does it follow that the two are on the side of the majority? Supposing there are 15,000 in each ward, and in Ward A there are 10,000 for the Whigs and 5,000 for the Tories, while in Ward B 8,000 vote for the Tories and 7,000 for the Whigs, and the same happens in Ward C; in these two wards you have got only 2,000 majority for the Tories, while in the other you have 5,000 majority for the Whigs. Yet you have a majority in the whole town of 3,000 Whigs, while the result is the election of two Tories and one Whig. That is an A B C example which I would like my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy to take to heart. [Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Take the whole Kingdom.] The whole Kingdom! The principle is the same, whether you take the whole Kingdom or a single place. I laid it down as a question of possibility or impossibility; and my hon. Friend, who is a man of great candour, will, I think, admit he was labouring under an error when he thought that what I represented to be possible was impossible. Take the historical case of the town of Geneva, which is divided into equal wards in this way. The Radicals of Geneva being massed in great strength in one ward, yet being in a slight minority in the other wards, lost the representation of them; and while in the whole of Geneva you had a majority of Radicals, the representation of Geneva in Council showed a majority of Conservatives. That is an historical case. My hon. Friends around me know the populous towns of the North, and they know perfectly well that if you are going to divide these big populous towns according to the principle which the President of the Local Government Board will not interpret—those who know the meaning of English know very well what it means—by segregating the poor from the rich, the professional man from the handicraftsman, you will have in these towns in the North the same experience as you have in Geneva, and the representation of the whole town giving a majority in this House, of "haves," while the majority in the constituency is a majority of "have nots." That, however, is a question of the future, and I have historical cases to which I can refer. Without dwelling upon the unknown contingencies of the future, let me take two or three towns in the United States which are divided up in this way, where the figures are so startling that I think they deserve attention. In the municipal elections of 1870 and 1871 in the United States, 42 members of the Municipality were elected by Newhaven. There were 28 Democrats against 14 Republicans, or two to one. Adding up the population of Newhaven who vote, and taking the proportion of voting, you have 16 Democrats and 26 Republicans, so that the voters are two to one one way, and the representation is two to one the other way, and that is got by dividing the town into wards and taking a Member for each ward. Boston is a bigger place than Newhaven. There the actual representation was 42 Democrats to 34 Republicans, while the proportion of voters was 29 Democrats to 47 Republicans. Here, again, there is a very considerable inversion of the real opinions of the town among the elected Members of the Council. The disproportion is almost as startling in the elections at Richmond, in Virginia, where four Democrats were returned as against 26 Republicans, the actual voting proportion being 14 to 16. My hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy will no doubt say that this is a matter which may be realized in a single place, but that when you come to a large area you get different results. Now I will proceed to a case of a larger area. I proceed to the case of the State of New York, which contains a great deal of population spread over a very large country and occupied in very different ways. There is the crowded population in the City of New York, and in other cities in the State, while there is a large number of rural inhabitants in the rural parts of the State. Now, what is the case in the State of New York with regard to its representation in Congress and the opinions of the voters themselves? I will give the figures for two consecutive Congresses—the 40th and the 41st. In the 40th Congress the State of New York was represented by 11 Democrats to 20 Republicans, whereas the proportion of the voters was 16 Democrats to 15 Republicans. The Democrats were actually in the majority, but as returned in single-Member districts to Congress they were in a minority. The judgment of the people of the State of New York was one way, while the judgment of their Representatives was the other way. In the 41st Congress the State of New York was represented by 13 Democrats against 18 Republicans, the actual proportion of voters being 16 to 15. Thus there was a reversal of the judgment of the people. These are facts, and remarkable facts, yet they have been left unnoticed; and the principle they illustrate has been overlooked, or even denied. I go further than that, and I may say, with great surprise and regret, that I have often observed how little studied these questions are in what I may call the light of comparative political science. Nobody has had more to do with the reform of the people in Parliament than the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government; but I never recollect observing in his speeches a single trace that he had studied the comparative action of other Legislatures and States—of our own Colonies and the United States—so as to ascertain, by some examination of free institutions elsewhere, what may be the result of the introduction of similar institutions here. But now I go a step further. I will compare the New York State Legislature with the action of the New York State as a whole at the Presidential elections. You have in New York State every four years, as in every State, an opportunity of taking a *plébiscite* upon the election of President. For many years—and, in fact, until the recent election of Governor Cleveland—I believe it was the case that whereas the *plébiscite* of the State of New York has always been Republican, the result of election for the Legislature upon the one-Member system has invariably been Democratic. Take its judgment on a single issue and the State goes one way; take its judgment as filtered through single-Member constituencies and it goes the other way. Could any illustration prove more completely that the method of instituting single-Member constituencies fails in that primary end and purpose of Parliamentary institutions—the ascertaining of what is the will of the people at large? There is yet another reference which I think I must make in this matter before I have done. I have spoken of New York, and I will now speak of another State in connection with another man. It is the State of Ohio in connection with General Garfield. When this Bill was introduced the Prime Minister referred to Mr. Cobden, and said that he recommended the plan of single-Member constituencies. To my mind that was a rather strong representation of the case. It is true that Mr. Cobden on two occasions in private letters to Members of this House indicated a preference for that plan; but it was a mere *obiter dictum,* not expressing any fixed and decided result of his mental action, and not deserving of the words which the Prime Minister attributed to it. I have since taken the trouble to look at the admirable book of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and I find so little importance attached to the expression of Mr. Cobden's views on this point, that minority representation is not even mentioned in the index at all. But it is mentioned in the book, and I think I can vouch my hon. Friend that I correctly state the fact when I say that the two references are mere *obiter dicta* not deserving the words which the Prime Minister employed. I am not one of those who would undervalue the authority of Mr. Cobden. His name is held in much honour; but of recent years it seems to me his doctrines have been singularly misrepresented. If Mr. Cobden was a man who had really given a decided judgment upon this matter I should have had a great difficulty in meeting it; but it is not so. Now I will turn to another authority, President Garfield, a man whose life and character are known the whole world through, and whose tragic death endeared him, and will for generations endear him, to the whole American people. What is the record—to use an American phrase—of President Garfield? He came to England in the year 1867, he attended the debates in the House, and sat under the Gallery there. My right hon. Friend (Mr. John Bright) introduced him, and it is rather a pathetic remembrance, if I may venture to indulge in the personal recollection, that I also was under the Gallery at the same time, and, although I knew it not, must have been sitting next to this revered man, because I distinctly remember that in that discussion my right hon. Friend (Mr. John Bright) coming up and speaking to the one who was next me. General Garfield came and attended these debates upon the Reform Bill of 1867, especially with reference to the cumulative vote and the restricted vote. He heard the debates in this House, he heard the speech of Lord Beaconsfield —then Mr. Disraeli—and the speeches of the present Prime Minister, of my right hon. Friend below me (Mr. John Bright), and of the present Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). He also heard the speeches of Mr. Mill and Mr. Lowe; and in his diary, since published, he expresses his opinion that, on the whole, he thought the balance of his judgment was against the view of his right hon. Friend, to whom he was attached by so many ties, and who had brought him here to listen to the debate. General Garfield afterwards heard the speeches of Lord Cairns, Lord Salisbury, and other Peers, who intervened in the debate in the House of Lords on the same issues, and his opinion was strengthened by what he heard. Still, he came then to no decisive opinion, and he held his judgment in suspense. Some three years later, in 1870, the question arose in the House of Representatives, of which he was a Member from Ohio. He made a speech which he began by saying that his attention had been directed to this in Europe, and that ever since he had given it his most careful consideration, and had come to a conclusion entirely in favour of minority representation. Now, Sir, if we are to put authority against authority, what are we to say about the opinion of a man like Garfield, listening here and keeping his judgment in suspense, thinking the matter over through years at home, and at last expressing his opinion, as Member for Ohio in the House of Representatives, against the casual observations of Mr. Cobden in a letter addressed to my hon. Friend the Member for Rochdale? There can be no question that the one completely and entirely overwhelms the other. I will refer to Garfield's testimony as to the representation of Ohio. What does he say?—

"When I was first elected to Congress in the fall of 1862 the State of Ohio had a clear Republican majority of 25,000; but by the adjustment and redistribution of political power in the States, there were 14 Democratic Members and only five Republican."

That was the result, although the Republicans were in a majority of 25,000, the Republicans having 250,000 votes as against 225,000 Democratic. In the next Congress there was a great change in the vote for Ohio, and the result was the return of 17 Republicans as against two Democrats. Thus there was an absolute turnover in the result, although there had been but little change in the proportion of voters. I do not see my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) present, who has been crying out recently. But I dare say he has an explanation to give of this apparent inconsistency. I will venture to give the House my explanation of the contradiction. It is this—the dispersion of the population within the territory is such that in certain crowded parts there is a great accumulation of people of one Party; whereas in other uncrowded parts there is a tolerably even distribution of the two Parties. Thus, in the crowded parts there is an immense waste of voting power, while in the uncrowded parts there is an economy of voting power. The crowded parts do not send anything like a representation according to their numbers, while the uncrowded parts send all they desire to send. If there is a considerable impulse running through the country which affects those parts of the country which are tolerably evenly divided, you may then secure a fair representation of the opinion of the country. If I could engage the attention of my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government, and once get him to appreciate this fact, he would expound it to the House with a fervour and clearness to which I can make no profession, but which would be delightful to listen to. I say that the distribution of the people of this country corresponds to these circumstances which I have delineated. In the great towns, for the most part, you will secure large Liberal majorities. You will also have country districts in which opinions will be pretty evenly divided. There a large number of Conservative Members will be returned. But whether you will not have a waste of power in the towns, allowing the Conservatives in the country to be returned so as to outnumber the Liberals of the towns, is a point which experience alone will determine. But it is rendered extremely probable by what I have stated. You have just the same dispersion of people as there is in New York and Ohio; and if there you find the distribution of populations voting falsified by the distribution of Members, why should you not have the same result here? Why should you not again have the same turnover at the poll of which we have had recent repeated experience? It is very foolish, perhaps, to talk about things beforehand, unless, as the vulgar expression has it, you know. But, as far as we can draw a horoscope of what would be the action of single-Member constituencies, you will have this waste of Liberal power in the towns, and this economy of Conservative power in the country, which might even produce the result of a Conservative majority in this House with a Liberal majority of electors, to be again overturned when there should be a small accession of Liberal voters producing a large accession of Liberals in the House. Sir, I have dealt, at considerable length, with this part of my subject, because this is a consideration which, so far as I know, has never received sufficient attention, whereas other circumstances to which I propose to turn have often been dwelt upon. Next to this failure to secure the primary result of ascertaining what is the judgment of the country by an election, I strongly condemn the suggestion of single-Member constituencies on account of the effect which it will have upon the character of Members. I need not say much about that, because I know I have a great support already amongst the Members of the big towns themselves. I appeal here to the Prime Minister himself. The Prime Minister has borne evidence of a very remarkable kind to the decline of the character of this House even within his own experience. He has said that from the period of 1835 to 1850 this House reached a pitch from which it has since been perceptibly falling away. To what can that be attributed, except to the action of causes which you are going to intensify and multiply, and which he will facilitate by the course he is now taking? But of all means of degrading the character of this House there is none more potent than that of dividing up the big towns into wards. If we have had to lament in recent years any falling away from the standard which once prevailed, it is impossible that when instead of Members for Manchester you have Members for divisions of Manchester, and instead of Members for Liverpool you have nine Members for divisions of Liverpool, you should not have a still further degradation. I appeal to my right hon. Friend immediately in front of me (Mr. John Bright), because within the last few weeks, unless I deceive myself, he delivered an address to a set of young men at an Eighty Club in which he condemned the proposal to divide up the big towns into wards, because it would produce a degradation in the Members returned. Need I say a single word, or go into reasons why the Member for a ward differs from the Member for a town; why a different class of person will be brought forward; why it is impossible to enlist men of the same standing; why it is impossible to confer upon them the same status, the same authority, the same dignity; why they must inevitably be of a lower rank, not merely socially, but morally and intellectually; why it must produce a degradation of representation which everybody condemns, and yet, if this Bill becomes law, we shall all have to deplore? We shall have vestrymen for the towns. We shall have local Guardians representing the divisions of the counties. No doubt, you cannot speak of county divisions in the same way as of towns. Here and there a county division will be dominated by some great landowner; but the mass of the district representation of the counties will be degraded like the mass of the ward Representatives of the towns. The county Members will suffer a decline answering to the decline of the town Members. I do not know whether my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer is now on the Front Bench. I am sorry if he is not, because I was going to express my sympathy for him. The relations between him and myself have always been so friendly and so cordial that I should feel a deeper anxiety if any peril appeared to be befalling him; and the financial prospects of the country are, perhaps, already not so bright that we need incur any fresh danger. ["Oh!"] I do not understand why some hon. Members say "Oh!" I am not saying anything which I should not have freely said a month ago. If I am asked to describe in a single phrase what will be the character of Members in the county divisions, I should say they would be ratepayers' Members. The question which will agitate them, and upon which they will all depend, will be the question of rates. My hon. Friend the Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes) will have an immense accession of strength. But, at all events, those of us who know how the Treasury is acted upon, how it was acted upon under the late Government, how the present Government has been acted upon so as to extract a subvention in aid of the rates out of the National Exchequer, must look with alarm upon the prospect. We know how the late Government acted, and we are perfectly aware how much money is now drawn from the Imperial Revenues, which is almost all wasted so far as real economy is concerned. Well, but the present Government have not been able to resist a similar demand. We all remember when my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister got up one Tuesday evening and anticipated an attack by the hon. Member for Oxfordshire by saying that he would be prepared to contribute £250,000 in diminution of the highway rate. If you get a lot of county Members representing these districts, returned in the interest of the ratepayers, I would advise the Chancellor of the Exchequer to seek peace with the enemy quickly, or else he will have on an early day to get up and make a further offer out of the National Exchequer in response to the demands of the ratepayers. I am quite well aware you will not all at once realize the degradation of the character of the Members of which I spoke. There will at first be a demand for present Members of the House among the new constituencies. Anyone who has a reputation here, and who happens to represent a borough in Schedule A or a borough in Schedule B that is to lose a Member, will probably be solicited by two or three constituencies to give them his services. But I do not see how the character of representation thus gained is to be kept up. Men of distinction may come in at first; but under the scheme of single-Member constituencies I fail to see how you will keep up the supply. New Members must come in through local knowledge fitting them to represent local interests, and you must then have that decline in the standard of representation about which my right hon. Friend (Mr. John Bright) expressed himself eloquently a few weeks ago. If this is the effect upon this House there must be a corresponding effect upon the electorate. You will have a narrowed, a single issue placed before each body of electors. You will have them restricted in their choice of candidates. You will necessarily have the alienation of a large amount of political energy from the political life of a large proportion of the electors. Whole classes will cease to be interested in what is going on. You will have decay and atrophy of political energy and power. The thing is known as a matter of experience already. It must become more known if you restrict your areas, if you narrow the issues, if you condemn us to carry on elections on these narrow and separate lines. All these things are, in fact, confessed. The discontent with the division of towns into wards is universal. There is not, as far as I am aware, a single newspaper in a large town which is not dissatisfied with it. *The Pall Mall Gazette* of this evening brings together a series of extracts from local papers, which are all united in condemnation of the proposal to divide their towns. I believe that condemnation is shared by the Representatives of those big towns in this House; at least, by everyone except the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). I have hopes that he yet may be influenced by the general condemnation of the proposal. [Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: He never changes.] My right hon. Friend says he never changes; but one might give on a fitting opportunity a curious history, half pathetic, half humorous, of the changes of my right hon. Friend on this very question. I hope he will yet, in the search after truth, come round and cease to be the single defender of the division of large towns. You will further have, as is clear from an answer of the President of the Local Government Board to a question by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), antagonistic sections in your towns. You will have one section of a town arrayed against another. Instead of that permeation of one class by another, which the right hon. Gentleman ought to appreciate, and the consolidation of all classes into one political whole, you will get the Radicals of the working men's quarter set in array against the professional classes of the more aristocratic quarter, and that again placed in hostility to another quarter. These sharp lines of division, instead of making the people feel that they belong to one community, will divide one section from another, and will set class against class. What is the alternative? I am bound to suggest how these evils may, in my opinion, be counteracted. If it be objected that what I suggest is a novelty or a new departure, it cannot be summarily rejected on that account by those who are proposing what is equally novel or newfangled. *The Pall Mall Gazette* has this evening suggested that a solution of the difficulty as to the big towns might be arrived at by letting them decide for themselves how they will vote. Apparently that suggestion does not require much refutation here. It seems almost a logical contradiction to ask people to vote how they will vote, because you must first of all define a method by which they are to vote on that question. The probability is they would prefer to vote in the way they have voted. If you ask them by *plébiscite* they will probably say they are for *plébiscite*; if you ask them in another fashion they may prefer that other fashion. There is *scrutin de liste.* I do not suppose many would propose it seriously—that is to say, that instead of nine Members being elected for Liverpool in nine divisions, nine should be elected by a mere majority. I will say for myself, expressing my own personal opinion only, that if it came to a choice between the two, I should prefer *scrutin de liste* as an interim step, because I am quite convinced that if it were once adopted it would not be maintained. If you adopt the district system, the ward system, my great fear and anxiety are that it will be tenacious of life. Some seem to think that that will be a great recommendation, but it is the lower animals that are very tenacious of life; it is only the higher organisms that give way and die. If you have *scrutin de liste* it would not last more than one or two Parliaments. My impression is that it is very likely that a reproduction here of the experience of Belgium would certainly cure us of preference for *scrutin de liste.* In spite of the authority of M. Gambetta, I am fairly well convinced that if we tried the Belgian system in England it would not last more than two Parliaments. It is, at all events, a little test of the apprehensions I have of the evils of the single-Member system that I am ready to run the risk of the *scrutin de liste* for two Parliaments as a means of avoiding that difficulty. There is no necessity for *scrutin de liste.* Why should we not adopt that principle which the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) laid down in the words "One man one vote?" It is totally inconsistent with *scrutin de liste;* it is in contradiction with it. One man one vote; that is simple. Some would accept it as a sufficient solution of the question—that our big towns retaining five, six, or seven Members, one man should have one vote and one vote only. But there is an objection, and I will face it. If the Prime Minister were one of eight or nine candidates at Liverpool it would be most difficult to prevent all the Liberals voting for him; it would be impossible, as the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) says. Still, I have an opinion that the sagacious electors would consult the wishes of my right hon. Friend himself, and that some of them by voting for others would give him real support rather than the appearance of it. But in order to prevent a waste of strength you would be bound to have a Caucus to direct the people how to vote. That is true. The waste must be prevented in some way; but is there no method of preventing it without a Caucus, without being subjected to the pain and ignominy of being compelled to vote as someone tells you? I think there is a very simple process of letting the voter himself say how he will pass on his vote from one candidate—his first choice—to a second, supposing it is not required by the first. Take the strongest example—that of Liverpool, with nine Members. Suppose that it is undivided, and a voter receives a ballot paper containing the names of all candidates. [An hon. MEMBER: Eighteen.] There would not necessarily be 18, and the voters would know well which were the Liberal and which were the Conservative candidates. Each voter would put a figure 1 against the name of the candidate whom he most desired to see elected, a figure 2 against a second to whom he desired to give his vote if the first did not require it, and so on. What follows at the end of an election? All the papers are collected together and their numbers are known by the existing machinery. Suppose 40,000 votes are given, and there are nine persons to be elected. The first thing to be done, according to the plan of which I am speaking, would be to divide the 40,000 by 10, that is, one more than the persons to be elected, giving a result of 4,000. Any person who has 4,001 votes is sure to be elected, because the remaining votes could not be divided among nine people each getting more than 4,000; therefore the one who gets 4,001 is certain to be elected. That, I think, is plain to the majority of the House. The papers having been shuffled together, are arranged in heaps, according to the names marked 1, and there would be a great number of heaps. Some of the heaps would exceed 4,001, and those candidates who were found to have that number would be elected. The papers remaining after 4,001 had been taken away would be distributed afresh according to the names marked 2. That would bring up some more papers. The candidate who got 4,001 votes in these heaps would be declared elected, and then there would be another distribution. The process would thus go on, until in the end the nine persons would be elected, each receiving 4,001 votes. The plan is a simple one. It is as simple as—it is simpler than a sum in long division. I claim that the plan is simple and workable, and that it would secure the representation of the masses of your big towns. It represents them in their totality. It has been asked, Are you going to represent numbers or interests? There is no such distinction. The scheme which I am propounding gives representation to all numbers and to all interests. But under that of my right hon. Friend below me only half the numbers would be represented. Under my right hon. Friend's scheme the majority only is represented. One of the best represented towns, in more meanings than one, is Plymouth. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. E. Clarke) and the hon. Member on this side of the House (Mr. Maclver) represent nearly the whole constituency of Plymouth between them and the interests of the town also. Now, what is the objection to our plan? I know the objection which weighs with many people; it is born of ignorance and is that of chance. It is said that, according as you get one set of papers or another uppermost, so one Member or another may be returned. But what is the risk you run? A man is declared elected because he has got a superabundance of votes. You put aside the votes that have secured his election, and you distribute the rest according to the second names on his surplus papers. The second name is always a Member of the same Party as the first. For instance, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham sitting below me (Mr. John Bright) would be elected by a vast number, and you have to strike his name off. Take two of the papers from which his name is to be struck off. My right hon. Friend would be the first on the first paper, and the President of the Board of Trade would probably be the second upon it. Now, is the theory conceivable that my right hon. Friend sitting below me would be the first on the second paper, and the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) the second upon it? I should like to see the Birmingham elector who would put the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock second to my right hon. Friend (Mr. Bright). The fact is, the choice and the chance refer only to two Members of the same Party. Upon the suplus papers of my right hon. Friend the names next in succession would be those of one or another of the same Party. Sir, the fears, anxieties, and trepidations entertained about this matter are of the most imaginary character. On the other hand, I invite hon. Members to remember for a moment what are its advantages. You liberate the electors of this Kingdom, you procure a just representation in this House by easy and natural methods of all divisions of opinion and character within the electorate. You would have a working man Representative among the Members for Birmingham; you would have Liberals of different character and of different degree, and Conservatives of different character and different degree; you would have all sorts of opinions in their proportions, and only in their proportions, represented in the House, and at the very same time you would get insured, what no alternative method has insured—namely, the representation of majorities themselves. You would reanimate political life, you would bring into direct and immediate connection with this House and the working of the Constitution all the electors throughout the country. You would nowhere have people with their power thrown away; you would nowhere have people dying of political inanity; you would secure the reunion of political life, the reconstruction of political life such as we have been strangers to; you would have, in fact, a reflection in this House of the national will and the national wisdom. The plan of this Bill does not secure that. The plan I advocate is, in fact, the realization of Democracy in it freest and widest form. This plan is often represented as a crotchet, the object of which is to prevent the access to this House of the Representatives of the people you are about to enfranchise. It is nothing of the kind. It is a plan to secure their representation. You have long since enfranchized the artizans of the towns. How many Gentlemen are there here representing them? One, and one only. You are going to enfranchise the agricultural labourers. How do you know you will have Representatives of them here? You may or you may not. Under your system it may happen, but there are enormous difficulties to be overcome. But I will show you a plan by which you can secure their presence, and by which you may give any class whatever sufficient certainty of having a spokesman of their own within these walls. It was this vision, Sir, which animated Mr. Mill in that remarkable passage which adorns his autobiography which I have already read once before in this House. It was this vision which moved General Garfield in that speech which I have already quoted, when he said that, if realized, it would remove the obstacles which now threaten the existence of Representative Government throughout the world. The scheme would emancipate those who are enslaved by the false machinery you have adopted, and it would be a message of freedom to the people, giving them, not merely a barren privilege, but bringing them into direct relationship with this Assembly. The plan I have placed before the House would prove as firm as a rock in popular estimation. There would be no single artizan or agricultural labourer or man of learning or man of letters who would not be able to say—"There is someone in the House of Commons for whom I voted who represents me, who possesses my political ambitions and my political life." Sir, it is not surprising that those who have once realized this vision should be somewhat carried away by its grandeur and breadth. No such Democratic future is held out under any other system; no such promise of freedom, no such promise of development can be secured by any other machinery. Your method may secure a Parliament, but it would never secure a Parliament which shall maintain the high traditions of this House, still less rise to the level of what the political life of this country is capable. I cannot sufficiently deplore my own want of power to drive home this idea into the minds and imaginations of the Members who are listening to me. If they once possessed it, they would accept it as a new gospel; they would see, as Mr. Mill did, and as President Garfield did, that it was the means of the resurrection of the people. Sir, I have occupied the attention of the House long, and I regret and apologize for it. There is, however, one more word I would like to say before I sit down. I could not be silent to-night when I remember what has again and again come to my mind as I have been speaking. Had the proceedings of this night happened but one short month earlier, I should not have been alone in standing here; I should not have been alone in deserting that Bench. I speak this not in mere surmise nor yet from knowledge acquired by long friendship for him. I do not say it because the last words he spoke at Hackney were devoted to this subject. I do not say it simply because the last words that we exchanged on the last night he appeared in this House were upon the proposals which are now laid before us. I have higher authority than my own for knowing that had he whom we have lost so prematurely been present he would have borne his powerful testimony in the direction in which I have attempted to bear it to-night. You may accuse me of having no personal knowledge of this question. You may with truth say of me that I have never been Member for a big constituency or known what was the popular ideal. You could not have said it of him. If he had been here he would have spoken with more power than I can, because he would have come fresh from the people themselves whom he so truly desired to serve. Sir, we desire to honour his memory. Those who shared his counsels, those who knew his thoughts, those who accompanied him so many years in his political life, cannot do him more honour, I think, than by being faithful to the doctrines which he held. I, for my part, would pray God that I may ever in this way be faithful to this trust.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, my hon. Friend has addressed the House with an ability which never fails him, and with a fervour and sincerity of enthusiasm which has inspired life into what I might almost call, but for the effect of his speech, an army of dry bones. But my hon. Friend made a remark of which I acknowledge the justice in regard to my own speeches on this subject. Of those speeches he said he found no traces there of an extensive studying of the electoral systems of other countries, or of the application of a system or science of comparative politics to the elucidation of this subject. Sir, that is perfectly just, and I can tell my hon. Friends that I am quite conscious of my inability to grapple with details as in former years I might have been in some degree perhaps competent to do. ["No, no!"] I beg pardon; I am very much obliged to my hon. Friends who decline to admit that inability, but I am too conscious of it, and the record of nature and lapse of time are facts too stubborn to be confuted even by the most kind and indulgent partiality. I should not have arisen to enter into this debate—I should have left it, as I proposed to leave the general discussion of the Bill, to other and younger and abler men—had it not been for the personal portions of the speech of my hon. Friend. He referred to the action which he had taken in the early part of this week, and he spoke of the Government he has left and of myself in a manner which deserves my respectful gratitude. Not less, Sir, does it require of me an acknowledgment which I am sure the experience of the whole House will bear me out in making—that in the departure of my hon. Friend from the service of the Crown and of the nation we have sustained a heavy loss. In that official career, not very lengthened, he has made his mark upon the administrative business of the country; and to this acknowledgment relating to the past, I desire to add an expression of a fervent hope for the future—that either with this or some other Government congenial to him he may for many long years be united without the untoward occurrences or impediments such as have now deprived us of his valuable services, and that when his career is run he may be able to record a long as well as useful and distinguished application of his great talents and business capacity to the Public Service. I will not follow my hon. Friend into the discussion which has occupied the last half of his speech. This is, after all, a debate on the second reading of the Bill; and I observe that, notwithstanding objections taken by my hon. Friend, in strong terms, to particular portions of the Bill, he has made no Motion adverse to the measure, has taken no step to prevent its passing, and I feel he himself will be the first to admit that the discussion is one necessarily without practical issue. When I stated to the House the method which we had adopted for the distribution of electoral areas, I did not refrain from making the admission that the subject was of such a nature that, adopt what plan you will, you must and will be open of necessity to a multitude not only of popular and plausible, but of real objections. Sir, had my hon. Friend not approached this question in the spirit of a philosopher, he would have stopped after the first part of his speech. No doubt the House felt that, in much that he stated in the exhibition of particular and possible failures of the system that we propose to attain electoral perfection, he stood upon solid ground. I think he must himself have observed that when, with that sincerity as remarkable as his fervour and talent, he came to develop the scheme which has really excited his own enthusiasm, and which he worships as embodying something very near political perfection, the sympathy of the House began to fail. He said that a few Members sitting in distant parts of the House did not appear to follow him. My impression was that the proposition presented to us, which he said was of so simple a character, was, in truth, a *pons asinorum,* which very few of us indeed, if a record of consciences and understandings could at this moment be taken, would have been enabled to pass. But, Sir, we shall have opportunities hereafter for the discussion of these matters. I would only say to the House that it appears to me that my hon. Friend in attacking that which is undoubtedly a material and substantial portion of this Bill, has not been happy at every point. I frankly own that I do not quite understand the doctrine of my hon. Friend. I cannot see how the authority of President Garfield can be considered altogether superior to that of Mr. Cobden. President Garfield was a man undoubtedly of great talent, and the tragic circumstances of his death have consecrated his memory among us, and raised an interest in him which I frankly own that I do not think the scope of his mind and the force of his ability would have availed to attract if it had not been for these extraordinary and almost unparalleled circumstances. I am sorry that my hon. Friend has given this prominence to the case of President Garfield on this occasion, because he has adopted him as a sort of normal example of the working of the human mind. See by what beautiful gradations he rose to the point at which my hon. Friend has seized him and has turned him to account. President Garfield came to the House of Commons and listened to the debate, when a certain progress was made; he went to the House of Lords and listened to the superior intelligence of that House, which gave him somewhat more effective assistance. He then made a voyage over the Atlantic, which we must presume was tranquil, and did not cause in him those disturbances which, in the case of many of us, are fatal to all continuous thought, and was the means of leading up to maturity and perfection of the intellect, and in the conclusion then attained, and in the steps by which it was attained, my hon. Friend finds a splendid example of the normal working of the human mind. Well, Sir, if that is so, I am very sorry; but I must illustrate the working of the mind of President Garfield, whom we are called upon to bow down to and to worship as to the image of Nebuchadnezzar—I must illustrate the working of General Garfield's mind upon this particular subject by reference to another subject, with regard to which we know something of him from public sources.

General Garfield was a distinguished member of the Cobden Club. My hon. Friend, like myself, values highly the principles of the Cobden Club, and no doubt regrets, like myself, that those principles are not so fresh and vigorous in their hold upon the minds of some of us as at one time, perhaps, they were. But they were lamentably weak in their hold upon the mind of General Garfield, for General Garfield, being a member of the Cobden Club when in this country, shortly afterwards appeared in America as a Protectionist candidate for the Presidency of his country, and became one of the great advocates of the system which, among us, he had foresworn. I have, therefore, not that perfect confidence in the normal character of the mind of General Garfield which my hon. Friend appears to have. My hon. Friend has, I think, not quite done justice to the facts with reference to the system of one-Member constituencies. In the first place, he says that it is a new-fangled scheme, and those who support it have no right to quarrel with any other scheme on the ground of its being new-fangled. Well, Sir, he places it on a par with the plan that he has propounded. Permit me to say that it is not quite in the same position in relation to human experience as the plan he has proposed. I admit that it was virtually unknown to our representative system in England and to Scotch representation; but before the Reform Act was passed our representative system was not worthy of the name, while Irish representation had been almost entirely paralyzed. But the system of single-Member constituencies came in with the Reform Act upon a certain scale; and in 1867, when we proceeded to amend the Reform Act, we proceeded also to extend that scheme; and it is a little hard upon the one-Member system which my hon. Friend treats as having produced great decadence in the character of this House that it is severely condemned by a Representative of a single-Member constituency. In the Cabinet my right hon. Friend who sits near me (Mr. Trevelyan) and I myself are among the degenerate individuals whom one-Member constituencies have chosen. My right hon. Friend on my left (Sir Charles W. Dilke) acts as the Representative of a one-Member constituency in some of those local duties and offices to which we attach so high a value, and which have reared for this House, in one form or another, so many valuable Members on this as well as on that side. My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), nurtured as a politician in municipal labours, came by single election upon every occasion to the exercise of those duties. The municipal system is founded upon the one-Member system. That scheme, I well recollect, was adopted in deference to the representations of the Conservative Party in 1835, who were actuated at that time by excessive fears of the operation of municipal reform, and that scheme was accorded to them as a consolation for their apprehensions. But my hon. Friend says that the scheme is desperately unpopular. If so, why does he say that, once adopted, it is quite certain to be very tenacious of life? When we adopt bad laws, are they necessarily incurable? Now, what is the representation of my hon. Friend? He says that this scheme has every vice under Heaven. He has pointed out how it works on the character of the electors, and on the character of Members, and how it will depress and destroy the character of this House. But, then, is this scheme, which he calls so very novel and new-fangled, really novel and new-fangled? Does my hon. Friend say that the hon. Members who sit in this House for one-Member constituencies are, as a class, in any way inferior to other hon. Members? The system is at work not here only. Go over the length and breadth of the representative world, and almost everywhere you will find the system of one-Member constituencies in operation. Surely it is a strong measure to call that a new-fangled system. Is it not a most extraordinary thing that if all these vices which my hon. Friend charges upon the system are really chargeable upon it, all those who have got it should have kept it, with the single exception of France, who has a peculiar reason, which I will mention in a moment, for rejecting it? I have never heard that there was serious controversy in any of those countries with regard to its maintenance. And what is the reason that this controversy is prosecuted so vehemently in France between the *scrutin d'arrondissement* and the *scrutin de liste?* It is obvious that by *scrutin de liste* there is a desire of giving a more sweeping and resistless effect to the will of the majority. For my own part, I firmly hold that the majority ought to prevail; but I am not one of those who hold that the majority ought so to prevail that there shall be no check upon it whatever which might somewhat moderate its courses. And I wish the House to understand that, because if you except the single case in which *scrutin de liste* is vehemently supported in France, the whole of the representative systems of the civilized world which have this single-Member system do not show the least desire at present to get rid of it. It is the general system of Europe, and, I believe, of the Colonies and America. However, we shall have opportunities of discussing it hereafter. My hon. Friend himself says that such is its character that if you once enact it you cannot get out of it. My hon. Friend made a very touching reference to the memory of Mr. Fawcett, of whom I have spoken on a former occasion. But my hon. Friend has hardly done justice to the facts of the case. Mr. Fawcett, I believe, upon a recent occasion expounded an argument very much in the nature of that which my hon. Friend has addressed to us. How was it received by his constituents? That is rather an important question. It is in vain that we argue, in a short and simple explanation of an hour long, that a system is perfectly clear and simple, unless you can in some way or other find an entry for it into the minds of ordinary and average people of the country. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Fawcett himself placed it upon record, after laying that exposition before his constituents, that he had never made a speech which was so little successful in obtaining their approbation; and I believe that there is also to be noted this fact, that my hon. Friend (Professor Stuart) who now occupies, and worthily occupies, I may presume to say, the seat of Mr. Fawcett, has come into Parliament after having been called upon to make a pretty decided expression of his own views on this matter in opposition to those of Mr. Fawcett. That is not very encouraging, after all, for the adoption of the system of my hon. Friend. Now, it is impossible to vouch for this universal acquiesence in a scheme which is so bad as my hon. Friend represents this scheme to be. If it had all these mischievous consequences, it could not have the patient acquiescence and the general adhesion of that portion of mankind who are interested in the representative system of the country. Sir, the real truth is this. It is a choice of evils. When we come to the Committee on this Bill we shall have all these different plans placed in fair comparison one with the other. We shall then show what is to be said in mitigation of the charges of my hon. Friend, and we shall also know much more clearly than we do now what is to be said in favour of the scheme he propounds. He has kept back, however, the great authority which he might have quoted on behalf of his view—the authority of *The Quarterly Review.*

MR. COURTNEY: I was not aware of it.

MR. GLADSTONE: My hon. Friend's reading, wide as it is, does not extend, apparently, to Conservative publications. He is afraid lest his mind should be poisoned. Now, I do not mention that for the sake of referring to the practice of my hon. Friend, or the circumscription of his reading, but for this reason. This is a favourite scheme of *The Quarterly Review.* But my hon. Friend says that this is a scheme by which you are to give a completeness of triumph to the principles of Democracy that cannot be attained in any other way. *The Quarterly Review,* however, does not take it in that light. It seems to take it for the opposite reason—namely, that it would check the triumph of Democracy. But, then, if these two authorities are so fundamentally in difference and at variance upon the effect of the working of the scheme, are we to be told that it is so very simple that it ought to be acceptable to the intelligence of us all in a few moments, when its very propounders represent it some as leading to one pole in the political system, and some as leading to the other pole? Sir, I will not go further into this matter, for I own I do not think that more than a respectful acknowledgment of the argument that we have heard to-night is due from me at the present time, for the reason that this is not a period when practical discussion can be had in this matter. My hon. Friend said that the one-Member system was rejected in 1832. No, Sir; the one-Member system was never raised in discussion in 1832.

It was adopted experimentally, and as a foundation, and the adoption of the experiment led, after an experience of 25 years, to an extension of the system. To say it was rejected would, I think, be not only an exaggeration, but would be a statement absolutely beside and beyond the mark. It must be upon a careful examination of the details submitted by my hon. Friend and of many other details that the House can alone arrive at a safe and specific judgment. Of this I am quite sure, that no judgment which the House can arrive at will enable you to present a plan free from evils. You must take your choice about it. I do not say that the judgment we have arrived at is necessarily a solid and a irrefragable judgment. Do not let us set out with a fundamental misapprehension, such as my hon. Friend himself makes out, because he really does think that he has got hold of a perfect nostrum by which he can not only solve the main difficulty and which he can not only present as preferable to any other scheme, but which is, in his eyes, a system of perfect and faultless beauty—an allegation which, I think, upon reflection, he will find is convicted of the fault of exaggeration. Sir, I am glad that my hon. Friend has not thought it necessary to offer any objection to the second reading of this Bill. He will understand, I hope, that I am in no degree complaining of the fulness with which he stated his views. He was perfectly entitled to do so, and, from his point of view, he was bound to do something of the kind; but it appears to me that upon another occasion we shall more advantageously aim to bring into comparison our minds and ideas in respect to this undoubtedly very difficult portion of the subject; and in the meantime I am glad to think, and I hope it may be the case throughout the evening, that there has been no indication of a disposition to refuse to recognize by an affirmative vote the second reading of this Bill.

Sir HENRY TYLER, in rising to move the following Amendment:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the principle of Representation in proportion to Population should be adopted in place of arbitrary figures as a basis, in order to obtain a logical, judicious, and permanent settlement of the question of Redistribution of Seats,"

said, he was unable to agree with the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) that the system he advocated would be better than the single-Member districts provided by this Bill. In placing on the Paper this Amendment, he intended no disrespect to Her Majesty's Government or to those Members of the Opposition who had been engaged with them in modifying the Bill to some extent. On the contrary, he wished to give them every possible credit for their labours, as he was sure they had earnestly devoted their time and attention to the subject with a view of adapting the measure to what they believed to be the good of the country. The present proposals were, however, neither logical nor final, and whatever the result of the debate to-night or to-morrow might be, there would be increasing discontent expressed with regard to them. There was no principle establishing any connection between the numbers 15,000, 50,000, and 165,000, which were the key-notes of the Bill. There was no reason either why Wales should be more represented than other parts of the Kingdom, and why she should still retain 30 Members. This Bill left anomalies almost as glaring as those which now existed. Liverpool with 550,000 inhabitants would only have nine Members, while there would be 20 boroughs returning 20 Members whose aggregate population did not exceed 350,000. Then there was growing dissatisfaction with the Bill in the large towns of the North. This was merely an attempt to patch up a temporary settlement; but in the end they would have to come to dividing the country into equal electoral districts. Perhaps on the Conservative side equal electoral districts might be thought to be somewhat of a Socialist scheme; but believing that it was a good principle in itself, he had no hesitation in advocating it. He did not believe anyone could forecast what would be the result of the next Election after the passing of this Bill; but if the basis were adopted of dividing the country into districts averaging, say, 54,200 inhabitants, or, roughly, 8,000 electors each, then, at any rate, Conservatives, Liberals, and Radicals would all have had fair play together, and each constituency would contain a manageable number of electors. He, therefore, begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

Viscount CRICHTON having risen,

MR. SPEAKER asked if the noble Lord rose to second the Amendment?

VISCOUNT CRICHTON: No, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Does any hon. Member second the Amendment?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he would do so. It appeared to him that the Amendment would have the effect of curing the defects of the Bill, especially the defect as to the disproportional representation of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. The Bill was good as far as it went, but it ought to go a little further. The hon. Member for Harwich (Sir Henry Tyler) asked that representation should be based on the principle of equal population, and he (Sir George Campbell) was of opinion that that was, if not the best, at all events the most practicable, method of dealing with the subject. In Scotland it was thought that some consideration might be given to intelligence, taxation, and other points as well as to population. They could see that there were practical difficulties in the way, and he believed he expressed the views of the Scottish Representatives when he said that if upon a fair principle of share and share alike they obtained representation according to population, they would be content. He regretted that the Government did not go as far as the hon. Member wished, because by not doing so they were forcing the country to make two bites of a cherry, as the settlement would inevitably require revision at an early date. They were going to acknowledge the system of equal, or nearly equal, electoral districts in the counties and large towns, and the same principle ought to be acted upon all through. He was not anxious to address any observations to the House on the general subject of the Bill; but the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) referred to certain objections which fell from him (Sir George Campbell). It was unfortunate the hon. Member should have selected him, for he was not at all a bigot on the subject. When he came into the House to hear the hon. Member's speech, his mind was in a fluid state; but he was convinced by the hon. Member's speech that they must come to single-Member constituencies, because the hon. Member proved too much when he said the single-Member constituencies would degrade the character of the Members, and had supplied no other satisfactory plan. How could his hon. Friend expect Scottish Members to accept that doctrine? They had in Scotland single-Member constituencies, and they were not willing to believe that these Scottish Members were of a lower class than other Members. Their experience was that single-Member constituencies did not degrade a country. Coming to his own grievance, which he believed would be cured by the suggestion of the hon. Member opposite, he admitted that the scheme of the Government gave Scotland within a fraction of its fair share of representation, supposing the House to be confined to the number of 658 Members; but when he compared the treatment of Scotland with Ireland and Wales, no one who studied the figures could say that a uniform principle had been applied to the three divisions of the Kingdom. Take a few instances:—Lanark in 1881 had a population of 387,000, and it was to have six Members—equal to a Member to every 66,000 of population; but Cork, with a population of 391,000, was to have seven Members—equal to one to every 55,000 of population. Tyrone, with 197,000, was to have four Members—equal to one to every 49,000 of the population; and Glamorgan, with 235,000, was to have five Members—equal to one to every 47,000. From those figures it was plain there was great inequality, and that preference had been shown to Ireland and Wales; but he could quote another case in which inequality was even more palpable. The county of Armagh, in Ireland, might be compared with the county of Ayr, in Scotland. In 1881 Armagh had a population of 157,000. It was to get three Members, while Ayr, with a population of 162,864—more than 5,000 in excess of Armagh—was only to have two Members. The figures he had quoted were founded upon the Census of 1881; but when they went a little more minutely into the matter they found that the county of Armagh was rapidly decreasing in population, while the county of Ayr was rapidly increasing in population. The consequence was that before the Bill came into operation the county of Ayr would be in excess of population over Armagh by at least from 15,000 to 20,000, and yet the Scotch county was to have one Member less than the Irish county. The President of the Local Government Board said that in Scotland they must take the counties as a whole, and that, considering the number of sparsely-populated counties, if Lanark were to get a larger number of Members, Scotland would have, on the whole, an excess of representation. But was this the fact? He had taken the trouble to analyze the figures, and he found that under the provisions of the present Bill each county Member in Scotland represented a little over 54,000 constituents, while each county Member in Ireland represented a little under 52,000, and each county Member in Wales represented a little under 49,000. Therefore, whether they took particular cases, or whether they took the aggregate of county Members of each of these divisions, it was palpable that Ireland and Wales were treated very much more favourably than Scotland. He could understand the reasons why some of the minor countries might receive a larger share of representation than the population warranted. The Prime Minister had given distance as one reason for such a course, although he did not think there was very much in that. But when a great country and a small country were united together, the small country was very apt to be overborne, and there was a tendency to that in the case of Scotland. The Scotch Members were too meek and mild, and did not combine sufficiently in opposition to get the things they wanted; but this argument about a minor country receiving a larger representation than the numbers warranted must not be applied to one country and not to another. He admitted that one uniform principle of disfranchisement had been applied to all; but with regard to enfranchisement there was an evident partiality shown to Ireland and Wales. He protested against the political opportunism which gave Ireland more than its fair share because it was a very troublesome country. He also protested against the earmarking of the 12 seats to be given to Scotland, as if they were new seats in the case of Scotland, while, in regard to England, these were simply old seats revived. Scotland was entitled to this extra number of Members; but, by way of favour and partiality, Ireland was to have 11 more Members than her population entitled her to, and Wales 4 or 5. An hon. Member had said to him that when the Bill got into Committee, Scotland would not get those 12 extra Members. His reply was he could not believe such a thing, and if it took place he was inclined to say the people of Scotland would be prepared to secede from the Union. They ought to deal with the different portions of the country on a fair and uniform plan. He claimed one of two things,—either the division of the number of Members to the House between the different divisions of the Kingdom on the principle of population, or the application of equal rules of disfranchisement and enfranchisement to every division; and he supported the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman opposite. He thought the effect of its adoption would be to take away a certain number of Members from Ireland and Wales, to which they were not entitled.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the principle of Representation in proportion to Population should be adopted in place of arbitrary figures as a basis, in order to obtain a logical, judicious, and permanent settlement of the question of Redistribution of Seats,"—(*Sir Henry Tyler*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Viscount CRICHTON said, that at the present stage of the Bill he desired merely to enter his protest against it, and to add one or two remarks as to what he considered would be its effect in Ireland. When the Franchise Bill was passing through the House last Session, several hon. Members on his side desired to exclude Ireland from its provisions on the ground that, in the present political and social state of that country, it would be highly dangerous to throw the whole power into the hands of the lowest, most ignorant, and most disaffected classes, and, further, that under the operation of household suffrage the peaceable, loyal, and well-affected minority, or over one-third, of the population of Ireland, would be almost entirely swamped and deprived of that share of political power which it was admitted ought to be accorded to them. But they were met by the argument—"Oh, trust to the Redistribution Bill to be afterwards introduced, which will remedy all that." Now, having scanned the provisions of the present Bill carefully, he utterly failed to discover any of the promised safeguards. On the contrary, he must say that the result of his examination had led him to the conclusion that if the object of the framers of the measure had been to annihilate the political power of the loyal and well-affected portion of the population, to completely destroy the influence of those who were anxious to maintain the integrity of the Union, they could not have devised a more effectual scheme for the purpose than that now before the House. He had always looked to the undivided representation of the great Protestant constituencies of Belfast, Down, Armagh, Antrim, and possibly Derry, to redress the disadvantage which the Loyal Party in other parts of Ireland must inevitably suffer; but the system of single-Member constituencies which was put forward as a protection for minorities would probably give the Nationalists a seat in each of these constituencies, while it would give no chance whatever to the minority of obtaining a seat in the three Provinces of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught. As the Nationalists had it practically all their own way in those three Provinces, they might be left to take care of themselves in Ulster, where they were the minority. Again, he protested against the absurd pedantry of fixing the line of disfranchisement for boroughs at 15,000 in Ireland simply because they applied that line to England and Scotland. The circumstances of England and Scotland were totally dissimilar from those of Ireland. If they applied that principle to Ireland, there would not be more than eight borough constituencies in that country that would in future return Members to Parliament. And if the Boundary Commission used the pruning knife, as they probably would do, the number would be reduced to seven, because Galway, if shorn of its rural area, would hardly come up to the required standard of population. Practically, therefore, the proposed Bill would reduce the Irish representation to one uniform level of county constituencies; whereas, if they had drawn the line of borough representation at 10,000 inhabitants, they would have to some extent rectified this inequality, and also have preserved three or four seats which would have returned to the House Representatives of the loyal minority to which he had alluded. Further, if the authors of the Bill were so enamoured of the principle of uniformity, why did they not apply it in its integrity? In Scotland and in Wales they left groups of boroughs which had answered very well. Why did they not extend grouping to Ireland? He had sat for many years as a Member for Enniskillen, one of the boroughs which would disappear under that Bill. He knew well the value of such towns in the Irish representative system, and he believed that by some judicious method of grouping in Ireland they might have maintained an element in their representation which was both necessary and dseirable. Another point to which he wished to refer was a somewhat painful one for an Irish Member to touch upon, nevertheless, he felt it his duty to draw the attention of the House to it. He meant the number of Members which it was proposed to leave to Ireland. Why, he would ask, when the representation was about to be thrown into the hands of the disloyal, did they propose at the same time to further favour the disloyal section by leaving Ireland a larger number of Members than she was entitled by her population? He knew he should be told that it would be dangerous to tamper with one of the Articles of the Union; but he thought that argument had been pretty well disposed of in 1869, when the House showed very little tenderness for what was called a fundamental and essential Article of the Union—he meant the maintenance of the Established Church in that country. But what had been the state of three-fourths of Ireland for the last five years? Had the conduct of its Representatives in that House been such, and was the prospect of an amelioration in it such as to entitle that country to exceptional favour at the hands of the House? If they accorded it that exceptional favour, and if the party of disorder were reinforced, as it was likely to be in the next Parliament, they would yet bitterly repent it. He did not ask for any vindictive measures, or that Ireland should be deprived of one seat to which she was fairly entitled; but, in justice to all the other parts of the United Kingdom, she ought not to have those exceptional privileges over them. He believed that the second reading of the Bill was not to be opposed. If it had been, he should have felt himself bound to vote against it. Believing, however, as he did that the Bill would enormously decrease the forces of loyalty, order, and progress in Ireland, and that it would make a corresponding increase in those of sedition and disunion, and he feared he must add of dynamite and the dagger, he, for ones, hould take every opportunity in his power of protesting against it.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR said, he should detain the House but a very few minutes, because, as he understood it, the discussion to-night was not really to be considered as a discussion upon the second reading, but rather as an extended discussion upon the first reading of the Bill. The real discussion in which they should be called upon to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with regard to the main principles and details of the Bill would be on the Motion, after the Recess, that the Speaker leave the Chair. He should that night only speak on the one point which had concentrated all the interest in Scotland at present. It had been admitted on both sides of the House by the introduction of this Bill that a large increase of Members for Scotland was a right; it was no longer a disputed claim. The Bill proposed that Scotland should have 12 additional Members. If that was not a very generous proposal, he thought most of them would be inclined to say that, at least, it was not inadequate; and he thought he might say for his Colleagues who represented Scotland, and he believed he might almost say for the people of Scotland, that they should be well satisfied with the 12 Members if Scotland got them. But the question was—from what source were these 12 Members to come? Different proposals had been made and suggested. There was one proposal that the principle of liberation, as the Prime Minister had called it, should be extended from the minimum of 15,000 to 20,000 or 25,000 inhabitants, and that the seats so liberated should be given to Scotland. Another proposal was that seats should be taken from the over-represented parts of the United Kingdom—he meant Ireland chiefly, and Wales—and that these should be given to the under-represented part of the United Kingdom—namely, Scotland. There was a third proposal—that the precedent of 1867 should be followed, and that there should be an Instruction to the Committee that certain constituencies should be named, and should be transferred from England or Wales or Ireland and given to Scotland. A fourth proposal had been made, the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) having stated that he would move an Instruction to the Committee that the University seats should be disfranchised, and that these should be transferred to Scotland. [General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR: Hear, hear!] He did not know what sympathy that Motion might meet with on the part of different Members; but, speaking for himself, he was bound to say that it did not much commend itself to his mind. He should be very sorry indeed that the whole of the University Representatives should be taken from the House, as he believed they added interest and colour to the House which they did not get from the existing constituencies, and could not get from the new constituencies about to be formed. Then there was a fifth proposal—the proposal in the Bill that there should be an addition of Members to the House. Well, he believed that in Scotland they should accept any of these proposals, provided they got their 12 Members. He was satisfied that they would not refuse the proposal of the Bill, and he supposed that the Scottish Members would be united in supporting the Government on that matter, provided they made it a really important and vital point of the measure. But the two Front Benches were not the only people to be considered in this matter. He was certain there would be a very strong feeling on the part of English Members that the numbers of the House should not be increased. It was quite possible the House might take this matter into its own hands, and defeat the proposed addition to its numbers; or the proposal might be defeated in the House of Lords, and where would the Scottish Members be? They would be left with their 60 Representatives, with not another Representative added, although it was admitted that they were entitled to a large increase of Members. The Prime Minister declined pointedly and determinedly to state what were to be the vital principles of the measure. No one would claim that the Prime Minister should state *nominatim* one by one what the vital principles were; but when a question was put to him upon a definite point, not by one Member or by a particular district, but by a whole nation—a nation to which the Prime Minister owed a great deal—when he was asked to assure the Scottish Members that it should be a vital point that they were to have their 12 Members, considering that this question affected a whole nation, he thought they might claim that on this point at least the Prime Minister should give them an answer. They were entitled to say that they should not have the go by in this matter; and the only manner in which they could secure this was by the Prime Minister, or one of his Colleagues in the Cabinet, assuring them that this should be considered a vital principle of the Bill. A question on this subject was asked on Monday by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan). The Prime Minister spoke in a cordial manner, but said this was not the time to state what were vital principles and what were not. When was the time? Was it now, or was it when they are going into Committee, or when they were in Committee, or when was it? There was considerable satisfaction in Scotland with regard to the Bill; but the satisfaction was mainly because it was printed in the Bill that they were to have 12 more Members. The hon. Member for Harwich (Sir Henry Tyler) had given a graphic and pathetic description of those who would have to pass the Speaker's Chair, with the words *Morituri te salutamus!* on their lips. No doubt he was speaking as one of those who, it was suggested, were to die. He felt a certain pang at his unexpected and violent liberation; but he hoped that these pangs would pass away with the Recess, and that, as a whole, even the doomed ones would not feel dissatisfaction with the Bill, provided, and provided only, they got some adequate assurance from some influential Member on the Front Bench that it should be a vital point that Scotland should get the Members given to it by this Bill. If they had that assurance, he believed there would be very little trouble given by Scottish Members in this matter; but if not, he could only say that he would raise the question on every stage of the Bill. If they got that assurance, they should be able to go down to Scotland with a clear conscience and say that this was a Bill which ought to have the warm support of the country.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he did not think that any hon. Gentleman on the Opposition side of the House had said a word in favour of the proposition raised by the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney). This was not, he believed, because there were no Members on his own side of the House who were not in favour of the proposition. On the contrary, he understood that there were a large number of Members on the Opposition side who were in favour of it. The Prime Minister, in dealing with the question raised by the hon. Member for Liskeard, appeared to him to touch very lightly on the points raised. It seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman passed over the question in a joking kind of way, and threw a certain amount of ridicule on the subject which amused the House very much. When the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was considered, however, he thought it would be difficult to find in it any argument which had been brought forward against the proposal. He was of opinion that the mode of voting advocated by the hon. Gentleman was as simple as the mode of voting in use at the present time. There might be some difficulty in the counting of the votes or in the allocation of the votes to the candidate, but surely there could be no difficulty in finding persons sufficiently educated to do this kind of work. He thought they were bound to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the Leaders of the Government and to the Leaders of the Opposition for the patriotic manner in which they had saved the House and the country from a grave Constitutional crisis. Four or five gentlemen meeting together could not, in the course of a few days, find out every possible complexity that might arise. They had submitted to Parliament a foundation on which Members of Parliament could build a good system of representation. The Prime Minister, however, stated that the House of Commons, notwithstanding the circumstances under which the Bill came before it, had the fullest liberty in regard to it. If the Bill had proposed a uniform system of representation, it might have been more difficult to ask the House to alter it; but this was not a uniform system. Whereas the greater part of the country was to be split up into single-Member districts, certain boroughs were still undividedly to retain two Members. He trusted that there might be such a concensus of opinion in favour of minority representation that the Government would be inclined to give to that proposal a very favourable consideration. If the old system of three-cornered constituencies had been further developed, the demand for minority representation might have been made with less force. But they were to be entirely abolished. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had consulted the Members returned by three-cornered constituencies as to its working, and the greater proportion of them spoke favourably of it. He knew that it worked well in Berkshire, which now returned two Conservatives and one Liberal. If this Bill came into operation as now drafted, he had been informed by persons acquainted with that county, that Berkshire would certainly not return another Liberal. One of the great drawbacks of the present system was the undue preponderance which it gave to a small majority. Thus, it appeared that at the General Election of 1874 in Great Britain, there were 978,000 votes polled for the Conservative Party, and 924,000 for the Liberals. Yet the number of Conservative Members returned was 312, as against 230 Liberals, or a majority of 82, which was 72 more than the Conservatives were entitled to on the proportion of votes. In 1880 there were 325,000 Liberal votes, and 208,000 Conservative, and the Liberals had a majority of 127 Members, or 89 more than they were entitled to. He objected to the division of the large towns into wards, and it appeared that the large towns themselves were not likely to be satisfied. Manchester, at any rate, did not at all care for the proposal. He believed the Prime Minister had made an honest endeavour to get some form of minority representation; but it was a rough and ready form. In his opinion, the scheme for the division of constituencies into wards was a leap in the dark. They had had no experience of any such plan, and they might find that its effects would be directly contrary to what was anticipated. The Prime Minister had said that one-Member constituencies had returned some of the ornaments of the House. But one-Member constituencies were very different to the separate divisions of one great town. There was another point he wished to mention, and that was that this system of single-Member wards was likely very much to reinforce the Party of the hon. Gentleman who sat below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House; and he thought that ought to have the serious consideration of the House and of Her Majesty's Government. Although those who were in favour of the proposition for minority representation did not propose to go to a Division on the present occasion, they were determined to press the matter on the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and he trusted the Government would give their favourable consideration to the proposition. They were going to have a somewhat lengthened Recess, and if the country had not made up its mind with regard to the question of proportional representation it would have an opportunity of doing so by the time Parliament again met on the 19th of February. If there was such great difficulty in driving so simple a proposition into the minds of the electors of this country—although Members of that House admitted to him they could not understand it—then he did not think they were persons to be intrusted with an extension of the franchise. Those who thought with him, and he himself, were determined to press forward the suggestion of the hon. Member for Liskeard, and every endeavour would be made in the course of the Recess so to educate the people of the country that they would look with a favourable eye on the proposition for minority representation.

Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE said, he wished to make a personal explanation, not so much on his own account as on behalf of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). He had heard that evening with the greatest possible surprise that a story had got about with respect to the division of the large towns which would lead to the inference that the right hon. Gentleman had committed an unwarrantable breach of confidence in betraying to him the communications that had passed between the Leaders of the Opposition and Members of Her Majesty's Government. He did not know how such a story could have originated, nor should he care in the least what anybody said about himself; but he thought the House would see that if he did not take the first opportunity in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman utterly and flatly to deny the truth of that charge, it would be thought that the right hon. Gentleman had committed such a breach of confidence. All he wished to say was that he never had the smallest idea what the scheme of the Government was going to be, and, as far as he was concerned, he was entirely guiltless in the matter.

SIR **HARRY VERNEY** said, he feared that, under the proposed scheme of redistribution, a class of persons whose presence in the House of Commons he considered desirable would have scant opportunity of finding a seat. He alluded to civil and military officials who had done good service abroad—Consols, Colonial Governors, Ministers—and also men of learning and science, many classes, whose knowledge and experience would be very valuable in Parliamentary debate, who would not wish to inhabit a large town or its immediate vicinity, and would not become known in those communities which were so largely favoured by the Bill. He was glad that they would have ample time to consider how the different portions of this Bill would affect their constituents, and to ascertain the opinion of the electors upon it. He would suggest to Her Majesty's Government the advisability of acquiring between this and the Committee stage full information as to the single-Member system abroad.

MR. **ARTHUR ARNOLD** said, that in the earlier years of this Parliament, when he had the honour of suggesting to the House the limit of 50,000 population, and also that the divisions of counties should be named by the names of boroughs associated with their local history, he was not confident that the present stage of Parliamentary Reform could be disposed of by this Parliament. He then thought there would be a waste of three or four years in barren conflict on the subject between the two great Parties in the State. When an independent Member had a strong conviction on this subject, he should not hesitate to acknowledge that if within the span of this Parliament there was a measurable prospect of a settlement they were, first of all, indebted to the profound wisdom and statesmanship of the Prime Minister in determining and in adhering to his method of procedure. The House of Commons had declared in favour of that method, and the Prime Minister had not swerved from it in the slightest degree. He regretted that the interviews between the Government and the Opposition had been so ostentatious; he believed such proceedings had been much more common than was generally supposed, and he did not condemn any reasonable desire or efforts for accord in the presentation of a Bill. He had no doubt that the Prime Minister would have received suggestions for a Conference from any quarter of the House. Passing to the Bill itself, there were three salient points on which he wished to offer a few observations. The first was that upon which the Prime Minister justified the introduction of the Bill—namely, "the gross anomalies still remaining in our representative system." He would not deal with those which were removed by the Bill, but with those which would remain if the Bill should pass into law. The Prime Minister carried the House with him entirely when he said that the scheme of the Government would have reasonable regard to the maintenance of communities; but if the continuity of undivided existence was to end in the case of constituencies like Manchester and Salford, what reason could there be for retaining 16 communities in England with separate representation and under 20,000 population? Where was the principle in bidding the House to look upon the figure 54,200 as the pivot of redistribution, and to sacrifice the unity of the most active municipal life in the country, while in the same breath it was declared that 16 English boroughs, with an average of about 17,000 population, were to be maintained? That was the most atrocious anomaly of the Bill and had not a rag of justification to cover its naked absurdity. He now came to the second anomaly. In the county of Lancaster it was proposed that the townsmen of Salford as well as the citizens of Manchester and Liverpool should have but one vote; but in other Lancastrian boroughs, and notably in Oldham, which was second to Salford in the rate of increase of population since the last Census, every townsman would have two votes. Legislation of that kind could have no finality. He felt confident that the proposal of the Government to increase the number of the House by 12 Members—to a total of 670—would not be sanctioned by the House. In 1866 the present Prime Minister said—

> "The House would be disinclined to add to its numbers because, if the proposal to increase were once assented to, it would be difficult to resist the continual intrusion of new places."

That, he thought, would prove a conclusive argument with the House against acceptance of this part of the Bill, especially as the anomalous preservation of 16 English boroughs with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants presented the means of providing extra seats for Scotland. In 1866 the Prime Minister suggested that "England out of its abundance should minister somewhat to the poverty of Scotland;" and he felt sure it would be better that she should do so in 1885 than that the already enormous number of the House should be increased. So far from agreeing with the hon. Member for Haddingtonshire (Mr. Craig-Sellar) in wishing that the Government should make this a vital point, he was gratified to learn from the Conservative meeting that the increase of the present number of Members was not to be considered a vital point in the Bill. He regretted that the Bill did not deal with the anomaly of University representation. He hoped that it would be altered so that in future there might be no dual representation of any University. If there was any principle in the Bill, why was it not applied to the University of Oxford with 5,382 electors, to Cambridge with 6,458, and to Dublin with 4,074? Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities had each as many electors as Cambridge, and but one Member apiece. He should ask the House to adopt a principle in this matter, confident that if there was any valid claim for academic representation it would be found most efficient where the Universities each returned a single Member. He now came to the last and most difficult point—namely, the sub-division of the great boroughs. He had felt in the four years during which he had sat in that House that the representation of nearly 200,000 of his fellow-countrymen was the highest honour he could ever hope to attain. Was a Bill which would deprive him and others for ever of such an honour justifiable? Hon. Members in his part of the House, who represented millions, while other equal sections of the House represented hundreds or even only tens of thousands, had always contended that any equitable scheme of redistribution must give a large increase of Members to the great towns. He had often mentioned the figures six and three, for Manchester and Salford respectively, as representing the fair acquittance of their claims. He acknowledged with hearty thanks that the Government had in this Bill satisfied the demands of those who shared his views in respect to the number of Members. He had a certain degree of preference even in the return of six Members for what was termed *scrutin de liste*, or the return of the whole number by a majority in the case of each candidate—for, in fact, retaining the present mode of election. This would lead to diversity of representation, for in no great community would it be possible to obtain the united support of either Party for any six or three candidates that could be selected. But he acknowledged that this system was costly and inconvenient unless some other arrangement could be made for filling vacancies occurring by death, resignation, or the acceptance of Office. The House was, therefore, forced to consider the alternative of some plan of subdivision, or some plan of proportional representation, which, however, did not necessarily exclude the plan of subdivision. In France there was a rule that every constituency must consist of 100,000 people; and if he were drafting a new Constitution there would, perhaps, appear many good reasons for limiting the number of the House of Commons to about 350, with single-Member constitutencies of that magnitude. The great constituencies alone had been free from corruption. A Member representing a large constituency always felt confident that his political action would be judged upon broad grounds. He could not but feel that this comfortable assurance was endangered by the system which it was proposed to adopt. Experience taught that there was danger of corruption in constituencies with fewer than 6,000 electors. It was proposed to sub-divide our great towns into constituencies just above that level, for a constituency of 54,200—the Prime Minister's figure—would contain, roughly speaking, about

6,000 electors. He could not face the prospect without some misgiving. When, in 1882 and 1883, he spoke at length in that House upon that figure of about 50,000, he did not argue for the subdivision of large communities, but that no constituency should contain a smaller population. Everyone must, however, admit that the reasons which, 600 years ago, led to the two-Member system, when Members of Parliament were corroborating witnesses, not Representatives, had passed away, and that there were distinct and peculiar advantages in the single-Member system, as there were also in the dual system. The Prime Minister had referred to Cobden's opinion in favour of this plan. But in his well-known letter Cobden made no mention of constituencies smaller than 10,000 electors. The proposals of the Government would give increased force to the recommendations of proportional representation. That plan would be fully considered during the Recess. Mr. Fawcett once said that the three-cornered system in great towns was "a cloud" upon the fortunes of proportional representation. That cloud had been removed by the Bill of the Government. But Mrs. Fawcett, writing in conjunction with her lamented husband upon this subject, said of Mr. Hare's scheme—

> "It is not too much to say that some method must be contrived for removing the uncertainty as to the second vote before Mr. Hare's plan can be applied in practice."

In that opinion he entirely concurred. He did not see that that uncertainty had been in any manner removed. Then it was to be considered that proportional representation, equally with election of the whole number of Members by a bare majority, made no provision for what were known as bye-elections; and the people would have to consider whether they could approve of a new method of election applied only in certain parts of the country. He had endeavoured to show that there were grave objections to the proposals of the Government; but because they were all sensible that there was so much in the Bill that they were not disposed hastily to part with, not only did they raise no objection to the second reading, but he was sure that they would part, after the second reading had been adopted, with a strong and confident hope that in the early part of next year this Bill might, by their united efforts, be fashioned into even a yet more complete and satisfactory reform of the representation of the people.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he entirely agreed with the hon. Member who had just sat down that there were many grave objections to the measure of Her Majesty's Government. He (Mr. Chaplin) was one of those who viewed with much dislike the Bill and the means to which they were informed it owed its birth; and he should be glad if the House would allow him to make a few observations. His observations, however, must be necessarily brief, because, within the limited time at their disposal, it was impossible for him or for anyone to form as critical and accurate an estimate of its probable effect upon the destinies of the country as one would desire to arrive at before addressing the House on the subject. He regretted above everything what seemed to him the unseemly haste with which the second reading had been pressed upon the House. It was not very long ago that a distinguished Member of the present Government, a Cabinet Minister, and one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, described the measure of the Government in relation to this subject as one of the greatest revolutions which the country had ever seen, or was likely to see for many years. The right hon. Gentleman was probably not much mistaken as to the consequences of this measure. He had himself, since his entrance into Parliament, been a witness of many important measures; but not one of them would compare for a single instant with this Bill in the extreme gravity and importance of the effects which it would have upon the future of the country. And yet in their case, one and all, it was invariably agreed by the Leader of the Government then, who was the Leader of the Government now, and by the Leader of the Opposition at that time, who was Mr. Disraeli, that it was right, imperative, and absolutely necessary that the House of Commons should have adequate and even ample time for the consideration of those measures before it was committed to their principles. With respect to this measure, however, which from its very nature must be of a peculiarly intricate and complicated character, which must influence the fortunes of the country, and re-settle its

Constitution, or ought to do so, for a generation at least, and which he should have thought would be of special interest to every Member of that House, they were asked and expected by the Government to read it a second time almost at a moment's notice, and within 48 hours after the Bill had been placed in their hands. And that was done with the perfect acquiescence of the Leaders of the Opposition, and apparently of the majority of the House. He supposed that the approach of the Christmas holidays had a great deal to answer for on this occasion, because the thoughts of Members were naturally directed to far happier and more pleasing scenes than discussions in the House of Commons; but these considerations ought not to account for the conduct of the Government and the Leaders of the Opposition. He had wondered what could have been the motive of this unprecedented hurry; but he ceased to wonder since looking into the particulars of the Bill. He was strongly of opinion that unless the second reading had been taken at a time when it was manifestly impossible for the House, as a whole, to grasp the real meaning and effect of the Bill, it would, if not obnoxious to the whole House, have met with a very different reception at the hands of the Conservative Party as a whole from what it was likely to meet with to-night. The Government had told them over and over again that the main object and principle of their measures in connection with Reform was the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourer in the counties. How was that to be accomplished? He found upon reference to the Bill that there were 150 towns in England with a population which varied between 15,000 and 50,000. Of these 150 towns, 79 were boroughs having their own Representatives, and they would retain their Members; but the remaining 71, with a population which he believed he considerably under-estimated when he said it amounted to 1,500,000, were chucked straight into the counties, without any adequate provision whatsoever for the separation of the rural and urban interests. He would give the House a single illustration of what he meant, and he did not doubt that others could be found if time permitted. The county of Stafford now had 19 borough Members; under the new Bill it would have 17. Its six county Members would, under the new Bill, be increased to seven; but how would they be elected? They would be elected not only by the extended household franchise in the counties, but by the household franchise in the following towns:—Lichfield, with a population, in round numbers, of 8,000; Tamworth, 14,000; Audley, 11,000; Brierly Hill, 11,000; Brownhills, 11,000; Burton, 39,000; Cannock, 13,000; Handsworth, 32,000; Leek, 12,000; Rowley Regis, 27,000; Smethwick, 25,000, or a total of 208,000 inhabitants. The whole population of the county, excluding the boroughs that would still exist, was 411,300; and therefore 200,968, or just half that number from whom the voters were to be taken to return the county Members, would not be rural, but strictly urban, in their character. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Members below the Gangway opposite said "Hear, hear!" He quite understood that cheer. They naturally rejoiced because that would happen of which he was afraid, and which they desired, that the agricultural labourer would be swamped, and the new vote which was to be given to him overruled by urban votes, a state of things which he had always understood it was the policy of the Conservative Party to prevent. Hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side were taunted with their new conversion to the cause of the agricultural labourer. So far as he was concerned, he denied that there had been any conversion whatsoever. ["Oh!"] An hon. Gentleman said "Oh!" but when he (Mr. Chaplin) first stood as candidate for a seat in that House he was asked to state his views with regard to the extension of the suffrage to the rural population. He said then exactly what he should say now—that, although he thought it most unwise for any country to be perpetually tampering with its Constitution, yet, as household suffrage had once been conceded in the boroughs, it was impossible to withhold it for any lengthened period from the counties, and it was only a question of expediency as to the time at which it should be granted. Upon the question of expediency of time he would not dwell. It was sufficient to say that in the condition of Ireland—a condition which was sufficiently attested by the devilish and dastardly outrage committed only a few days ago on the home and family of Mr. Hussey, and with the present condition of affairs at home and abroad, he had always looked upon it as little short of a political crime on the part of a Minister of the Crown to raise this controversy at such a time. But having raised it, it was the business of the Government to make the new vote a reality, and not a sham, and to have placed before the House provisions for a just separation of urban from agricultural districts. But on this subject the Government had told the House nothing whatever, except as to some hazy instructions which had been given to the Boundary Commissioners, who themselves were bound by certain geographical considerations, and whose recommendations, no matter how distasteful they might be, were to be subject, with the consent of the Government, to no alteration whatever. Then, one of the chief merits claimed for the Bill was finality. He did not see how any measure could possibly be final which, like this, was full of anomalies from beginning to end. If finality was wanted, care should have been taken that votes should have approximated to something like an equal value. The Bill was full of anomalies. He would give the House a few instances which he had found on a most cursory search. The borough of Bedford, with 19,000 inhabitants, was to return one Member, while Luton, which was much larger, was to be a part of the county. The county of Bedford had 129,000 inhabitants and returned two Members—one for every 65,000—whilst the borough of Bedford had one for 19,000. Birkenhead, with 84,000, had one Member; Stockport, with 59,000, two Members. Macclesfield, with a population of 37,000, was to have no separate representation, because it was corrupt; while Chester, which was equally corrupt, was to retain a Member. Then Pontefract, with 15,000 population, was to retain a Member; while Burton-on-Trent, with 40,000, Rotherham, with 35,000, Gorton, with 33,000, and Aberdare, with 33,000, were to have none. So he might go on *ad infinitum* exposing the extraordinary anomalies of the Bill. A great deal had been said on the subject of single seats, and if that system did afford any kind of representation to minorities it would be better than nothing at all; but upon its merits, as applied to large boroughs, he absolutely detested it. There was something to be said for it in the counties on the ground of convenience and practical work. There it was probably a necessity; but no reason of that kind could be given for the application of the single-seat system to the large boroughs. He believed its effect would be most pernicious to the standard of our public life; and, to coin a phrase, it would vestrify the House of Commons. He had often thought that there were already too many elements of the vestry in that Assembly. The system seemed to him to be calculated to destroy all *esprit de corps*, and what he might describe as the public and the corporate spirit of those great communities. Divided as the large towns would be, into wards, the spirit of the vestry would be dominant among them; and they would fall into the hands of the local wire-pullers, who would be nothing but agents and creatures of the Caucus, whose petty objects and private ends would become their chief and principal aims. The House would perceive that upon the grounds which he had stated—and they were by no means complete on account of the limited time that had been given for its consideration—this measure did not commend itself much to his approval. The Bill was full of anomalies from beginning to end; and finality, in his opinion, was out of the question altogether. He objected altogether to the system of single seats as applied to the large boroughs of the country, and believed that a general hostility to the Bill was growing from day to day. But what was the position of the Conservative Party with regard to it, and what was the position of the House of Commons? If he spoke with perfect sincerity he should offer his most humble congratulations to the Prime Minister, for never on any occasion had he seen the victory of a Minister more triumphant, or the rout of his opponents more complete. They heard a good deal during the Recess about the iniquity of a Government seeking to pass a Bill for Redistribution under the pressure of a Franchise Bill already passed into law. He remembered the brilliant and unanswerable manner in which Lord Salisbury vindicated the rights of Parliament to a free and independent judgment in this matter. But, alas, "How are the mighty fallen!" It was literally, the truth that as far as their position in Parliament was concerned, the position they occupied then was precisely the position which they so bitterly denounced before. [An hon. MEMBER: Not at all.] He apologized to the hon. Member. There was a difference, and that was that the rope which was round their necks—which he seemed himself to feel already—was being pulled and tugged at by Lord Salisbury and the Leader of the Opposition in conjunction with the Government, instead of by the Government alone. He hoped, however, that the House of Commons would determine to vindicate the freedom and independence of Parliament, and would not submit blindfold to secret arrangements made behind its back, whatever might be the secret understandings and the pledges so carefully concealed, with reference to which he had failed to elicit the slightest information from the Prime Minister to-night. Whatever their secret understanding might be, he hoped the House of Commons would refuse to pass this measure in its present shape—a measure which he believed to be utterly unfair to our labouring population, injurious to the rural interests in the counties, degrading to our public life in the great towns and centres of industry in the Kingdom, and which he was honestly convinced would be detrimental to the best interests of the community at large.

MR. GOSCHEN: I must really offer my heartfelt condolences to the hon. Member who has just sat down (Mr. Chaplin), because I am sure it must be an exceedingly painful position for the hon. Member to feel that rope round his neck to which he has made such an eloquent illusion, and to know that one end of it is in the hands of the Leaders of his own Party. I did not see, when he sat down, that any right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench made any sign of rising to reply to him, or else I should have waited with patience, in order to see what reply could be made to his observations. I may also say that I greatly regret the absence to-day from the House of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, and especially the cause of it—namely, his indisposition, which we must all be sorry for. I am not sure that he might not have felt it to be his duty, if he could have been present, to have risen to move the second reading of this Bill. But, in his absence, I should have thought that his duty in that respect might have been very fairly and ably discharged by the noble Lord the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners), who might have expressed to us his satisfaction at the result of those private conferences, which he denounced so eloquently and with so much earnestness a few days before they took place. There is one point on which I entirely agree with the hon. Member who has just sat down. I do not think that a certain amount of debate on this Bill at this stage is thrown away. It has been stated that the debating of the measure at the present stage is rather discouraged by Her Majesty's Government. The Prime Minister himself has said that there is no practical issue before us; but, in my opinion, we have a Bill before us of a magnitude and scope, and marked by general features bearing on the future Legislature of this country, such as have not characterized any Bill which has been introduced into the House of Commons since the great Reform Bill of 1832. I do not think, looking at the magnitude of this measure—a measure as great as, or possibly greater, in its effect upon the future of the country, than the Bill of 1832—that it would have been right that there should have been an absence of debate in this House on the present occasion, even before we broke up for the Recess. No doubt the time is short, and our information is incomplete, and any discussion on the question must necessarily be conducted under great disadvantages; but if we were to pass the measure at this, its most important stage, without any discussion whatever, and without giving some indication to the public of our views, the House of Commons would not, in my opinion, be discharging its duty to the constituencies. I do not think that we should be doing right in separating for some two months or more if the Members of this House, in their places, did not express some opinion with regard to the great principles of this Bill—principles involving the future efficiency of the House of Commons—and if we were to leave the whole discussion with regard to those principles to the local political organizations, to the platform, and to the Press. It is our duty to see that the wishes of the different localities and communities are attended to; but we have a duty beyond and besides that—namely, to see that we pass a Bill which will send to this place an efficient Parliament, capable of battling with the increased business that must necessarily come before us. These are points with regard to which the Members of the House of Commons are competent to give, and, in my opinion, ought to give, an opinion. Therefore, in my judgment, those who interpose in this debate at this stage of the Bill ought not to be thought to be speaking at an inconvenient time, when they are really only discharging their duty to the country by endeavouring to throw some light upon this measure, the magnitude of which all of us must be prepared to admit. And, looking at the matter from that point of view, I hope the House will allow me to say a few words. While the Leaders on both sides of the House are agreed, in the main, with regard to the leading features of the Bill, there are many points of detail in it which I think should be left freely to the judgment of the House. For my own part, I deprecate the many questions which have been put to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister as to what he considers are vital portions of the Bill, and I hope that in reference to those questions he will commit himself as little as he possibly can. I hope, further, that there will be that confidence in the interchange of opinion between the Leaders of both Parties as may enable their followers on both sides of the House freely to discuss the details of the Bill; and I trust that they will not present the measure to us, as the hon. Member who spoke last (Mr. Chaplin) remarked, with a rope round our necks, but that we shall be allowed to discuss it with the feeling that Party influences have been, to a great extent, removed by the joint authorship of the measure, and that, therefore, the free judgment of the House of Commons may be taken upon this, one of the most important measures that has ever been submitted to Parliament. There are, of course, parts of this Bill which doubtless must be considered as vital, and I do not say that Her Majesty's Government would not be right to declare that the entire disfranchisement of boroughs up to a certain line of population, and the partial disfranchisement of other constituencies up to another line, and a large enfranchisement of others, and an increase of representation to be given to others, are vital points in the Bill. For my own part, I say let the Bill be large, let it be even sweeping, let its lines of disfranchisement and of enfranchisement be drawn boldly; but when we go beyond that, and when we come to the questions of increasing the numbers of this House, and as to how the seats to be gained by disfranchisement are to be distributed, and as to how the voting is to take place, we ought not to be worse off in discussing such points of detail than if no arrangement between the two sides had been made; and I am sure from the tone of the Prime Minister's observation we are not to be coerced into accepting any preconceived settlement, even if it may have been agreed upon by the responsible Leaders on both sides of the House. Let us look, for a moment, at this proposal to increase the number of the Members of the House. I cannot help congratulating Her Majesty's Government upon having hit, by a most extraordinary piece of luck, and by a most curious coincidence, upon certain lines of disfranchisement and enfranchisement, the application of which particular principles to those two portions of the United Kingdom, Wales and Ireland, leave them in precisely the same position, as regards representation, as that in which they stood before this Bill was introduced — neither of them is to have one Member more, nor is to have one Member less. Difficulties might doubtless have been expected to arise; but so fortunate was the line which the joint authors of this measure struck that when they determined to adopt it, they found, to their great surprise, no doubt, but to their great gratification, that Ireland would be entitled under it to 103 Members, as she is now. The only fault that I can find with the arrangement is that the Government did not take the total number of Members of this House as they stand, and divide them fairly between the different portions of the United Kingdom. It is a decided flaw in the measure that it involves an addition of 12 Members to the numbers of the House, though I frankly admit that the claim of Scotland to additional representation has been made out. It appears to me that any increase at all in the number of Members of this House is a critical point. As we substitute, in the future, for the disfranchised places, centres of great political activity, there will probably be an increase in the number of those who will desire to take a part in the discussions in this House, which will still further increase the difficulties with which we have at present to contend in carrying on the Business of the country. With regard to the disfranchisement of the smaller boroughs, while I should certainly not oppose the line which has been agreed upon, it is a singular circumstance that the line which, according to our information, had been drawn by the Liberal Government—namely, 10,000 for the boroughs returning single Members, and 40,000 for the boroughs returning two Members, should have been raised, in concert with the Conservative Party, to 15,000 for the one set of boroughs, and 50,000 for the other set. That is a point upon which I should like to have heard the views of the Front Opposition Bench. But there is another point in this Bill to which I should like to call attention. Even in the next list you will find that boroughs between 50,000 and 165,000 have been far less favourably treated than the very big towns above 165,000. Now, I ask—although this is a matter on which right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite are more entitled to speak than I am—is this a Conservative move? I am not sure that there is not sometimes a tendency among hon. Members opposite to look rather how they may get Conservative votes than how they can maintain Conservative principles. I am now referring to those boroughs which are disfranchised—I do not say by the action of the Conservative Party or their Leaders, because I know nothing of the negotiations that have taken place—but which were not before to be disfranchised, but which have been disfranchised by the joint labours of the two sides. We have been informed by the Prime Minister that no one who might have listened at the door would have known which was the magistrate and which the thief. I can quite understand that no one who had listened would have known which was the Conservative and which the Liberal. But in disfranchising, or partially disfranchising, such towns as Oxford, Cambridge, Exeter, and Worcester—towns where there must be some Conservative force, although they may return Liberals—and transferring the Members for those cities to such places as Bethnal Green, Rotherhithe, and Battersea. [An hon. MEMBER: The Strand.] Well, the Strand may possibly be Conservative; but I trust that hon. Members opposite will do me the favour to listen seriously to this argument, because I think there is more in it than may strike them at first sight. I say that in such a transfer of Members the Conservatives, from their own point of view, will be committing a great error by neglecting the great forces of the middle classes of this country. They may disfranchise towns which now send Liberal Members in order to enfranchise places which may support advocates of the Tory democracy. If they have studied the addresses and speeches of such able men as Mr. M'Alister, who recently contested Hackney, they will understand what I mean. It appears to me that it is not sound Conservative policy to remove power from a certain number of boroughs which stand between the small boroughs and the very large boroughs, in order to concentrate power even on the Tory democracy of the large towns. I should like to make one observation upon the towns between 50,000—the line where a borough commences to be entitled to dual representation—and 165,000, which is the line where the large towns begin to have additional representation. Now, I admit that I am speaking without accurate information, and I am, therefore, throwing this out simply for information from those who understand these electoral questions better than I do; but I cannot help thinking that I have established, on the present information, that towns between 50,000 and 165,000 have been somewhat badly treated as compared with some very large towns above that line, and that the tendency has rather been to give Members to the very large towns, some 15 in number, than to distribute more equally among other towns the Members which will be gained from the small communities. There are three towns which I will take—Oldham, Newcastle, and Stoke-on-Trent—each having a population of about 150,000 and having a population of 450,000 together. They have six Members, and will still continue to have six Members. Then take Sheffield and Birmingham. Birmingham has at present about 400,000, and, with the constituency which will be added by the contemplated change of boundaries, may have about 450,000. Birmingham will have seven Members, with the same population as these three towns, which will only have six. That appears to me an error in policy, unless it can be explained. Then take two of these towns—Oldham and Newcastle. They will have four Members, with a population of 300,000; while Sheffield, with 285,000, will have five allotted to it under the Government scheme, though its population is 15,000 less. I should have thought that when you have to deal with increasing limits of population you ought not to concentrate more and more Members upon the very largest towns. I should have thought that it was undesirable that there should be seven towns, including the Metropolis, returning 100 Members to this House. I saw somewhere, this morning, in reference to the Proportional Representation Society, that the new system only applied to 17 towns. But when you have 17 towns and they receive nine, seven, six, and five Members apiece, having in the aggregate such an enormous number of Members, it is a matter of the utmost importance to see how this aggregate of Members acting for places of enormous importance, yet similar in character, and in a position in which they will be able to vote together, will be moved in their political course. How is that question to be dealt with? That leads me to the last point with which I wish to trouble the House. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has in many ways acted up to those principles which he laid down even before he came into contact with the Radical tendencies of the Conservatives, who have joined him in framing this Bill. There are, however, some points on which we see a departure from the principles which my right hon. Friend laid down. He has approached nearer to that numerical representation of the big towns than at one time we had reason to suppose he would. He has acted in the direction of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), from whom he seemed to differ at the time; and, on the other hand, he has departed, I am sorry to say, on one essential point from one principle which it appeared to me he was anxious to act up to, and that is the continued representation of communities. The community is that which has hitherto been represented in this House, and when we come to the sub-division of the big towns we seem to me to be departing from that principle. When the Conservatives joined with my right hon. Friend in cutting down the representation of the small communities which have a small population less than 15,000 they were acting in a manner to which all the Parties in this House practically were pledged. Those communities could evidently not be preserved. I rejoice to say that in one respect the Bill is very satisfactory—that in regard to the large number of boroughs which exist having between 50,000 and 165,000 inhabitants, the principle of the community has still been preserved. But above that limit, and in the counties, the principle of the community has more or less been abandoned. And there, I think, we ought to lay to heart, to a great extent, much that fell from my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) in his most able speech this evening. The House may, or may not, agree with the particular application of his principles; but in his picture of the danger arising from the abandonment of the community as the body to send Members to this House, I believe my hon. Friend had with him the sympathies of a great portion of this House. I entirely agree with the Prime Minister that there are difficulties upon every side. There are difficulties which we must set ourselves in as harmonious a spirit as we possibly can, and I trust without introducing Party spirit in the least, to overcome. But the danger of this system of abandoning the community is one which I should wish the country to well consider in the interval which will elapse between the second reading of this Bill and our next meeting in February next. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister mainly answered my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) on the general principle of single-Member constituencies. Now, I confess I do not see the great objection to single-Member constituencies, provided that a single-Member constituency represents a community by itself. But it is one principle to assign a single Member to a community which exists as an entity, and still more if it has always existed as an historical entity, and it is a very different principle to cut the Metropolis into 60 equal portions, and to say that every slice of the Metropolis is to send a Member to this House. That is a totally different thing. Let us, whatever our opinions may be, endeavour to see this matter clearly in all its bearings. Supposing you have a county which is not a community in itself, I can conceive that, for the sake of geographical convenience, there is no objection to dividing it into so many divisions. There is no corporate existence in a division of a county. There is, indeed, a Parliamentary tradition, and I am surprised to see with what readiness the existing two-Member condition of the county is to be abandoned—if it is to be abandoned—by the Party opposite. But still there is a great distinction. In a county which sends one Member—in that slice of a county which you are going to make —the probability is that, at all events, you will find representatives of various classes of the community. You will find landlords, farmers, tradesmen, and agricultural labourers. They will all be in one division. But look at the division of the towns as it is drawn in the Bill and in the Schedules, and you will see that there you may have that which we have not yet had in this country, and that which I hope we shall not strive to arrive at in this country—namely, constituencies composed almost exclusively of one class. It has been the strength of this Constitution and the glory of English politics that in electoral contests the master and his servant, the manufacturer and his foreman and his factory hands, have served on the same Committees, have voted for the same candidates, have canvassed for the same men, and have influenced each other's opinions, not only at the time of election, but they have had their political education by the combination of all classes together. And are we to change that in our great towns? Are we to have representatives of the Proletariat in the East End of London and of the rich districts in the West? Are we to have a Member for St. George's-in-the-East and a Member for St. George's, Hanover Square? I admit that all classes must be represented; but I should wish them to be represented by still remaining together and fighting out their differences between themselves, each man being secured a chance of representing his own interests—by some such means, if necessary, as those which have been sketched by my hon. Friend. It may be said that that is difficult to arrive at; but the object is well worth the trouble, and in the Recess all men should attempt to arrive at something which, if it is not equivalent to that which I was sorry to hear the Prime Minister call the *pons asinorum*, at all events may be a mode of solving this difficult question. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister spoke with satisfaction of the single-Member system, which exists in all other countries, in our Colonies, and in America. My hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) dissented from that expression of satisfaction. But I would ask the House, and I would ask the country—Are the conditions the same? They would be the same if this question were mainly a question of areas in the counties where you have men following the same pursuits and living under the same conditions. But it is a peculiarity of the Metropolis and of the big towns, which is only shared in a slight degree by other cities, that there is a separation of classes by localities; and geographically you have enormous differences in our big towns in England. It will be said that the big towns on the Continent have these differences also, and that they have this geographical separation. But what is the result? Are the Parisians satisfied with the representation of Paris? Should we be content in this Metropolis that its Representatives should be regarded in the future in the same light as the Representatives of Paris returned upon the single-Member system? I might ask the same question as to Germany. Are the people of Berlin satisfied with the mode of voting there? The cutting-up of big towns into single-Member districts has nowhere been a success. The result has been that these great towns, although they have been prominent in the politics of the country, have not redeemed their position as intelligent capitals of the countries in which that system prevails. I trust the House will forgive me for having touched on this point at this stage; but it may be too late afterwards, unless it is now understood what are the issues involved. I have listened to the able argument of my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard on the question whether single-Member constituencies would send better or worse Representatives to this House; and I would wish to add to what he said, that if these constituencies send even the same class of men to this House, they will send them here in a different character and under a different bond. Let us beware that the single-Member constituencies do not develop into one-class constituencies whose Members will come here feeling themselves responsible, not to the whole people of the country, but to the particular class living in the district by which they are returned. The Prime Minister spoke of the single-ward system as applied to municipalities; but surely that is a very different thing. And even in that respect, notwithstanding the success of our municipal life, I do not know how far it can be traced to the single-ward system. It is precisely because we do not wish simply to resemble the municipalities, great as they have been in serving their country—it is because we must shake off the idea of simply representing particular wards, and remember that there are great historical communities which have to be represented in the House of Commons—it is for that reason that we must weigh seriously the proposals which are embodied in this Bill. It is not against the Bill as a whole that I wish to raise my voice. I see that the Bill is necessary, and that in many respects its provisions are wise. I would wish to conclude, as I began, by expressing my hope that we may approach this question unfettered in every way, and not treat it as a matter between Conservatives and Liberals, because I feel confident that, however this may end, if we adopt the single-ward system, it will be disastrous to the character both of the Conservative and the Liberal Party. We have heard arguments to-night as to whether the Conservatives or the Liberals will gain by this system. I believe that both will lose; and it is parochialism, it is class interests, it is those who separate themselves from the general interests of the country who will gain. Let us endeavour to fall back upon the principle so eloquently laid down by the Prime Minister when he said that it is to the communities we must look, and that it is communities that shall be represented in this House in the future as they have been represented in the past.

MR. RAIKES: It was scarcely necessary for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) to comment upon the speech of the hon. Member who addressed the House in the early part of the discussion, and to remind us that the best and most perfectly established concert between the Parties may be broken up by the independent action of Members on the two sides of the House. To-night the speech of the right hon. Gentleman has had a double bearing. Whereas he generally poses as the Mentor of Her Majesty's Government, on this occasion he has been able to pose as the candid friend of both Front Benches at once. I listened to the speech with the admiration which we always feel for the oratorical exercises of the right hon. Gentleman; but I confess that in regard to his conclusions I have experienced the disappointment which always accompanies his best efforts, because we always know that whatever the right hon. Gentleman says it is entirely hopeless to expect him to give to his convictions any practical effect. I think this debate, from its outset, has been somewhat prejudiced by the fact that it commenced with an interest which was felt in a distinctly personal question; and it is because we commenced it with a certain amount of curiosity to know what was to be said by the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) as to the reasons which led him to break his connection with Her Majesty's Government that the discussion has been allowed to drift into a consideration of one particular part of the question rather than into a consideration of it as a whole. I will not deny that the speech which was made by the hon. Member for Liskeard was a very remarkable and a very interesting speech; but the earlier portion of it partook rather of the character of a sort of eulogy of his own official career; and when he quitted that view of the question the hon. Member proceeded to address himself chiefly to the Members who sit around him, indicating to them the various advantages which the single-Member system of the division of the great towns might give to the Party opposite. Perhaps, in so doing, the hon. Member has carried conviction as to the merits of the Bill to the minds of some of the more timorous of my Friends who sit on this side of the House. At all events, I am inclined to think that he has been more successful in producing that effect on these Benches than on reconciling his Friends around him to any theory of proportional representation. Now, upon the question of proportional representation, and even to the extent of the particular scheme indicated by the hon. Member for Liskeard, I am very much inclined to support the hon. Member. I believe, myself, that if you could ever get the transferable vote introduced into your system for the election of Members of Parliament in this country, you would probably obtain the best representation which our institutions will admit of; but I confess that I am not so sanguine as the hon. Member for Liskeard. I do not think it will be possible, at any time at all events in the course of the next quarter of a century, to recommend that scheme to the mind of the English electorate. If we could see our way to experimentalize upon a single constituency, I should be glad to see the experiment tried; but in our anxiety to obtain this great good, and to secure the transferable vote, I am afraid we might find ourselves landed in a position in which we should obtain neither the one thing nor the other. And the hon. Member for Liskeard was so warmly enamoured of the scheme as even to express his willingness to submit the destinies of this country to a House of Commons elected by the *scrutin de liste,* because he is thoroughly satisfied that at the end of the first Parliament or two so elected the country would be thoroughly sick of the system, and extremely glad to get rid of it. But I venture to think that in two such Parliaments there would be a readiness to get rid of a good many other things also, and that after they had run their course there would be little occasion to care as to what form of representation was adopted for the future. I, therefore, felt that there was a certain amount of weakness in the argument of the hon. Gentleman, because a politician who is prepared to make so great a sacrifice in order to carry out a particular hobby of his own can hardly be supposed to approach with calmness the solution of this philosophic proposition. The hon. Gentleman and the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen)—and it was the strongest part of their position—contend that the adoption of the ward system of election would necessarily deteriorate the character of the Members of this House. I should like to ask upon what ground? What possible argument can be brought forward, from anything which has passed in former times, to show that their theory is correct? This is a matter which, I think, is really more a question of experience; and I fail to find that any argument, supported by experience, has been brought forward to show that the constitution of the House of Commons would be less satisfactory. I would not like to say that it is not possible for the House of Commons to be deteriorated; and although we have already had, perhaps, some experience as to the process of deterioration—I will not say by such process as that upon which the Prime Minister has descanted—I fail to see how this process of deterioration is to be accelerated by the fact that Members are returned by comparatively small constituencies instead of large ones. The House will remember that the Reform Bill of 1867 made one sub-division in the case of an important Metropolitan borough. The borough to which I refer was the then borough of the Tower Hamlets, which was divided into two, and the borough of Hackney established. If those dreadful results which are now anticipated by squeamish politicians follow from such a step, we ought to have seen an immediate deterioration in the representation of the boroughs of Hackney and the Tower Hamlets. But what is the fact? Has the representation of Hackney deteriorated? According to the argument of the hon. Member for Liskeard, the Members for Hackney ought necessarily to have been of the vestryman type, instead of which the borough for many years returned Mr. Fawcett, whose loss this House has so recently deplored, who, no doubt, like the hon. Member for Liskeard, was opposed to the principles upon which the Government have framed the present Bill. Only the other day, when there was an election to supply the place of Mr. Fawcett, did the people of Hackney go out of their way to select a vestryman or a politician of that type? On the contrary, they selected a Gentleman who had already won his spurs in political life by obtaining some 1,300 votes in the most cultivated constituency in England. I think that, as that has has been the case in connection with a large and important Metropolitan borough, we have no right to contend that an extension of the principle of the further sub-division of boroughs would tend towards a deterioration of character in the Members returned. It, therefore, appears to me that there is no force whatever in the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). He talks about the separation of classes, and about the unconstitutional departure from the ancient traditions which have governed the history of our representative institutions involved in the separation of one locality from another. It may chance that, in some cases, persons of one class may be situated in a particular locality; but if this objection is to prevail, how can the separation of the Tower Hamlets from the City of Westminster be justified? Surely, if it was justifiable to cut up the Metropolis into larger boroughs, it is equally justifiable to cut it up, as now proposed, into smaller boroughs. I certainly fail to see upon what ground the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon can justify his argument, unless he is prepared to go the whole length of contending that the whole of London ought to form one constituency. We are told that in the great Provincial towns there is seldom so definite a local demarcation between classes than there is in London. That is probably in some degree the case; and, for my part, I would be happy to accept the scheme of the hon. Member for Liskeard, if I thought there was the faintest chance of its becoming law, because I think it would be a better scheme for testing the opinion of the community than that which is now proposed by the Government. But I am afraid it is absolutely impossible to reconcile the House of Commons to the transferable vote, and everyone who has heard the debate will fully realize that fact. Our object is to secure such a representation of all classes of the community as is compatible with the true theory of representation; and it appears to me that the only course which can be trusted for bringing about that result is the course which has been adopted by Her Majesty's Government in the present case. If we are going to have the large towns divided into wards, we shall have, no doubt, a sufficient representation of all the interests in those towns; but if you do not make a sub-division, and allow all the Members to be returned by the majority, you will have men elected who will represent the class which happens to be in a majority for the time being. It is really a choice of whether you are to elect your Members by the *scrutin de liste,* or whether you are to give to the various interests and different classes which are to be found in the large towns such a fair share of the representation as may make the representation a sort of microcosm of all the classes proposed to be represented. And now, with the permission of the House, I should like to say a word or two on another matter which was particularly dwelt upon by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), although I do not think it has been noticed in the same degree by other speakers who have taken part in this debate. I allude to the question how far the Government have not thrown away a great opportunity of equalizing the representation by grouping together the smaller towns. The Government limit of disfranchisement was originally fixed at 10,000. I know it is the fashion to say that Her Majesty's Government are not responsible for the draft plan of a Redistribution Bill which appeared in one of the newspapers some time ago; but it is no secret that it was the original intention of the Government to limit the absolute disfranchisement to 10,000; but from representations since made from outside they have been induced to raise the limit to 15,000. For my part, I should have been perfectly content if they had raised the limit still higher —say to 25,000; but if that had been done, it would have been necessary to protect the interests of that particular class of boroughs, by grouping into constituencies which would bring them up to nearly 50,000. [Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD dissented.] The hon. Member for Salford shakes his head. The hon. Member is himself an example of how a borough may be improved by the process of sub-division; but I think it is felt by all parties that there is a different scope of middle-class life in the smaller boroughs from that which exists in the large towns—and that there is a very numerous class of such boroughs which has no desire to obtain representation by being merged in the large cities or in the county districts. If

Her Majesty's Government were to set themselves to work to create a number of groups of what I may call the third-rate towns, of from 10,000 to 25,000 inhabitants in each, I think they would very much tend to diminish the anomalies of the present scheme, and they would introduce a much more equal representation, while, at the same time, they would preserve those historic traditions which attach to many existing communities which we are all sorry to part with, if we can avoid it. Let me take the town of Lewes as an example. It is a small town, containing about as many people as the town of Warwick. Warwick is to have the good fortune of being preserved, and we are all of us glad that it is so; but it preserves its existence because it happens to be in the immediate neighbourhood of Leamington, a large and important watering-place. But I may point out that in the case of Lewes there is another very large watering place—a town of great and rising importance of a similar character to Leamington—the town of Eastbourne, containing more than 20,000 inhabitants, and at no great distance from Lewes, which, with Lewes, is now to be merged in the county of Sussex. If Eastbourne were grouped with Lewes, the representation might be continued, in the same way as that of Warwick, without merging it in the county representation. Then, again, take the case of Scarborough. We have heard a good deal of Scarborough lately. It is proposed by the Bill of the Government that Scarborough in future shall put up with only one of the two Members who now adorn its representation. This, no doubt, will be a loss to Scarborough; but perhaps the country might gain if the constituency of Scarborough, which at present numbers only 30,000, were augmented by throwing in the borough of Whitby, a town of exactly the same character, which the Bill proposes to disfranchise. Whitby contains 14,000 inhabitants, is only three-quarters of an hour, by railway, from Scarborough, and, as I have said, is a borough of precisely the same character. I put a question to the Prime Minister, when the Bill was introduced, with regard to the groups already existing; but I am sorry to say that I did not obtain from him any information which I could regard as particularly satisfactory. I do not wish that I should be at all misunderstood in the reference I made to the Welsh contributory boroughs; but what I desired was to point out that, whereas the right hon. Gentleman had made a great point of the fact that Wales was to be treated as part of and under the same conditions and in the same way as England, by admitting the fact that the contributory boroughs were still continued in Wales and in most instances without any proposed re-adjustment whatever, he had thereby opened the door for the creation of groups in this country. Of course, the grouping system is not altogether unknown in this country. The borough of Hythe is coupled with the town of Folkestone; and there is also another constituency in Kent, which includes three, I think, of the old Cinque Ports. Then, again, there is the borough of Huntingdon, which includes Godmanchester and Penryn and Falmouth. We have, therefore, had various examples of places contiguous with one another being formed into a system of groups. I would ask the Government, in the Recess, to see whether something cannot be done to raise, by grouping, the constituencies of the minor boroughs to a reasonable size, so as to preserve the ancient traditions of these corporate communities, by making them contribute to district groups of boroughs, and by that means lightening the load of urban population, which will otherwise necessarily fall into the counties. There is another point which I think it is desirable to take notice of in the interval which must elapse before the House meets again—and that is the way in which it is proposed to deal with the Scotch boroughs. I do not think that any Member of the House can have any idea of the utter enormity of the present system of Scotch boroughs. I have here a list of one or two, to show how utterly without rhyme or reason these boroughs have been grouped together. Take the case of the Falkirk District of burghs. That group, which contains altogether the respectable total of 50,000 persons, includes the town of Falkirk in the county of Stirling, the town of Airdrie in the county of Lanark, and the town of Linlithgow in the county of Linlithgow. That is to say, that it embraces towns which are to be found in three separate and distinct Scotch counties. It may be said that if these were the only boroughs in those three counties there was nothing else to be done; but Falkirk, as a matter of fact, is not the only town in Stirlingshire, because the town of Stirling itself forms part of another and a distinct group; Rutherglen, in Lanarkshire, forms part of another group—namely, Kilmarnock; and Linlithgow is not the only town in the county of Linlithgow. Take also the case of another well-known group—the Kilmarnock District of burghs. That group of burghs embraces the town of Kilmarnock in Ayrshire, the town of Dumbarton in the county of Dumbarton, the two towns of Renfrew and Port Glasgow in the county of Renfrew, and Rutherglen in the county of Lanark. In that case there are five distinct burghs selected from four counties. Then, again, the Elgin group comprises towns in three counties—Elgin in Elginshire, Banff and Cullen in Banffshire, and two burghs, which are in the county of Aberdeen. In the same way I find that in the Ayr District of burghs the towns of Ayr and Irvine, in Ayrshire, form parts of a group with which are coupled Campbelltown, Inverary, and Oban, three towns in the county of Argyll. If anyone will take half-an-hour to study the map of Scotland they will see at once that it is sown broadcast with anomalies. In fact, it is impossible to point to anything that can be more absolutely indefensible, on any ground whatever, than the existing state of the Scotch burgh representation; and I am sorry to say that the Bill of Her Majesty's Government proposes to leave it altogether untouched. The Prime Minister, however, told us that this is a matter of such delicacy that it ought not to be entrusted to the Boundary Commissioners; but I trust that it may come under the consideration of the House before our debates on the Bill are concluded; and I also hope that the hon. Member who was the first to call attention to the matter will provide us with some scheme which will obviate, at all events, some of these anomalies. And now, Sir, I desire to say one word as to the Welsh boroughs to which I referred just now. I do not know whether the House is generally aware how these district boroughs, scattered as they are over entire counties, are made up. By this means one of these boroughs reaches a population of 24,000 altogether, and therefore escapes the limit fixed by the Government in their Bill; it contains altogether eight towns, three of which have together a population of nearly 20,000; but five out of the eight towns only contain between them 5,000 people. Are you going to continue these anomalies in the contributory boroughs when you are disfranchising towns like Guildford and Lewes, with 12,000 and 14,000 inhabitants? Two of the existing Welsh borough districts fall short of the standard of the Bill—namely, Beaumaris, with 14,000, and Cardigan also with 14,000. Both of these districts are to be disfranchised, although it does happen that the Beaumaris District contains Holyhead, the most important town in the whole of North Wales—perhaps not the largest, but which must ere long become the most important, and the Cardigan District contains the town of Aberystwith, the most important town in Mid Wales. There is a place called Kenfig in the Swansea District in South Wales, which, although it has the honour to be a contributory borough, contains a population of 631 only; and there are several other places in other parts of the Principality which contain about 1,000 people each. I think it will not be a waste of time if the Government would depute some one of its subordinate Members—say my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. George Russell)—to turn his attention to the question of these Welsh and Scotch boroughs during the Recess, with a view of providing us with a certain number of clauses in connection with the present Bill, which would probably be all the more acceptable to the House if they proceeded from one who bears my hon. Friend's historic name. I have ventured to dwell on this point because it appears to me to be a great omission in the Bill; and if the representation of Wales is still to be governed by the same principles the Government ought to be prepared to extend that principle of grouping to the English boroughs. If, on the other hand, it is considered undesirable to extend the principle of grouping to England, the Government are bound, although I should see it done with regret, to extinguish this exceptional system of representation in Wales. I entreat the House not to be led away by any of these interesting and plausible proposals for securing the representation of minorities until they are quite certain that the adoption of any such proposals may not land them in the position of having no representation of minorities at all. The hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) told us that he, for one, is prepared to face all the danger of the representation of simple majorities; but I fear that in rejecting the proposed scheme of minority representation we may lose an opportunity which will never recur.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK: Sir, no one could have listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister without appreciating the conciliatory spirit by which it was animated, and his anxiety to settle that great question in a just and equitable manner. The fact that this Bill comes before us in a form approved by the Leaders of the two great Parties in the State no doubt renders any attempt to modify it in important particulars unusually difficult. On the other hand, it has this advantage—that the discussion ceases to be a question of Party politics, and the House is all the freer to express its independent opinion. Everyone must, of course, speak with diffidence in venturing to criticize a Bill which comes before us backed by such eminent authorities; still I trust the House will allow me very respectfully to state why I cannot but regard it as, in some respects, of a retrograde character. So far, indeed, as it gives a more equitable distribution of political power, it is, no doubt, a great improvement; but in so far as it is an attempt to give the majority of the country their just power in this House, so far as it is an attempt to improve in any way the representative character of the House itself, I fear that it will prove a failure, and that a great opportunity will be lost if this Bill be adopted in its present form. Like my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), in his very able speech, I deprecate the proposal to cut our great cities into wards. It is one of the most remarkable phenomena of history how seldom any nation will condescend to learn from others. One after another they fall into the same mistakes. Just when America, having tried large constituencies, with mere majority voting, and found them a failure, gave them up and adopted single seats; Geneva, on the contrary, having tried single seats, and found them a failure, gave them up as unfair and not securing a just representation of public opinion. Now, what has been the experience of other countries which have adopted ward representation? The hon. Member for Liskeard told us that there are a number of men in this House who already represent single-Membered constituencies; but there is all the difference in the world between a contituency which is whole in itself, and another which is a mere fragment of a larger body. We might just as well compare an animal taken as a whole with the limbs and fragments torn from a living being. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) asked for some evidence as to how the system which we advocate works where it has been tried. I would refer him to the Report upon the subject by a Committee of the Senate of the United States. The difference in the character of politics and politicians between England and America has long been a subject of comment. It may be difficult to say how far that difference is due to the system of ward representation which exists in America, and which this Bill proposes to introduce here; but that this system is one main cause can hardly be doubted. In 1869 the Senate of the United States appointed a Committee to report on Representation Reform, and the Committee made an unanimous and very able Report, which is of great interest. They emphatically condemned the system of single seats, which, they say—

"Has not secured fair representation of political interests; and it has continued in existence, in a somewhat mitigated form, the evils of the plan of election by general ticket, which is superseded. Still, one body of organized electors in a district vote down another; electoral corruption is not effectually checked; and the general result is the unfair representation of political interests in a popular House of Congress. Besides, the single-district plan has called into existence inconveniences peculiar to itself, and which did not attach to the former plan. It excludes from Congress men of ability and merit, whose election was possible before, and this exerts a baneful influence upon the constitution of the House. Two causes operate to this end; in the first place, no man who adheres to a minority in any particular district can be returned; and, next, great rapidity of change is produced by the fluctuation of Party power in the district. Single districts will almost always be unfairly made. They will be formed in the interest of Party."

One great evil of the American system, as they point out, is that Members are never secure in their seats, and of this they report that the system of single seats is the chief cause. In fact, a large number in the House only sit for a single term. The single-seat system has carried the idea of local representation to excess. This insecurity of seats, they say, prevents Members from devoting themselves to Public Business with zeal or confidence. They are engaged in a perpetual struggle for existence. The Committee say—

> "In brief, his time, as his efforts, instead of being expended for the public, must be expended on personal objects, if he desires to remain for any considerable time a Representative of the people. Undoubtedly, many of the best men of the country must be deterred from entering upon a Congressional career, continuance in which requires such sacrifices to an evil system, so much of unpleasant effort, attended with uncertainty and probable mortification."

Again, the system of single seats necessitated a continual re-arrangement of boundaries, and this gives rise not only to great trouble, but, to say the least, to suspicions of unfair dealing, which have given Governor Gerry an unenviable immortality. The Committee go on to say—

> "There is hardly a State of our Union in which the Congressional districts are not gerrymandered in the interest of Party."

And, in conclusion, they endorsed the opinion of Mr. John Stuart Mill that the result of the single-Membered system, which we are now asked to adopt here, has, in the United States, brought things to such a pass that—

> "It is an admitted fact that in the American Democracy, which is constructed on this faulty model, the highly cultivated members of the community, except such as are willing to sacrifice their own judgment and conscience to the behests of Party, and become the servile echo of those who are their inferiors in knowledge, do not allow their names as candidates for Congress or the Legislatures, so certain it is they would be defeated."

They then proceed to point out another evil, which is that if you are to have single-Membered seats, which are to be at all equal, it will be necessary to make re-arrangements of boundaries. Well, Sir, I will not advert to the case of France, because at this late hour I am anxious not to detain the House at unnecessary length. France also has a similar system; but it is perfectly notorious that the single-Membered system does not work with satisfaction in France, and particularly the Liberal Party in France complain that it works badly. We are told by the Prime Minister that the system has been supported by *The Quarterly Review.* I do not know that that is any objection to it; but I would remind my right hon. Friend that if it is supported by *The Quarterly Review* it is also supported with equal energy by *The Edinburgh Review.* The Prime Minister seemed to regard it as a remarkable fact that it is advocated by *The Edinburgh Review* because it is a Liberal system, and by *The Quarterly Review* because it is a Conservative system. The system of proportional representation is, however, supported by Members of both Parties, because it is the only way in which to secure at the same time a hearing to the minority and power to the majority. It combines the two advantages for which both sides of the House contend —a secure hearing for the minority, and the certainty of power to the majority. Sir, I will not venture to express any opinion how far our great city communities may approve of being sub-divided in the manner proposed by the Bill. That is a matter of feeling. But I confess that I have grave doubt whether the tendency of this course would not be to weaken that local patriotism, that pride in their own community, by which many of them have hitherto been so honourably distinguished, the effect of which has been so beneficial. No one, I think, can question that anybody would rather represent a great historical community, such as Liverpool or Edinburgh, than a mere ward. Moreover, this Bill contains no provision for double elections. Now, in the Liberal Party there are always great differences of opinion. There are many ways of moving; but only one of standing still. I confess that I see in this a great danger to the Liberal cause. I should like to ask my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister whether he knows more than one or two cases in which an Assembly is chosen by single-Member constituencies without double elections? Without such a provision it would very often happen that, owing to some division in their ranks, or some miscalculation of their strength, the majority would fail to secure their candidate. In the recent German elections, out of 397 constituencies, it has been found necessary to have a second election in no less than 97, or, in round numbers, 25 per cent. Then I come to bye-elections; and I was surprised to hear my hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) mention it as an objection that when we come to a bye-election the result must be decided by a bare majority. Of course, it must; but I confess I fail to see that that is any argument against our system. It reminds me of the remark of an old woman when 1*d.* papers were first introduced. She read *The Daily Telegraph* through, and then said she was a good deal disappointed, for the 1*d.* papers did not seem to be any better than the 4½*d.* ones after all. So we are told that at a bye-election proportional representation is no better than mere majority voting after all. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister devoted a considerable part of his speech to a criticism of the mode of voting recommended by my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney). He seems to be greatly impressed with the difficulty of the system, which he said was so great that nobody would understand it. My hon. Friend, however, showed that, as far as the electors are concerned, there is no difficulty whatever about it. But then it is said that the Returning Officer would find himself in a difficulty; and that my hon. Friend, in attempting to explain the points of the scheme, found it difficult to do so. But if the attempt were made in a few words to explain almost any Act of Parliament, which must necessarily be very complex, and contain technical language, it would be found difficult. My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) has himself acknowledged that it was quite impossible to explain his own instructions to the Boundary Commissioners in answer to a Question. The complexity, however, such as it is, would not effect the elector. So far as he is concerned, it is simplicity itself; while, as regards the Returning Officer, all that would be required of him would be that he should have a knowledge of subtraction and addition, which, moreover, is requisite even now. That, I think, is a conclusive answer as to the difficulties of the system. Moreover, the system has been at work in Denmark for over a quarter of a century without hitch or difficulty. Indeed, when the Danish Constitution had to be re-modelled at the end of the German War, the system had worked so well that it was re-introduced again. It is absurd to tell me that a system which is working well in Denmark is so difficult that it could not be worked here. With all respect I must maintain that that argument is not worth listening to. We are told that there would be a certain amount of uncertainty about the second vote. I admit frankly that there would be a certain amount of uncertainty in that case. I cannot say that there is none; but what does it practically amount to? Mr. Parker Smith has calculated—and Mr. Andrae, whose eminence as a mathematician is unquestioned, has put it still more strongly—that even if out of 10,000 votes for the favourite candidate so large a number of votes as 4,000 have to be transferred, there would not, on an average, supposing them to be equally divided, be a difference of more than 11, while it is 2,000 to 1 against the chance of making a difference of 60. For practical purposes, therefore, this is infinitesimal. I would now like to say a word or two about the question of the representation of Ireland as affected by this Bill. I have no desire to say anything discourteous to the followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). I have always listened with respect to what they have said, and I can assure them with a sincere desire to meet their views, as far as possible. Neither do I, in the least degree, suggest that they should receive a lesser amount of representation than that to which their numbers fairly entitle them. But, believing, as I do, that the adoption of the main principle of the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his supporters would very likely land the country into civil war, I cannot support a Bill which, as I am informed, will to so great an extent silence and exclude both Liberals and Conservatives in Ireland, and give far more than their fair share of power to those who wish to destroy the Union. Our position at the moment is something like that of America before the Civil War. Now, the Committee of the United States Senate, in the Report to which I have already referred, shortly after the close of that great war, expressed their unanimous opinion that if America had adopted proportional representation instead of single seats, that disastrous conflict might have been prevented. They said—

> "The absence of proportional representation in the States of the South when rebellion was plotted, and when open steps were taken to break the Union, was unfortunate, for it would have held the Union men of those States together, and would have given them voice in the electoral Colleges and in Congress. But they were fearfully overborne by the plurality rule of elections, and were swept forward by the course of events into impotency or open hostility to our cause. By that rule they were largely deprived of representation in Congress. By that rule they were shut out of the electoral Colleges. Dispersed, unorganized, unrepresented, without due voice and power, they could interpose no effectual resistance to secession and civil war."

That, I take it, is very much our case at the present moment; and I do say that it would be sheer madness on the part of this country to adopt a system that would silence our friends in Ireland, and give an undue share of the representation to those from whose principles we entirely differ. Sir, I would implore my countrymen to take warning by the example I have cited, and on this account, if on no other, I should hesitate to support the Bill. I will not trouble the House with any remarks about the desirability of protecting minorities, because I imagine that enough has already been said on that point. There is, however, one other question—Will this Bill really secure to the majority in the country their fair power in this House? In this respect, also, it is open to great question. Hitherto, when public feeling outside has not corresponded with the preponderance in this House, it has generally been assumed that this was due to the small constituencies and the anomalies of our representative system. But this is by no means a complete explanation. My hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) quoted a number of foreign cases that were very much to the point, and would seem to be conclusive; but I would venture to call the attention of the House for a moment to what our experience has been in our own country. Let me turn, in the first place, to the representation of Ireland. I am not now in the least degree questioning how far the voting for the Gentlemen who advocate Home Rule represents public opinion. I will merely take the votes as they were polled in contested elections in 1880. At the General Election 86 seats were contested in Ireland out of 103. If I were to put in the uncontested elections it would make no material difference in the argument, but it makes the case more clear to take the contested seats only. Fifty thousand Liberal voters and 55,000 Conservatives—that is to say, 105,000 electors in all—only secured 34 seats, while 48,000 Home Rulers obtained 52 seats. This shows clearly how such a system of mere majority voting completely failed. It has been stated, and I believe accurately, that at the General Election of 1874 the Liberals in Great Britain polled 200,000 votes more than the Conservatives, and yet were hopelessly outnumbered in this House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Reading (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) disputes these figures. Without admitting the accuracy of his figures, I will accept them for a moment for the purpose of argument. My right hon. Friend himself said in an article in *The Contemporary Review*—

> "In 1874 the polling strength of the Conservative Party for Scotland and Ireland was 978,000, that of the Liberal Party was 934,000—a difference of only 44,000, or about 2 per cent of the aggregate voters. If the Members returned had been in the same proportion, the numbers would have been about 276 Conservatives and 266 Liberals—a majority of only 10. In fact, the elections resulted in the return of 312 Conservative Members to 230 Liberals—a majority of 82, or 72 in excess of what should have been their majority in proportion to the votes given. In 1880 the polling strength of the Conservative Party was 1,022,000, while that of the Liberals was 1,199,000—a majority of 177,000, or about 7½ per cent of the aggregate votes. This majority on the proportional system would have given 290 Liberal Members, and 252 Tory Members—a majority of 38. The actual return was 335 Liberals and 208 Tory Members—a majority of 127, or 89 in excess of the true proportion."

This was not due to any Conservative preponderance in small boroughs, as was sometimes supposed; indeed, the small boroughs which were to lose seats under this Bill returned a considerable majority of Liberals. Nor had it anything to do with the Liberal wave of opinion which passed over the country in 1880. That affected, of course, the number of votes, but not the effect of those votes as votes; yet, according to the right hon. Member for Reading (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) himself—one of the ablest of our opponents—chance gave the Liberal Party 72 seats too few in

1874, and 89 too many in 1880, in proportion to the votes—a difference of 161 out of 658. Surely the country cannot consent to trust the result of a General Election to such chapters of accidents. Pure accident made a difference of 161 seats in two General Elections. It is sometimes said that the effect of mere majority voting is to give the majority rather more than their fair share. But this is not so. You may have a small majority in the country, and a large one in the House; but you might equally have a large majority in the country, and a small one here. The result really leaves the matter very much to chance. The noble Viscount the Member for South Wiltshire (Viscount Folkestone), who made a most admirable speech in the early part of the evening, said that my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) may have made some Members opposite think that, after all, the Bill was better than they had any reason to suppose. What I wish to point out to hon. Members opposite is that under our system they would always have that minority in the House to which they are justly entitled, whereas without the adoption of it they may be swept away almost entirely. It is most important, I think, that both Parties should be represented in this House approximately according to their strength in the country generally. But it is clear that the system of majority voting would by no means invariably give to the majority in this House a majority in the country. But there is another consideration pointed out by Mr. Mill, which has never been answered, and which clearly proves that proportional representation alone can insure to the majority of the country their just preponderance in the Legislature. The majority on a Division in Parliament is arrived at by eliminating two minorities which together might largely outnumber the so-called majority. This is no imaginary case. In Switzerland it can be brought to the test, because in that country, after laws have been passed in the Assembly they are submitted to the whole electorate, by whom they are often rejected. Thus, for instance, in 1882—to take a single year—a law on the reorganization of the Departments of Justice and Police was rejected by 214,000 to 150,000; a Revised Penal Code by 202,050 to 159,000; one on Patents by 190,000 to 174,000; and an Education Bill by 317,000 to 170,000. Thus, we here see proved to demonstration in practice what is in theory perfectly obvious—that the majority of a majority may be and often is a minority. We have been taunted over and over again by our opponents with having no plan, no one system, on which we are all agreed. We have not, however, allowed ourselves to be hurried or dictated to. We carefully collected all the information we could bring together, and weighed as well as we have been able the relative advantages of the different possible systems. I hope Her Majesty's Government will not commit themselves too deeply on this question. I do not understand my right hon. Friend to have committed himself absolutely against the system. No doubt, he pointed out certain difficulties which struck him; but I hope I understood him correctly that he would give the matter his consideration. I am satisfied, if he does so, that he will find many of the objections he has brought forward to the views of my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) will fade away when they come to be looked into more closely. My right hon. Friend objects that the Gentlemen who are in favour of this system have no plan. I hope, however, that he will not commit himself too deeply. At the general meeting of the Society held yesterday, the single transferable vote, as suggested by Mr. Hare, but confined to each constituency, was unanimously adopted. That represents a great principle. It would place Representative Government on a new basis. It is to the theory of government what gravitation is to astronomy, or evolution to biology. It is the representation not merely of the majority, but of all. It does not appeal only to Conservatives or to Liberals; it appeals to all. The principles for which we contend, and which we shall endeavour to introduce into the Bill in Committee, are—firstly, to leave the great local communities undivided; and, secondly, to provide that in such constituencies each man should have one vote, so that every vote would have an equal value. The result would be that able and trusted Leaders on both sides would be sure of their seats, that the minority would always secure a hearing, and last, although not least, the majority would obtain the preponderance to which they are justly entitled.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, that if he had been able to obtain a hearing at an earlier period of the evening he should have gone at some length into the question of the reduction of the representation of the City of London. As it was, he contented himself by giving Notice that he should go into the question on the Motion for going into Committee. It was perfectly true that the sleeping population of the City was only 50,000; but there were as many as 261,000 whose daily work was in the City. The electorate of the City was 26,000, and the rateable value was as much as £4,000,000. As regarded the general scheme of the measure, they had no course left to them except to give their support to it. In many particulars he thought it was a good Bill. For his part, he believed in the one-Member constituencies; and as regarded disfranchisement he should have liked to have seen it go a little further—he should have preferred to see the limit of disfranchisement raised to 20,000. Indeed, if his hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) would modify his Motion in that respect and disassociate it from the question of University representation, he should be very glad to support him.

MR. BRYCE said, that at that late hour (12.20) he should not detain the House more than a few minutes. There were one or two points, however, on which he wished to say a few words. The first point was that of the proposed increase in the number of Members returned to the House. He was aware it was felt by many Members of the House that they wanted large numbers for the purpose of Committee work; but he desired to remind those who took that view that if they got rid of the Private Bill Committees, those large numbers would not be required. He also desired to remind the House that the tendency of all recent changes had been very greatly to increase the number of Members in permanent attendance on the House. Fifty years ago, there were seldom 150 Members in regular attendance; now, there were between 300 and 400. With the new constituencies, they would probably have an average attendance of 500. He did not put this view forward with any regard to the accommodation which the House afforded, but he put it forward on the ground that they would become more than what Mr. Bagehot called them, "a public meeting." With such an enlarged attendance he did not hesitate to say they would have a House of less gravity and sobriety. He could not help thinking that this point would be carefully considered before they went into Committee on the Bill, and that some means would be found to provide for the altered circumstances without any increase in the numbers of the House. He would have liked, had time permitted, to have called the attention of the House to the representation of the Universities; he would, however, reserve any remarks he had to make on that subject until the Motion was made to go into Committee. He had, however, one or two words to say about the addition to the representation of London. It was not amiss that something should be said about London, because, under this Bill, London would contribute one-eleventh part of all the Members of the House. Some of the hon. Members who had spoken that night had shown very little knowledge of what London constituencies were like; they had spoken as if London constituencies were sure to take up with an inferior class of candidates. He hoped that would not be the case. Even if London were sub-divided, he believed the advantages would be great in one or two ways. In the first place, the areas would be much more limited; and, in the second place, the expenses of a contest would be very much diminished, and the seat would be available to many persons who now found a difficulty in entering upon a contest owing to the expense they were required to incur. None of the existing divisions of London could be called natural; therefore, the sub-divisions would not necessarily do harm. Nor did he believe that the division of the Metropolis into popular constituencies would tend to the acceptance of what were called parochial candidates. He thought it would be found that the same feeling which led the constituency of Hackney to accept their present junior Member (Mr. Stuart would be found in smaller divisions. People were apt to talk of one local man having great influence in a place; but it must be remembered that it constantly happened that in a locality there were a number of persons of influence, and, therefore, the political parties were inclined to obtain a candidate from outside. He should also like to remind the House that there was one point in which, no doubt, the one-Member constituencies, even in London, was of the greatest advantage, and that was the difficulty at present of maintaining a good political local centre. He could not help feeling that it would be desirable to have somewhat larger constituences than were proposed; but there were, of course, objections to every scheme which could be suggested, and the objection to the scheme which was propounded to them always seemed the greatest. In conclusion, he would tell the House what was the opinion to which the representatives of the local organizations of London were led. Their view was that their objections to one-Member constituencies were so serious as to make them not desire any *pis aller*, though they were of opinion that one borough might return seven or eight Members. One point on which they were quite unanimous was the opposition to the minority vote or to anything like a proportionate system of representation. He thought that in every constituency the minority vote or cumulative vote had been condemned by experience, and that it was admitted that proportionate representation was a thing that could not be made out. He believed that in London, at any rate, the general feeling was that the best thing would be to have *scrutin de liste*—that was that the boroughs should return five, six, or seven Members as the case might be, or that London should be split up into an increased number of boroughs, each returning two Members. He could not help hoping that the Government might see their way, before the House went into Committee on the Bill, to abandon the uniform and cast-iron system which they seemed to have determined to adopt. Politics, after all, was the next experiment to science. If he had time he thought he could convince his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) that the experience of the United States was entirely the opposite of that he imagined, and that, so far from furnishing argument against one-Member constituencies, it furnished argument in favour of such a system. In the same way the people of France favoured *scrutin de liste*, because they wanted all the Members to be elected without the minority vote. He thought it would be well to try election by different systems. There were several large boroughs in the country; why should not the House assign different methods of election to different communities, or allow the municipalities to determine in what way their Members should be returned? He admitted it would be a novelty; but they were in a position in which novelties might fairly be given a chance, and if the House would try the experiment of allowing different methods of election to prevail in different localities, they would have a much better chance of reaching a satisfactory system than they would have by noting the experience of other countries. He hoped that particular care would be taken to see that a system was adopted, at all events as regarded London, which would not too greatly narrow the political life of the boroughs.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY asked the indulgence of the House for a few minutes, while he made one or two remarks in answer to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). He thought that when an hon. Member of the right hon. Gentleman's weight and influence made a statement which was entirely delusive, it was well some correction should be given as soon as possible. The right hon. Gentleman began by complaining that the Bill had treated the boroughs between 50,000 and 150,000 population with gross unfairness as compared with the boroughs over 150,000 population, and to prove his case he took three boroughs—Stoke, Newcastle, and Oldham—which had an aggregate population of 450,000, and compared their treatment with the treatment of Birmingham.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he did not speak of gross unfairness, but said there seemed to have been a tendency to favour the large boroughs.

Mr. LYULPH STANLEY said, he would take it, then, that in the right hon. Gentleman's opinion there was a tendency to favour the large boroughs against the medium boroughs. He maintained it was not fair of the right hon. Gentleman to pick out the three boroughs which stood at the top of the list. If he wanted to make a contrast between the two classes, the right hon. Gentleman should have taken all the boroughs between 50,000 and 150,000 population, and if he had done that he would have found they worked out an average of somewhere about 50,000 inhabitants to one Member, or some 4,000 below their fair proportion—they were over-represented to that extent. Stoke, Newcastle, and Oldham were to have six Members; with Hanley, which was to be taken out of Stoke, they would have seven. Therefore, as compared with Birmingham, they would have a population of 450,000 as against 400,000. If the right hon. Gentleman would take the case of other boroughs, especially the large Metropolitan constituencies, he would soon find that the Bill had not unduly favoured large urban populations at the expense of the smaller boroughs between 50,000 and 150,000 population. The right hon. Gentleman also laid great stress upon the importance of representing communities rather than individuals. If they were to represent communities, and not sections of communities, they must obviously adopt what was stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes)—they must represent London as one gigantic unit. But what was more opposed to the representation of communities than that which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) seemed to support—either proportional representation or minority representation? Because, if they took communities and represented so many of the majority and so many of the minority, they no longer represented communities, but they represented individuals according to their individual opinions. Proportional representation was a most absolute contradiction of the representation of communities; and so emphatically was that proved, that when formerly some Members of the House introduced Bills on the subject they agglomerated boroughs near one another to make the aggregate electorate sufficiently large as to enable individuals, according to their numbers, to be fairly represented. He did not think, however, it would be well to go into the merits or demerits of proportional representation. He had risen because he thought it was fair to make it clear, in the first place, that there was no tendency to favour large boroughs at the expense of small boroughs; and, in the second place, that the vexed question of the representation of the people would not be solved by minority or proportional representation.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, that in the earlier part of the evening his hon. Friend the Member for Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig Sellar) called attention to the invidious position in which the Scotch representation was put by the fact that the addition to it that was proposed was made contingent on the House agreeing to an addition to its numbers. What he (Mr. Buchanan) wished to urge upon the Government was that this question of increasing the numbers of the House of Commons was one affecting the United Kingdom, and not one that should affect Scotland alone. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon had stated that the claim to increased representation on the part of Scotland was acknowledged; but the satisfaction of that claim should be kept totally distinct from the question of an addition to the Members of the House. That was the view which he (Mr. Buchanan) wished to enforce. The question of an increase to the Members of the House was one upon which a good deal of adverse feeling existed in various quarters, and intimation of that opposition had been shown in the course of the evening by the hon. Member for Salford and others. Scotland was not without experience of proposals similar to this in past times, by which an increase in its representation was made dependent on an addition to the Members of the House. In 1868, in the Bill for Scotland, Mr. Disraeli proposed that additional Members should be given to Scotland in this way. The hon. Member for Salford had alluded to the fate of that proposal; but he had rather understated what actually took place. So strong was the opposition that was developed, that Mr. Disraeli abandoned the proposal not only without Division, but without debate, and a decision was taken between two rival substitutes—one proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose (Mr. Baxter) and the other by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Northamptonshire. More than this, both these Amendments reopened the question of English redistribution that had been settled the previous Session, thereby showing the strength of feeling that existed against the idea of increasing the Members of the House. Nor was this the only experience that Scotland had had of such a proposal. In the previous year, 1867, the Scottish Reform Bill of the Conservative Ministry implied an increase of the Members of the House. And what was the view taken at that time by the present Prime Minister? This was the advice which he gave to the Scottish Members. Speaking on the 31st May, 1867, he said—

> "Scotland will have to meet the whole face of that adverse judgment which a very large proportion of this House have formed against the increase of Members of this House. I would earnestly invite the Scotch Members to bear in mind the assailable nature of the position in which they would stand, if they have no other available fund out of which to answer the credit which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to us in favour of Scotland, except the speculation of an increase of the number of Members of this House."—(3 *Hansard*, [187] 1426.)

That advice was sound then, and it was sound now. He (Mr. Buchanan) was sorry that again Scotland was placed in this disadvantageous position. One of the most satisfactory features of the present Bill was that it was a Bill for the United Kingdom; the same numerical standards of population for enfranchisement and disfranchisement were to be applied throughout the country. Why should not the results also be worked out uniformly for the whole United Kingdom. Scotland should be treated as an integral part of the United Kingdom; and if so treated, Members from Scotland would abide by the result.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 19th February.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 11.]

(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Parnell, Colonel Nolan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Healy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he did not intend to detain the House any undue length of time in moving the second reading of this Bill. He regretted very much that, in consequence of the condition of the Business of the House, it had become necessary that the introduction of a Bill of such importance as this should take place at so late an hour. His excuse, however, was to be found in the importance justly attached to the measure by the people of Ireland. The case of the Irish National School teachers had been brought again and again, in successive years, under the notice of the House of Commons, and on no single occasion had any serious or solid objection been offered to a remedy of the existing grievances such as was proposed in the present Bill. Notwithstanding, however, that these grievances were exposed year after year, and that there had been no serious objection to the application of a remedy, nothing had ever come of the efforts of the Irish Members to obtain that remedy. The Government had made promises time after time, but on no occasion had they ever made any serious effort to redeem those promises; and it, therefore, seemed the duty of the Irish Members, having all but carried a Resolution, last Session, declaratory of the principle of the scheme contained in the present Bill, to bring forward a measure themselves this Session, and lay it before the notice of the House of Commons, and give the Government the opportunity either of supporting it or of adducing their reasons for adopting an opposite course. The grievances the Irish National School teachers had long complained of were three in number—first, insufficiency of pay; secondly, the condition of the residences provided for them; and, thirdly, inadequacy of the pensions and retiring allowances granted to them. The Bill, which was a very short measure, proposed to deal with every one of these three questions. It proposed to supply deficiencies in two Acts passed in 1875—one to improve the position of the teachers in regard to salaries, and the other to alleviate their condition in regard to their residences. These measures—like a great many other measures of relief for Ireland—were faulty, entirely inadequate, and came too late. The Bill he now proposed for second reading amended in two or three important respects the terms of these former Bills. It proposed to raise the fees paid to the National School teachers. The Act of 1875 provided that any Poor Law Union in Ireland that was willing to do so might contribute a certain portion of the rates to be divided amongst the National teachers as result fees; and the Act also provided that if a Union did make such contribution, the Treasury might advance a small amount to them. It was left permissive to every Union to contribute or not, as it thought fit. The result was that although some Unions did contribute at first, the number rapidly fell away, until, at last, it became painfully evident that there was no practical value in the provision. The present Bill provided that result fees should be paid in each case, whether the Unions agreed to contribute or not, and that the teachers, who were a hardly-worked and badly-paid class, should not be dependent on the caprice or at the mercy of this or that Union, but should have fair and decent salaries secured to them. The second portion of the Bill was simply to amend an Act which laid down conditions on which money should be advanced for the purpose of erecting houses for the teachers. It proposed to improve the conditions specified in the Act of 1875 by extending the period of payment and reducing the amount to be paid each year. The third part of the Bill placed the teachers in a better position in regard to pensions and retiring allowances. These were the points of the Bill. It would be wrong in him to detain the House at so late an hour in explaining at greater length all the interesting questions which naturally arose under this Bill. The House was already well acquainted with the grievances of National School teachers and the remedies the Irish Members wished to apply to their case. It was simply proposed to develop and improve the two Acts of 1875—to carry out the intention the House had in its mind when it passed them. The Irish Members asked Parliament to make a reality of what they had desired, but had failed to do, nearly 10 years ago, and to mete out a measure of justice to one of the most deserving and useful and ill-treated classes of public servants in Ireland, or any other country. He begged to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy.*)

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I can hardly believe that the hon. Member expects the House, I will not say to read this Bill a second time on the present occasion, but even to proceed seriously to discuss it. [Mr. SEXTON: Why not?] The Bill was only printed and placed in the hands of hon. Members this morning; and not only is that the fact, but the history of the measure is rather singular. The hon. Member gave Notice of it at an early period this Session. It was introduced and read a first time on an early day, and for some time lately it has been put down day after day on the Orders of the House—for what reason I do not exactly know—but the House having no indication of what the Bill really was intended to be, it was put down day after day on the Orders of the House. It is, therefore, pretty clear that the hon. Member himself did not know what the Bill was going to be until a recent date—probably not until a day or two ago. [An hon. MEMBER: Long ago.] If the hon. Member has taken so long to make up his mind as to what his own Bill was going to be, it is only fair that the House should be allowed a little time to make up its mind as to what opinion it should form of it. It is a Bill of a very serious kind, largely interfering with the emoluments of teachers in Ireland. I am not going to express an opinion either for or against it; but it is a measure on which the Irish Government could not take any step without first consulting the Treasury, the Board of National Education in Ireland, and other authorities, so that it is quite impossible for us to express an opinion now. Under all the circumstances, and considering that the Bill is perfectly new to the House, and that it affects a very large question which cannot be dealt with in an off-hand way, I think that I best discharge my duty by moving at once that the debate be adjourned. I am not sure that a technical objection could not be taken to the Bill, on the ground that it largely affects many questions, and ought to have been brought in in Committee of the Whole House. I do not raise that objection myself; and I think that, under the circumstances, the best course for me to take on the part of the Government is to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Mr. SEXTON said, he regretted the course which had been taken by the right hon. Gentleman, and even more than the regret he felt at the Motion the right hon. Gentleman had made was the regret he was obliged to feel and to express at the tone of the right hon. Gentleman's observations. It was true the right hon. Gentleman had refrained from the crowning step of making the technical objection he had referred to; but whilst he had refrained from taking that course himself, he had indicated pretty clearly to every other enemy of the Bill that they might defeat it and prevent its progress by doing that which he himself would not do. Looking at the manner in which the Cabinet was now engaged in forwarding legislation on a question far greater and more important than that dealt with in the present Bill, he (Mr. Sexton) was bound to say that the objection taken by the right hon. Gentleman against proceeding with the Bill struck him as being exceedingly singular. The right hon. Gentleman said there had been delay in printing the Bill, and that it had been put down in the Orders from day to day. Well, the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), who was in charge of the Bill, felt it convenient and necessary to negotiate with those outside the House; and it was strange that a Member of a Government which had been quite recently engaged in private negotiations outside on a much more important matter should object to such a course on the part of the hon. Member.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I made no such objection.

Mr. SEXTON said, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think the fact that the Bill had not been printed earlier—which was owing to these negotiations—was a reason why the Bill should not be proceeded with at present. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the hon. Member for Longford himself was not aware of the contents of his own Bill until a late period, and that he now desired the House to proceed with it suddenly. Well, how long ago was the House of Commons aware of the intentions of the Government with regard to the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill? They had been engaged in private negotiations for the past fortnight; they had sprung this Bill on the House of Commons a couple of days ago, and they had rushed it through a second reading that night. It was in presence of the fact, well known to everybody, that the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill, which had been rushed through the House that night, had sprung out of a private negotiation carried on outside the House, that the hon. Member for Longford was reproached with delay in putting down the terms of his Bill. His delay was urged as a reason for not proceeding with the Bill. A measure of the magnitude of the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill, could be proceeded with under such circumstances, but not a simple measure for the relief of the Irish National teachers. The hon. Member for Longford had, of course, put down the Bill from day to day, in the hope of being able to avail himself of such opportunities as might arise for bringing it on. There had been several occasions on which the House had disposed of its Business early, and on one of those the hon. Member had hoped, when his Bill was ready, to bring on the second reading. Such an opportunity had arisen that night. The propositions in the Bill were simple and just, though they were long. They were only long because long propositions were necessary to satisfy the justice of the case. The House, if it desired to do justice to a deserving body of public servants, ought to proceed with the measure without hesitation. The Irish Members asked, first, that the salaries of the National School teachers should be modified. He did not know whether he was in Order in referring to——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that we are now on the Question of the Adjournment.

Mr. SEXTON said, he had apprehended that he was slightly out of Order from a significant and eloquent movement on the part of Mr. Speaker. Judging from the precipitancy with which the Government had forced a measure of great importance on the House, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the course he had adopted that night had behaved with great inconsistency and with great want of conciliation towards a long-suffering body of public servants in Ireland. He (Mr. Sexton) hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not insist on his Motion for Adjournment. The Irish Members would oppose it, but they would not be able to resist it for any length of time. Under any circumstances, he hoped the Government would give the Irish Members a promise that they would not on its future stages oppose the progress of the Bill.

Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY said, it seemed to him singularly unreasonable on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to move the adjournment of the debate that evening on the ground that he had not been able to find time to master the exceedingly simple details of this measure. The whole subject of the National School teachers of Ireland had been before the House for a very long time indeed — for something like 10 years—and the details of their grievances, and the manner in which it was proposed to remedy them, ought to be familiar even to the freshest of Chief Secretaries. If the right hon. Gentleman was not familiar with them, it would, of course, be the duty of the Irish Party to make him familiar with them during his tenure of Office, if that tenure were sufficiently long to enable them to do so. He (Mr. M'Carthy) had had the honour, two or three months ago, of bringing this subject of the National School teachers of Ireland under the notice of the House, and had only been unsuccessful in carrying his Motion by a very small number of votes. He had hoped that the warning then conveyed to the Irish Executive would have induced them to bring forward some measure of their own dealing with the difficulties of the Irish School teachers. But as the Government did not think it right to take any steps in the matter, it was left to the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and those who followed him to have the case again brought before the House. The arguments the Irish Members might have used in support of the Bill, if the action taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had not silenced them, would have been more or less a repetition of the arguments which the right hon. Gentleman might have made himself familiar with if he had studied the previous debate. He (Mr. M'Carthy) was aware they could not now go into the details of the measure before them, but they could protest with all the vigour at their command against the course the Government had taken of gagging them on this occasion. The Government were accustomed to gag the Irish Members whenever they could. They would hardly feel at home if they were not trying to do so. This was the first occasion on which the present Chief Secretary had been able to do so, and, very naturally, he seized his opportunity. He (Mr. M'Carthy) protested against the course pursued on behalf of the Irish National teachers, whose cause he had represented before now; and he also protested in the strongest manner against the tone assumed by the Chief Secretary.

Mr. KENNY said, he would remind the House that at the closing period of last Session a Resolution on this question was discussed at considerable length, and was tested by a Division. The result was that the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Athlone (Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy) was only rejected by a majority of two. The question was at that time fully discussed, and the objections made by the Government were objections as to political exigency. As well as he could remember they were not objections advanced on principle. He desired to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that when, a year ago, his Predecessor (Mr. Trevelyan) had in charge a Bill, of a nature analogous to the present, to increase the pay and pensions not of teachers, but of Irish policemen, the Bill was passed through the House with the utmost expedition. The Rule of Urgency was not voted for it, but the Government took every opportunity in their power to press it forward. Even at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning the clauses — the different Amendments—were discussed in Committee, and the Chief Secretary at the time turned a deaf ear to all the requests made to him by the Irish Members to give them time for the purpose of considering their action with regard to the Bill. He would suggest to the Chief Secretary that the measure had been amply discussed. The justice of the claims of the Irish National School teachers had been over and over again admitted by the officials of the Government on the Treasury Bench—even by the officials of the present Government. The Bill was an extremely simple one and although it had been before the House but for a short time, nevertheless the time was sufficiently long for every Member of the House who cared to instruct himself upon the subject to become thoroughly master of the details of the measure. In view of these considerations, he would appeal to the Government to take the course they had taken in regard to a still more important measure, and agree to the second reading of the Bill, in order that they might give to the National teachers of Ireland an assurance that the Government were serious in their intention of legislating. If the Government would read the Bill a second time now, the Irish Members would consent to take a discussion upon its principle upon a later stage on the Motion that the Speaker should leave the Chair, and they would be ready to put down the date of that stage for some day not before the 19th of February, the date which had been fixed for going into Committee on the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill. Under any circumstances, he hoped that Her Majesty's Government would give some assurance to so deserving a body of men and women as the Irish National teachers, that there was a *bonâ fide* intention on their part to make some provision for their future treatment and training.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he must express a considerable amount of surprise that the forcible appeal which had been made by the hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny) had not elicited any response from the Government. He saw the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland in his place, and he ventured to think that the hon. and learned Gentleman knew a great deal more about this than almost any other Irish question. The hon. and learned Gentleman ought, therefore, to be in a position to answer the hon. Member for Ennis, if he were willing to do so, and he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) would support the proposal put forward by his hon. Friend—that the Government should allow the second reading of the Bill, with the understanding that the discussion would be taken on the Question that the Speaker leave the Chair. He was sure that his hon. Friend who had charge of the Bill would be perfectly willing to put down the further stages of it for any reasonable date, say, the last week in February or the first week in March. He put this forward only as a suggestion, and not for the purpose of raising a discussion. He joined in the regret which had been expressed at the manner in which the Chief Secretary had dealt with the question. There was certainly no reason for moving the adjournment of the debate at the moment that course was taken by the right hon. Gentleman. If the right hon. Gentleman had put forward his views to the Irish Members that this was not a proper time for discussing the question, they would have been quite willing to give fair consideration to any of the arguments he might have adduced in support of those views; but the right hon. Gentleman had preferred to take the course of endeavouring to apply to them an effectual gag, by moving the adjournment of the debate, before any real discussion of the question could take place, and at the very first moment that it was possible for him to do so. That course had been aggravated by the arguments the right hon. Gentleman had brought to bear in favour of an adjournment. One reason assigned was that his hon. Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had put the Bill down on the Paper from day to day. Was there anything absurd, unusual, or reprehensible in an hon. Member putting down a Bill from day to day in such a ricketty and dissevered kind of Session as they had at the present moment? Nobody knew what was going to be done. They were in the midst of a great Party struggle, and the House might rise at 7 o'clock in the evening or sit until 3 o'clock in the morning. Under circumstances of this kind, his hon. Friend would have been grossly neglecting the important interests intrusted to his charge if he had not put down the Bill from day to day, in the hope that some occasion might arise when he would be able to bring it forward. What was the second reason of the right hon. Gentleman? It was certainly one upon which the right hon. Gentleman ought to have endeavoured to illuminate his mind before he put it forward. The Chief Secretary said that his hon. Friend did not know what was in his own mind when he gave Notice of the

Bill. Now, that was not so. His hon. Friend was fully aware of the proposals he intended to make, but he had some doubt as to the particular drafting that was necessary in order to put those proposals in a proper shape in the Bill. Several technical objections stood in the way of his hon. Friend; but his hon. Friend, from the moment he gave Notice of the Bill, always entertained exactly the same views in regard to the provisions required as those embodied in the Bill. Did not the right hon. Gentleman know that this measure was only the embodiment, in the shape of a Bill, of the proposals of his hon. Friend the Member for Athlone (Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy) in a Resolution he had moved in the House. The Government were familiar with all the proposals contained in the Bill. They had been brought before them time after time, Session after Session, in Resolution after Resolution, and speech after speech, until he thought it would have been a far more reasonable complaint on the part of the right hon. Gentleman if he had said that he was sick and tired of hearing of the subject, rather than that he was unfamiliar with the proposals contained in the Bill. Under these circumstances, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would withdraw the unreasonable opposition he had made to the second reading of the Bill, on a distinct pledge being given that it would not be carried to a further stage until the close of February, and that ample time would be afforded for a full discussion.

DR. LYONS deprecated the Motion for the adjournment of the debate on this important measure, which concerned very large interests in Ireland. He would remind the House and the right hon. Gentleman, if they were not already aware of the history of the measure, that it had formed to a large extent the subject-matter of a Bill which ought to be familiar to the House. When that Bill was passed it was passed on the distinct understanding that there should be a contribution on the part of the Unions. That part of the Bill had not been carried out, and it was necessary that the provisions should be reshaped. He believed he was perfectly justified in making that statement. In point of fact, the Bill, in a certain sense, was a secondary Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question before the House is the Question of Adjournment. The hon. Member is not entitled to go into the principle of the Bill, or of any amendment of it.

DR. LYONS said, he had only been trying to recall to the mind of the Chief Secretary that the engagement made some time ago by a former Chief Secretary for Ireland was that the measure should be reconsidered if it was found necessary. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would now, by withdrawing his Motion, permit some discussion on the principles of the measure to take place, and some statement to be made of the circumstances which had already taken place in regard to this Bill. He sincerely hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not press his Motion to a Division, because it would have the effect of hanging up the consideration of the question until an indefinite period. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would be most ill-advised in taking that course. The Bill had now obtained a certain position, in which it was possible to make some advance; and in all probability if the Motion for Adjournment were pressed, on the part of the Government, the Bill would be killed, notwithstanding the fact that it was regarded as a necessity in the interests of a large class of the Irish people.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he did not think that, in refusing to allow this Bill to be read a second time that night, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary calculated at all accurately the degree of disappointment which would be created in Ireland by the course which he was adopting. The Bill which the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had introduced was one which had for a very long time attracted considerable interest in Ireland. It was a measure the provisions of which had long been felt to be a necessity; and he was perfectly sure that to-morrow morning, when the news reached Ireland that upon that night, which was practically the last night of the Session of Parliament, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had refused to grant the second reading of the Bill, there would be nothing from one end of Ireland to the other but deep disappointment and dissatisfaction. Upon what grounds did the right hon. Gentleman refuse to allow the Bill to be read a second time? He believed the right hon. Gentleman had no fault to find with the principle of the Bill. At least, he (Mr. Redmond) was not aware that the right hon. Gentleman had given expression to any dissatisfaction or opposition to the principle which was contained in the Bill. He had not denied that the position of the National School teachers in Ireland required material improvement; and as far as they upon those Benches could understand, it was practically, although silently, perhaps, admitted by the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill was a necessary Bill, and that it was a measure which would meet with the approval and support of the Government at some future date. Why, then, did the right hon. Gentleman refuse, by not allowing it to be read a second time, to give to the people of Ireland the satisfaction of knowing that Her Majesty's Government did approve of the principle of the Bill? If the second reading necessitated the adoption by the Government of the provisions of the Bill, pure and simple, as they were presented within the four corners of it, there might, perhaps, be some ground for the right hon. Gentleman's objection that the measure had been but recently printed, and that sufficient time had not been afforded to the Government for fully mastering the details of the measure. It ought to be considered that the second reading was by no means a pledge that the Bill would be passed. The second reading was merely an expression of approval of the general propositions contained in the Bill; and it would be quite competent for the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and his Colleagues in Her Majesty's Government to oppose any portions of the Bill which they did not think desirable, at a further stage of the measure—in Committee. It would be quite competent for anyone between the present time and the day on which the House would be asked to go into Committee upon the Bill, to master any detail which any hon. Member might now complain that he had not had time to enable him fully to master. He did not think that the position of the right hon. Gentleman was consistent. The right hon. Gentleman did not say that he disapproved of the Bill. He did not say that it was a Bill which Her Majesty's Government would not be able to sanction; and yet, although he tacitly gave his approval to the principle of the measure, he would not allow that approval to take the form of consenting to the Bill being read a second time, so that it might give satisfaction to the people of Ireland. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider the situation. By allowing the Bill to be read a second time, what would he do? He would do an act which would give very great satisfaction to the people of Ireland, whom he would have to govern between this time and the time when Parliament would reassemble. By allowing the Bill to be read a second time, he did not pledge himself, nor did he pledge Her Majesty's Government, to pass the Bill in its entirety. By allowing it to be read a second time, he and the Government would be doing an act which would be graciously received throughout Ireland, and which would be fully appreciated by the Representatives of Ireland sitting upon those Benches. Upon the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman, by refusing to allow the Bill to be read a second time, would give rise to an impression throughout Ireland, which might perhaps be erroneous, that Her Majesty's Government were opposed to the Bill. As surely as the right hon. Gentleman pressed his Motion for Adjournment—as surely as he did not allow the Bill to be read a second time—the National School teachers of Ireland and their friends would construe the action of the right hon. Gentleman, in thus opposing the measure, into an expression by Her Majesty's Government of opposition to the general provisions of the Bill. Under these circumstances, he thought he was justified in asking the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider his position. It was not very much that they asked the right hon. Gentleman to do, and he was sure that if he acceded to their request, it would be altogether for the benefit of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland. It would render all the more secure the position of the right hon. Gentleman himself as Chief Secretary for Ireland, and satisfaction would be given to a very large and influential class of the Irish people. The right hon. Gentleman's plea for and justification of his refusal to allow the Bill to be read a second time, was that it had only recently been printed, and that, consequently, he and other Members of Parliament had not had sufficient time to master its contents. That was a plea which he had certainly not expected to hear from the lips of any Gentleman in that House, much less from a Member of Her Majesty's Government. What was the nature of this Bill which required such a great deal of study in order to master its provisions?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to discuss the Bill.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he was only about to point out why he thought it would be desirable that the Bill should be read a second time, in opposition to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that the debate should be adjourned. The Bill against which the opposition of the right hon. Gentleman was directed was a measure containing six clauses only. He did not know the average mental capacity of hon. Members of that House, and he did not know what amount of time the right hon. Gentleman required to enable him to master six clauses of a Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is exceeding the fair latitude given to an hon. Member in discussing a Motion for Adjournment. I must call upon him to confine his remarks to the Mosion before the House, which is strictly the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he was sorry that the Rules of the House would not allow him to explain why it was that he was opposed to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. What were the facts of the case? A Motion for the adjournment of the debate had been made by the right hon. Gentleman, and that Motion, if adopted, would practically kill a most necessary and a most useful measure which had been introduced by his hon. Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) for the benefit of the National School teachers of Ireland. Of course, according to the ruling of the Chair, he (Mr. Redmond) was not allowed to show why he considered that ample time had been given to every Member of the House, of average intellect, to master the details of the Bill, and to approve of its second reading, as against the Motion for Adjournment. Therefore, he would confine himself strictly to discussing, for a few moments longer, the Motion which the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had made. Upon very many occasions when it had been the duty of Members sitting on the Irish Benches to move the adjournment of the debate, or of the House, they had received a very great deal of opposition from Her Majesty's Government. Whenever they had, in accordance with the duty which they considered to be consistent with their position as Representatives of the people of Ireland, moved the adjournment of the debate, or the adjournment of the House, they had constantly called down upon their heads the indignation and disapproval of Her Majesty's Government; but now, when it suited Her Majesty's Government——

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to resume his seat. I have twice told him that his remarks are irrelevant, and that he is exceeding all reasonable latitude. I must ask him, therefore, to resume his seat.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND remained standing.

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to resume his seat.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I was about——

MR. SPEAKER: I ask the hon. Gentleman once more to resume his seat.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND, thereupon, resumed his seat.

MR. O'BRIEN said, he was in hope that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland might, to some extent, have been softened by the entreaties made from the Irish Benches and from the Benches behind the right hon. Gentleman, and that he might not have pressed his Motion for Adjournment in the teeth of what was plainly the opinion of the Representatives of Ireland. He (Mr. O'Brien) and his hon. Friends could not help noticing, and he did not think that the Irish teachers would fail to notice, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was in such a hurry to give an ungracious reception to a Bill of so much importance to a large class of public servants in Ireland, that he actually jumped up to make the proposal for adjournment before the Motion for the second reading of the Bill was seconded. The right hon. Gentleman had made no objection to the Bill itself; but the Motion he had made would simply have the effect of killing the Bill for this Session; and the only ground on which it was made was that this short Bill of a few clauses was only put into the hands of Members that morning. If he was not mistaken, it was only that morning that Members received the amended draft of the Parliamentary Elections, Redistribution, Bill, which had been read a second time that night. They excused a good deal of the right hon. Gentleman's inexperience of Irish affairs; but he should have supposed that even one whose acquaintance with Ireland was of so very recent date would have known that this Bill was not in any respect sprung upon the House of Commons. Years ago, the House adopted the principle of the Bill, and the Bill that his hon. Friend (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) wished to have read a second time simply provided the machinery for carrying out what was already the expressed will of the House. He could not possibly understand that the almost technical excuse that this short Bill was only delivered that day should be allowed to stand in the way of the House entertaining this Session the claims of a hard-worked body of public servants, whose grievances—and they were many—had over and over again been acknowledged. He could not help contrasting the slowness with which the Chief Secretary for Ireland made, that night, the attempt to do justice to the School teachers of Ireland with the speed, the extraordinary speed, with which the claims of the Royal Irish Constabulary were entertained by the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not now confining himself to the Question of Adjournment. He is going into matters which are quite irrelevant to the Question before the House.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked if he was not at liberty to represent to the Chief Secretary and to the House that the course which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take now in the case of the claims of an important body of public servants was not similar to the course that was taken by the Government when the claims of another body of public servants had to be discussed?

Mr. SPEAKER: No; that is quite irrelevant to the subject before the House, which is the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, it might, possibly, be one of the misfortunes of their case; but he must say it was rather difficult for an Irish Member to find anything to say that was relevant to questions, when Irish intervention in debate was disagreeable to the majority of the House.

Mr. LEAMY said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would be courteous enough to reply to the arguments which Irish Members had advanced in favour of this Bill. Of course, he (Mr. Leamy) and his hon. Friends were only very small in number; but that was no reason why the arguments they had put forward against the Amendment which had been moved by the right hon. Gentleman should not, at least, be replied to by someone on the Treasury Bench. The awkward position in which they would be placed by the adoption of the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment was that the discussion of the Bill would practically be prevented for the remainder of the Session. If this Bill had been an English Bill, it would have been mastered in five minutes. It had been suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should allow the Bill to be read a second time, now and inquire into its merits during the Recess, and before the Committee stage could possibly be taken. The right hon. Gentleman could command big battalions, and as he could defer the subsequent stage of the Bill until such time as he wished, and as he must know that he could read the Bill a second time without committing himself to the principle of the Bill or without tying his hands to pass the measure, he (Mr. Leamy) failed to understand why it was that the right hon. Gentleman persisted in his present Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman was new to his position; he was new to the propositions of Irish Members; but when the Motion was made to read this Bill a second time, he certainly had no right to meet it in the way he did. Were the Irish Members to go back to Ireland at the end of this Autumn Sitting and tell the people that when they brought forward a Bill of this character, which was not a controversial Bill, but one for the amelioration of the condition of a deserving body of public servants, it was not allowed to be discussed? He thought they had a right to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), upon whom, at present, the Leadership of the House devolved, to be courteous enough to rise in his place and tell them why they should adjourn the debate. It was only asked that the Bill should be read a second time now. If that were done, there could not possibly be any further discussion until they met again in February. If the right hon. Gentleman withdrew his Motion and allowed the Bill to be read a second time, it would always be in the power of the Government to say whether the discussion should be resumed or not; it would be in their power to say whether there should be any chance of the promoters of the Bill moving that the Speaker should leave the Chair. Seeing that the chances of resuming the discussion were so very remote if the Government did not desire that the consideration of the measure should be resumed, he did not see what the Government could lose by allowing the second reading to be taken that night. He put it to the House whether the claim put forward by the Irish Members was not a most reasonable one, especially as they could not by any possibility force the Government to take any future stage of the measure?

Mr. WARTON said, he was in favour of the Motion for Adjournment, because there was not time that night to go into the question properly and fully. He ventured to suggest, however, that the Government would save themselves a great deal of trouble if they now assented to the second reading.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, that the Representatives of Ireland were often told that the Government were very anxious to deal with Irish affairs on the same footing as they dealt with English affairs. He did not think the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that night would, in the opinion of the Irish people, justify that assertion. This Bill was a very simple one. It was merely a Bill to put the teachers of Ireland——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in discussing the principles of the Bill.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, he was sorry to say that the action which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had taken that night would encourage the opinion, now so largely prevalent in Ireland, that the people could not get anything from Her Majesty's Government unless they resorted to pressure. It was very possible that the action of the Government that night would force the National School teachers of Ireland, if they wished to have their grievances redressed, to adopt something like the tactics adopted recently by the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, that, before the Motion was put to the vote, he should like to know whether anybody on the Treasury Bench meant to justify the Motion for Adjournment by offering any suggestion, or making any proposition, or giving any indication that anything whatever would be done by the Government? He hoped the Government would say something which might excuse or vindicate the extraordinary course they proposed, or that they would offer a promise to do something which would enable them to bring the question before the House at the proper time. The Bill was only 33 lines in length, and yet the Government had said nothing whatever in the way of pledge or promise, or in vindication or excuse of their conduct.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that to the appeal made in the terms used by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) he had no hesitation in responding. Of course, in the remarks he had to make, he should confine himself strictly to the question whether the debate ought to be adjourned or not. So far as he knew, the matter was simply this. A Bill was introduced for the purpose of improving the salaries and pensions of the Irish School teachers. That Bill was introduced about six or seven weeks ago, and until that morning it was not printed, and nothing had been done to have it printed. No proposal for increasing the salaries of Irish teachers, or the salaries of any other public servants, could be made except by a Minister of the Crown. It was not in the power of Members, except by Motion set up by a Minister of the Crown, to make such a proposal. There was, however, a single clause in the Bill to which this did not apply, and, therefore, in point of form, it might come before the House; but when increase of salary was the real object of a Bill of which they only had Notice a few hours ago, a Bill which, in this respect, dealt with matters strictly within the power of a Minister of the Crown and no one else, was it or was it not reasonable that the Government or the Treasury should have time to consider the matters with which the Bill dealt? In this instance, they had not had such time, because the Bill had only been printed that morning. That seemed to be an unanswerable reason for adjourning the debate. He was the last person who would take his stand upon technicalities; and, therefore, setting aside all technicalities, he would undertake that the Government would consider this proposal—not as a Bill, because as a Bill it could not be introduced. They would consider the proposal between now and the reassembling of the House in February, and if, after due consultation with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Irish Government, they thought that any proposal about School teachers salaries or pensions should be made to the House, they would, on their own responsibility, make it. He thought the course he suggested was a fair and reasonable one, and, therefore, he hoped the House would now agree to the adjournment of the debate.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 83; Noes 14: Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 22.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Bill deferred until what day?

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: This day.

Mr. SEXTON: What day is fixed?

Mr. SPEAKER: I asked the hon. Member (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), and I understood him to say "to-morrow."

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: I said "to-day."

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

ELECTIONS IN COUNTIES (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.—[Bill 19.]

(*Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Cochran-Patrick.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT: I move that you, Sir, do now leave the Chair. I do not propose to proceed with the Bill in Committee to-night, my desire being to advance the measure a stage—that is to say, to get you, Sir, out of the Chair. The consideration of the clauses in Committee I shall propose to proceed with on some other day.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. A. R. D. Elliot.*)

Mr. SEXTON said, he did not think it was desirable for Mr. Speaker to now leave the Chair for the purpose of enabling the Committee to proceed with this Bill, and he (Mr. Sexton) had more reasons than one for objecting. In the first place, he considered the hour was too late. It was an hour since the Irish Members had proposed to make progress with a Bill they considered of very great importance, since it affected the question of the livelihood of 16,000 men and women engaged in the Public Service in Ireland. The Irish Members had not been allowed to make progress with that measure notwithstanding its great importance; therefore, he certainly thought the hour was too late to attempt to make progress with another Bill which only affected the hours of polling at elections in counties, a great many of which were not likely to take place for more than a year to come. If Irish Bills of importance were not to be considered at half-past 12 o'clock, he did not think English Bills of importance should be considered at half-past 1. In the second place, this Bill, though brief and apparently simple, was not quite so simple as it seemed. It proposed that the hours of polling should be from 8 o'clock in the forenoon until 8 o'clock in the evening, and though that was a symmetrical proposal which would apply equally to every constituency in the country, yet it was desirable for Members to have more time for consideration before going into Committee. The hon. and learned Member (Mr. Elliot) in making this proposal was somewhat inconsistent. The Bill was only read a second time yesterday, and surely more consideration than a few hours was required before they could decide to go into Committee upon it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who addressed the House a few minutes ago, was greatly averse to proceeding with measures after only a few hours' consideration. Well, if a Bill of six clauses, to which there was little or no opposition on the question of principle, could not get a second reading after a few hours' consideration, he thought an important Bill like the present, though it consisted only of one clause, could not be allowed to go into Committee after a few hours' consideration. He believed the measure was only circulated on Monday or Tuesday last, and only passed the second reading yesterday; and he did not think that, under the circumstances of the night, and considering what had passed, it was desirable or even decent that further progress should be made. He thought he was only performing his duty when he moved the adjournment of the debate.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT: The Bill was printed and circulated weeks ago.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he did not wish unnecessarily to detain the House. ["Oh, oh!"] If these interruptions from hon. Gentlemen opposite continued he was afraid that his remarks would necessarily be somewhat lengthy. He desired, very briefly, to support the Motion of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) for adjournment. He could not conceive anything more thoroughly inconsistent than the action of Her Majesty's Government in refusing to accede to the Motion made a few minutes ago that a Bill much more extensive than the present measure be read a second time. It was now proposed to go into Committee on the Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) Bill—["No, no!"]—which was of considerable interest to very many Members in the House. Many Irish Members were interested in it; and, in the interest of those Gentlemen who did not imagine that the Government were about to spring Business of this description upon the House at that late hour of the night, he was very glad that his hon. Friend had moved the adjournment of the debate. But, apart from this consideration, that there were Members interested in the Bill who were not now present, not having expected it to come on that late hour, there was another consideration which, he thought, rendered it absolutely necessary that Members from Ireland should oppose the measure at that juncture. A few minutes ago a Bill had been introduced by an Irish Member of Parliament. It dealt with a subject of very great interest to the Irish people. Her Majesty's Government refused to allow progress to be made with it. Now there came on a Bill which was fathered by four English Members, and to that the Government offered no opposition at all. It was a mere insignificant Bill compared with the Irish Bill. The Government took up that position for the sole reason that the present Bill had the disadvantage—and it was always a disadvantage to any Bill with which it was desired to make progress—of being introduced by Irish Members of Parliament. He was sure if there was anything which could emphasize in the minds of the people of Ireland the action of Her Majesty's Government in refusing to allow the National School Teachers Bill to make progress, it would be the fact that now, within half-an-hour of having refused to allow that Bill to be read a second time, they were anxious to proceed with an English measure, fathered by English Members of Parliament. Such a course as that, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, led the Irish Members to the conclusion—a conclusion many of them had long since arrived at —that there was a great deal of latitude allowed to English Members and their measures, no matter how late the hour; whereas there was very little latitude allowed to Irish Members for any Irish Business which might be introduced to the House by them, and not by Her Majesty's Government. He considered that his hon. Friend, in moving the adjournment of the debate, had only done what was his absolute duty; and he sincerely hoped that it would be a lesson to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—who had not altogether disappeared from the House—who, although he had slaughtered one useful Irish Member—[*Laughter.*]—or rather measure, fortunately did not have it in his power to slaughter Irish Members. If the right hon. Gentleman had it in his power to do that he (Mr. Redmond) was afraid that some Irish Members would meet with the same fate as some of their measures. The right hon. Gentleman had not retired, and he (Mr. Redmond) was glad of that, because the present would be a very good example of that which the right hon. Gentleman had to expect at the hands of the Irish Members, if he persisted unnecessarily and intentionally in obstructing legislation which those Members introduced into the House. He sincerely hoped that not only would his hon. Friends support the Motion for Adjournment which had been made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo, but that, in their turn, very many of them would also move adjournments, and so teach English Members that though they might triumph in their attempts to suppress Irish Members in the measures they introduced, they would not succeed in that triumph without considerable loss of sleep.

Mr. KENNY said, he should like to know from the hon. and learned Member who was responsible for the introduction of the Bill whether or not it was to apply to Ireland?

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT: Yes; it is to enable Irish voters to get to the poll. ["Hear, hear!"]

Mr. KENNY said, that notwithstanding that fact, and the interruptions of hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite, Members of a "superior race" had declined to allow the name of an Irish Member to be placed on the back of the Bill, or to become in any way responsible for its passing into law. He entirely repudiated the right of hon. Members sitting on the other side of the House to attempt to force on, with consultation or without consultation, legislation of a grave and serious character on the House. This was said to be a measure affecting the interests of the Irish; and if it were so, it would be a matter upon which the Irish people might be expected to entertain some opinion. He thought it was due, therefore, to the Irish Members that before legislation of this character was proposed in that House by private Members of the standing of the hon. and learned Member whose name was first on the back of the Bill, some consideration ought to be shown to those hon. Gentlemen, even to those sitting on the hon. and learned Member's own side of the House, and the framers of the Bill should have had the courtesy to consult such Members with regard to their views upon such a subject. He could not protest too strongly against what he must characterize as the wantonness of English Members, with their affectations of superiority and their affectations of a right to rule.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is neither respectful to the House, nor is he confining himself to the subject of the Motion before the House.

Mr. KENNY said, he had no intention of wandering beyond the scope of the measure.

An hon. Member: You have.

Mr. KENNY said, he was simply endeavouring to point out that the unusual course which had been adopted by hon. Gentlemen responsible for the introduction of the Bill was in itself sufficient to provoke the opposition of the Irish Members. He would like to know what did the hon. and learned Gentleman whose name stood first on the back of the Bill expect to gain by taking the stage he proposed to gain that night. If he succeeded in gaining that stage did he propose to run the Bill through Committee at once? [Mr. A. R. D. Elliot: No!] He (Mr. Kenny) should like to know, then, what object the hon. and learned Member could have in view in thus endeavouring to force on, at that extraordinary and unusual hour, a stage which was a mere formal one, in view of the fact that no further progress could be made with the measure for the next two or three months? If no further progress could be made with it for such a period the attitude of the hon. and learned Member was one of the most unjustifiable and extraordinary that could possibly be conceived. They were asked to proceed with the Bill at an unusual hour; they were asked to proceed with it without having had, as he conceived, an opportunity of having its merits sufficiently investigated; and they were asked to proceed with it at a time which was absolutely unsuited to its discussion. Even if an additional stage were taken it could not be of the slightest service to hon. Members who seemed so anxious for its passage. He doubted very much whether the Bill was one which would be of a serviceable or useful nature. He very much doubted whether the proposals involved would not result in the very greatest possible inconvenience.

Mr. SPEAKER: I really must ask the hon. Gentleman to observe the ruling of the Chair, and not to deviate into irrelevant matter. He is now discussing the principle of the Bill on the Question of Adjournment.

Mr. KENNY said, it was only that moment that he had learnt that the Motion before the House was for the adjournment of the debate; and to that Question, no doubt, he had not been confining himself strictly. He, however, was perfectly unconscious that he was not now addressing himself to the Question before the House. ["Order!"] At the same time, he believed Mr. Speaker to be the best judge as to whether anything he (Mr. Kenny) was saying did or did not come, in a certain sense, within the meaning of the Motion made by his hon. Friend. With regard to that Motion for Adjournment, he sincerely hoped that the House, which a few minutes ago so speedily voted the adjournment of a somewhat similar and more important question, would now maintain its logical consistency, and also decline to proceed at that extraordinary hour with a measure which had not been sufficiently considered, which had been introduced without consultation with hon. Members sitting on the Irish Benches, and the pressing of which, if the hon. and learned Member in charge of it insisted in pressing it on, would only result in its meeting with more strenuous opposition in the future than was offered to it now.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he agreed with the proposal which had been made by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). It would be much the best course to adjourn the debate. It was undoubtedly a measure which would require serious consideration; and, if this stage were taken, it would make an important difference to the Bill. When once the Chairman was got into the Chair the Bill could come on in Committee at any hour of the night; and if the House were to sit tomorrow it might come on then. He did not think that the House generally had given sufficient consideration to the provisions of the measure. He was himself inclined to support the Bill; but he did not think it could be discussed at that hour of the morning, and it would be more satisfactory if the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of it would allow this stage to be postponed until a future opportunity.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT wished to remind hon. Members that there had been an agreement between the two sides of the House in regard to the Bill, by which it was to be put down for this stage, and a date fixed for going into Committee, without real progress being made in Committee itself. No objection was taken to that course. A complaint had been made that the name of no Irish Member appeared at the back of the Bill. He was sorry that that was so, and personally he could have wished that the name of some Irish Member should have appeared upon it, because it did so happen that the Bill was intended to apply to the Three Kingdoms. The object of the Bill——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT begged pardon, and regretted that for a moment he should have been about to trespass upon the Rules of the House. He hoped the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) would advise his Friends to allow this stage of the Bill to be taken, so that they might be able to make further progress with the measure in February next.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he would appeal to the Government not to allow this stage to be taken. It would look very badly in Ireland when it was found that the interests of the National School teachers of that country could not be discussed in the House of Commons, because the hour was too late, and yet that another Bill, which stood later on the Paper, could be brought on. No doubt, if the circumstances had been of an ordinary character, the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Elliot) would have had the assistance of the Irish Members in passing the Bill; but, at the same time, it was a measure for which nobody had asked in Ireland, and after the House of Commons had refused to go into the grievances of the Irish National School teachers—a matter which had been before the House for years—the next thing they proposed to do was to go on with a very important Bill of which nobody had ever heard before. His own opinion was that the Bill would require some little watching on the part of the Irish Members in Committee; but if once they got the Speaker out of the Chair, the measure could be brought on at any hour of the night and rushed through Committee without any discussion whatever. ["Divide!"] If hon. Members opposite were so anxious to join in the debate, it would be better for them to get upon their legs, instead of addressing remarks to the House from their seats. He really did not think that the National teachers of Ireland would be much pleased, or would consider that they had been fairly dealt with by Her Majesty's Government, if the Government consented to support the Motion for going into Committee on this Bill. He would point out to the hon. and learned Member in charge of the measure that he would facilitate the progress of the Bill much more by getting the Irish Members on his side than in securing their opposition. For his own part, he was bound to say, as a matter of fact, that he had not heard one word in Ireland about the Bill.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON said, he only rose for the purpose of making one suggestion. Perhaps, if his hon. and learned Friend who was in charge of the Bill would consent to exclude Ireland from its operation, it might make all the difference.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, he could not quite understand the enthusiasm of the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), and hon. Members around him, in desiring to rush the Bill through the House at that hour of the morning (2.5). He should have expected that hon. Members, who in such troops had followed Her Majesty's Ministers into the Lobby a short time ago, in order to set their foot down upon an important Irish measure, on account of the shortness of the Notice and the lateness of the hour, would have got up to discourage the present attempt, at a still later hour of the morning, to pass a vital stage of a Bill, which involved an important principle, proposed for the first time yesterday. There was also some occasion to remark that the Government, who were so eager a short time ago to adjourn the debate on the Irish National School Teachers Bill, were manifesting no anxiety now as to the hour of the night, or as to the circumstances under which the Bill came before the House. It seemed to him that every argument that weighed with the majority a while ago for adjourning the debate upon the Bill which had been just decided was equally strong when applied to the present Bill. The Bill involved a new principle; it was only yesterday submitted to the House; and it did not, as in the case of the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), involve a principle which had long ago been sanctioned by the House. On the contrary, it introduced a totally new principle. He was not about to enter into the discussion of that principle. All he would say was that hon. Members opposite who suggested that there was nothing to discuss in the matter were in error. The Bill involved some important considerations in reference to the convenience of voters in Ireland, the expense of elections, and whether time might not be saved and expense now incurred at elections obviated. He did not propose to enter into those questions now; but it seemed to him that there was no possible reason why the majority of the House should vote for expediting the passage of this Bill that night, and getting it practically through its vital stage, after having voted for the slaughter of the Irish measure. There was no possible distinction between the two cases, except that the one Bill was Irish and the other was not. He would urge hon. Members opposite, in the peculiar circumstances under which this Bill came before the House, to consider whether they might not possibly be facilitating the ultimate passage of the measure by consenting that night, in deference to the opinion expressed on the Irish Benches, to forego the present stage, knowing as they did that they would have an opportunity to-morrow, in good time, and with full Notice to hon. Members who were not then present, of getting the stage they desired.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR wished to assure the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill, in reference to the remarks he had made, that several Irish Members were yesterday engaged upon an important Committee upstairs at the time this Bill was going through the House. The questions referred to the Committee were of vast importance, and required the serious attention of the Irish Members. Personally, he knew nothing of the present Bill until he took up the newspapers in the morning and read the report of the discussion. The Bill had, therefore, come upon him, to a certain extent, as a surprise. He did not propose to discuss the principle of the Bill. Probably, on the whole, he was inclined to be favourable to the general principle of the measure; but he thought it was unfair to ask the Irish Members to discuss it at that hour of the morning. The hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), whose retreating form he saw departing from the House, had suggested that

Ireland should be omitted from the operation of the Bill. That was a proposition which would by no means meet the objections of the Irish Members. He confessed that he was quite unable to see the relevancy of that argument. A few moments before the discussion of this Bill was entered upon there was a Bill under the consideration of the House which excluded from its operation both England and Scotland. It was a Bill which applied to Ireland, and to Ireland alone; but the fact that England and Scotland were rigidly excluded from the operation of the Bill did not prevent the hon. Baronet, and the hon. and learned Gentleman who was mainly responsible for the Bill, and other hon. Members, whose impatience now to get to bed was one of the causes of the prolongation of the present debate — the rigid exclusion of England and Scotland from the operation of that Bill did not prevent those Gentlemen from enthusiastically and multitudinously following the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the Division which prevented progress being made with that Bill. Surely what was sauce for the goose in that case was sauce for the gander now. The arguments on one side applied equally to the others. Hon. Members had gone into the Lobby mere at the bidding of the Minister of the Crown to vote down the Irish Members and adjourn one of their measures; and they could not be surprised if the Irish Members attempted to pay them back in their own coin by adopting the same inconsiderate means they had themselves resorted to. It did not seem to him that the House generally was willing to accept the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) for the adjournment of the debate. He would, therefore, suggest to his hon. Friend that although the hour was advanced they were quite prepared to discuss the Bill, if a discussion were persisted in. He would, therefore, advise his hon. Friend to allow the Motion for Adjournment to be withdrawn, or, if the House refused to allow that course to be taken, to permit it to be negatived without a Division, and then to go on with the discussion of the Bill, although he certainly protested against being compelled to do so at such an inopportune and unreasonable hour of the morning.

MR. WARTON said, he supported the adjournment of the debate, because he was strongly opposed to the provisions of the Bill; and he only regretted that he had not been able to put down a blocking Notice against it. If the Government did their duty they would give more scope to the half-past 12 o'clock Rule, and thus extend its utility.

MR. SEXTON said, that if the House desired to go on with the discussion of the Bill he would ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

COLONEL NOLAN desired to say a few words upon the Bill. He did not think the measure was very much wanted in Ireland. He had been engaged in several election contests, both in his own and other counties; and he thought they had always been able to finish them by 3 o'clock in the afternoon. He had certainly never heard anybody complain of the inconvenience to the voters either in the county districts in Ireland or in the large towns. By the fact of the poll being closed at 5 o'clock he was afraid that more and unnecessary trouble might be entailed. The longer the poll was kept open the larger would the number of the people be who would be required to watch the ballot boxes; and, of course, they would expect to be paid for their services. The Returning Officer and the Sheriffs were not in any way in the confidence of the great body of the people of Ireland. Those gentlemen had charge of the ballot boxes, and under the provisions of this Bill they would have to convey them from the polling booth in the dark. He thought it was highly objectionable that they should be permitted to be taken away in the dark. He had known several cases in his own constituency, in the county of Leitrim, and other places, where a large number of votes had been invalidated in consequence of the presiding officer writing a name on the ballot papers. There was not the slightest doubt whatever that whoever did it did it on purpose to invalidate the vote; and he maintained that any person who was capable of invalidating a ballot paper by writing a name on the back of it was perfectly capable of tampering with the ballot boxes when they were being conveyed away from the polling booths at night. At any rate, their conveyance at night would very much assist persons who desired to tamper with the ballot boxes. There was an Amendment he would certainly like to propose in Committee on the Bill, and he would give Notice of it at once, because he had no desire to spring matters suddenly in the Committee itself; but he preferred to give time for considering them. He had proposed this Amendment before; but unfortunately the present Attorney General, and the Government, and the principal Members of Her Majesty's Opposition were against him. His Amendment, as the Attorney General would probably recollect, was simply this—that the presiding officer should not be allowed to go away from the polling booth in one carriage, and place the ballot boxes in charge of some other person who returned home in another. It ought also to be provided that the ballot boxes should be handed over to the Postmaster General, or his representative, wherever it was practicable, in order that they might be conveyed to some special and properly constituted establishment. He was satisfied that if this Amendment were passed, in addition to saving expense, it would materially add to the security in Ireland of the ballot papers. He could not conceive what possible objection there could be to hand them over to the Postmaster, instead of allowing them to be conveyed away as they were now. He certainly intended to propose this Amendment when the Bill got into Committee, and he trusted that it would be fairly considered. It was an obvious means of saving expense at elections, and it was rendered more necessary by the fact that at the present moment the ballot boxes were required in many instances to be conveyed for long distances. It was very unfortunate there had been no consultation with the Irish Members, because there were few counties in England in the position of Irish counties. English counties were largely made up of towns, and the distances between the different polling places were short. In Irish counties the ballot boxes had often to be conveyed 40 or 50 miles by car. In his own county—Galway—the ballot boxes had to be carried long distances on outside cars, and now they would have to be conveyed by night, and he was afraid the Sheriff would have to put off the counting until the next day. He did not think they could be too particular in seeing that there could not be any possibility of suspicion that the boxes had been tampered with. He did not deny that the measure was required in England. No doubt it would in its operation prove very convenient in the large towns; but it certainly was one that was not much asked for in Ireland, and one which must, from an Irish point of view, be looked at very carefully.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan), without committing himself on the subject, had indicated that there were several reasons why the provisions of the Bill should not be made applicable to Ireland. There were several things to be considered before the Bill passed through Committee. When the Bill was read a second time the general understanding in the House was that there were a large number of subjects in connection with the Bill which would have to be considered by the Government before any progress was made with the clauses in Committee. It was upon that understanding that his hon. Friend (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot) promised to postpone the Committee stage until March. The hon. and learned Gentleman had promised again that night to put off the Committee until March; and if when the beginning of March came they had not come to a clear understanding as to what alterations, if any, should be introduced in the Bill, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had no doubt his hon. and learned Friend would put off the Committee to even a later date than that. Of course, he could not pledge his hon. and learned Friend, but he promised to put himself in communication with his hon. and learned Friend, and other hon. Gentlemen interested; and if he found it was generally felt that the Bill was not required in Ireland, he should strongly advise a concession to Irish opinion on the subject.

Mr. CALLAN said, he was glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) that it was a matter for consideration whether Ireland should be included in the Bill or not. He expressed no opinion as to the inclusion of Dublin and Belfast in the Bill. He had never been at an election at either place; but he had had large experience of borough and county elections in other parts of Ireland. He had entered upon contests in three boroughs and two counties, and he had had something to do with other elections besides his own. As to the county elections, the constituencies were polled early to the last man; indeed, from 3 to 5 o'clock the polls were entirely idle. Those hours were merely spent by the polling officials in cracking jokes, or in preparing for the journey with the ballot boxes which had to be undertaken to the large town. He could see no possible good in applying this Bill to any county in Ireland. On the contrary, he could see a great deal of harm; and, therefore, before committing themselves for or against the Bill, it was as well he and his hon. Friends should consult their constituents. There was no need to hurry; no Party would be injured by a few weeks' delay. Unlike the National School teachers, no person would suffer by the Bill being put off until the 19th of February. He did not see why there should be an attempt to rush the Bill into Committee, and preclude discussion on it, when in the two months' interval which was to ensue in their Parliamentary labours hon. Members would have time to consult their constituents, and ascertain whether they should vote for or against the Bill. If it went to a division now, he should vote against the measure. He would much prefer that he was not called upon to record his vote until he had had time to consult his constituents. What objection could there be to a postponement of the debate? Why should they take a Division now unless it was to preclude them, with the full information they would obtain in the Recess, from discussing the question on the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair? He could not see that any valid argument could be advanced in favour of the Speaker leaving the Chair now. He interpreted the hon. and learned Gentleman's (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot's) persistence to mean that they should not, with the full knowledge they would acquire by consulting their constituents, discuss the question. He (Mr. Callan) should certainly vote against the Speaker leaving the Chair on the present occasion. He appealed to the hon. and learned Gentleman, who went into the Lobby against the Irish Members in the last Division, to give them a *quid pro quo;* he asked the hon. and learned Gentleman to do the same justice to them as he did to the National School teachers of Ireland, and postpone his own child, however complete it might be, until the beginning of next year, and allow the House then to discuss the question on the Motion that the Speaker should leave the Chair. He had only had occasion during the last few minutes to look at the Bill and to refer to his own electioneering experience, which he should say was much more varied and larger than that of the hon. and learned Member (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot).

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) gave one good reason at least why Irish Members should object to the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman told them there had been a consultation between both the English Parties. To that consultation the Irish Members were certainly not invited.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was alluding to what passed in public in the House yesterday afternoon.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, that to that public consultation the Irish Members were not invited.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he alluded to the debate in the Whole House.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY remarked that, during the earlier part of the discussion in the House yesterday, some of the Irish Members were engaged on the Labourers' Committee upstairs. However, there were other reasons why Irish Members should object to the Bill. He had not heard any reason given why this Bill was required in Ireland. Personally, he was rather inclined to support the measure under certain conditions. Of course, the extension of the hours of polling must have the effect of keeping the results of elections in suspense, or unknown for a longer time. This would cause a prolongation of all public excitement, which was not in itself desirable. These were objections common to both England and Ireland. The people of Ireland, however, now lived under the most severe coercive measure ever applied to their country, and one of the provisions of that measure was that any person found out of his house at night might be arrested by a policeman on his own responsibility, and if he could not give reasons for his being abroad sufficient to satisfy the highly intelligent mind of the policeman he could be dragged off to the nearest police station. Another provision was that anyone found at night in any part of the country to which he might by any possibility be called a stranger was liable, in the same way, to be seized by any policeman, clapped into prison, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. Under such circumstances, he wanted to know whether his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot) did not think there was very good reason indeed why Irish Members should be especially cautious in having a Bill of this kind applied to Ireland? What he should desire to see was the insertion in this Bill of some clause which should exempt from the fearful provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act every man honestly engaged in going to or coming from the poll. He was sure that his hon. and learned Friend, with his usual sense of fairness and justice, would see that Irish Members could not allow this Bill to pass without some such restrictions as he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had indicated. Was every man found ten or a dozen miles away from his home to be treated like a felon, though he happened to be there for the purpose of recording his vote? These were considerations which every English Member must admit made Irish opinion with regard to this Bill totally different from English opinion. He did not commit himself to any opposition to the Bill; all he wanted was that the Government should give them to understand that they were prepared to do something which would prevent a cruel coercive law from being made more cruel and more coercive in its application than it need be.

Mr. GRAY said, he did not profess to be of opinion that this Bill was required in Ireland; in fact, he had not now any opinion on the subject. He ventured, however, to suggest to his hon. Friends who were more or less opposed to it one or two considerations which he thought might possibly cause them to modify their views. The people of Ireland had suffered enormously in all matters affecting the franchise, and in all matters affecting redistribution, and generally affecting the powers and privileges of voters; the people of Ireland had suffered enormously owing to Bills being introduced applicable only to England, and it had been years and years afterwards that they had been enabled to have the principles of those Bills extended to Ireland, and only then usually in a very modified and imperfect way. It was manifest that the only chance they really had had of obtaining an extended franchise and of obtaining a proper redistribution of seats in Ireland was by insisting upon equal laws upon those subjects being extended to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; and he thought it was a little dangerous for Irish Members to say, in regard to a Bill of this kind, that they desired Ireland should be excluded. He recognized, of course, the force of the observations of his hon. Friend who had just spoken (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), and of his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan); but he did not think the considerations they had set forth were of any great importance. He did not think it was likely that men would be arrested coming home from the poll, or that the ballot boxes, during their conveyance to the place of counting, were likely to be tampered with; but he thought that to stamp with their approval the principle of exceptional legislation on a question affecting the franchise was rather a dangerous step for Irish Members to take. He would be quite content that on all questions of this kind there should be a general unstanding that Ireland should share the conveniences or inconveniences, as the case might be, with England. For that reason, especially now that a pledge had been given that no further stage of the Bill would be taken until March, and that if then Irish Members were found adverse to the application of the Bill to Ireland the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would advise the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill to yield to their views, he could not see why they should object to the Motion that the Speaker should leave the Chair.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would not be led away by the remarks addressed to the House that evening with the idea that the Irish Members were unanimous on this question. One of the disadvantages of the manner in which this Bill had been precipitately brought forward and pushed on was that the Irish Members had not had an opportunity of determining this simple question amongst themselves—in fact, the majority of the Irish Members were quite ignorant that this Bill was in so advanced a state. Now, he himself was very strongly inclined to the principle of the Bill, partly because he thought the more facilities given for voting the better, and partly for the reason put forward by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray)—namely, that the more uniform the laws of England and Ireland were on such matters the better for England and Ireland. What was desired was that there should be a general uniformity of laws between England and Ireland, and he and his hon. Friends were particularly anxious to relieve Ireland of coercion laws. He appealed to the candid mind of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot) who had charge of the Bill. There was a Coercion Act in operation in Ireland as everybody knew. Under that Coercion Act, as had been pointed out by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), a man who happened to be out of his house during the hours covered by this Bill was liable to arrest and imprisonment; a man could be put in the police lock-up for one night, and brought before the magistrate next day. What was the ground on which a man could be locked up? That he was a stranger to the district, and the person who was to be the judge of whether he was a stranger or not was a policeman—a policeman who, as a rule, was himself a stranger to the district. In other words, if a man in the county of Mayo was not able to establish his identity to a policeman from the county of Antrim he was liable to be arrested and cast into gaol. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) thought he and his hon. Friends were perfectly justified in bringing forward in this manner the extraordinary meaning of the coercive legislation in Ireland, legislation which actually acted as a bar to the bulk of the people whom it was sought to benefit by this Bill. They meant to bring before the House the effect of the Coercion Act, and they would be wanting in their duty if they did not take every opportunity of so doing. He thought, therefore, they would be justified in saying to the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot) that their future attitude would largely depend upon the position he took up as to the very necessary addition to the Bill which would be proposed. The addition could be made in a few lines. A Proviso could be inserted to the effect that, from and after the passing of the Act, the "Curfew" Clauses of the Prevention of Crime Act—"strangers" Clauses, or whatever else might be the police name by which they were known—should not be in operation in any district in which an election was taking place. If the hon. and learned Gentleman would consent to that, it would do away with a great deal of the opposition which was likely, otherwise, to be offered to the Bill. He (Mr. O'Connor), in saying that, wished to guard hon. Gentlemen on the Irish Benches from being considered to hold anything like an unanimous view on the question. He had not had the experience of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) in connection with county elections, especially county elections of a hotly contested character. Hotly contested county elections might have prejudiced the mind of the hon. Member, as he had so successfully gone through those contests. They, who had not had the hon. Member's experience, believed that the longer the hours were and the greater the facilities for getting to the poll the better it was for them. He thought it would have been wiser to have allowed the debate to be adjourned; but he hoped that before the next stage hon. Gentlemen belonging to the Irish Party would have had a meeting, and would be able to present their opinions to the House.

DR. LYONS said, that in consequence of some observations which had fallen from some hon. Members opposite, he wished to say that he should most strongly deprecate the exclusion of Ireland from the operation of the Bill. He was sure any proposal to exclude Ireland would be received with very great regret. All the arguments in favour of allowing the working classes of England plenty of time to get to the poll applied to the working classes of Ireland with even greater force, on account of the greater distances to be travelled and the difficulties attendant upon getting to the polling places.

Mayo, for instance, it was proposed to divide into four sections; and as the county was of no inconsiderable size, distances of very great reach would have to be covered by voters, and it was difficult for them to travel from their residences or their work, backwards and forwards, in the limited time allowed under the existing law. He, therefore, wished to enter his protest against the idea of Ireland being excluded from this very excellent Bill. The question of the difficulty of transmitting the polling boxes had been mentioned; and that seemed to him to be a matter it was very proper to take into consideration in connection with the amendment of the Bill. It was, he thought, one of the reasons why it was most desirable that the measure should be advanced from its present stage, so that they might be ready to proceed with the consideration of its details at once next year. He, himself, knew of a case in which a ballot box had been lost during transit at night. The whole of the county having been ransacked for it, it was eventually found on the bank of a river at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning. It was a very fortunate thing that it had not fallen into the river; but, as it was, the episode caused great delay in the declaration of the poll. He (Dr. Lyons) was present when the Bill was discussed yesterday, and had found the House so unanimously in its favour that he had not had the least expectation that there would be the smallest objection to it coming from Ireland. He had reason to know that there was a strong feeling in many country districts in Ireland in favour of some measure for the purpose of facilitating access to the poll. There was a strong feeling that the difficulty of getting to the poll was very great, and that the hours of polling should be extended, and there could be no doubt that with an extended franchise this feeling would have double force. He trusted Mr. Speaker would now be allowed to leave the Chair.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, he was surprised to find that the hon. Member for Dublin (Dr. Lyons) retained any lively interest at all in the hours of polling. He (Mr. O'Brien) could assure the hon. Member that he was under a totally erroneous impression, if he thought that anybody on those—the Irish—Benches had asked for, or declared for, the exclusion of Ireland from the Bill. This discussion was an admirable illustration of the inconvenience of rushing the Bill through at that break-neck speed, in spite of the protests of the Irish Members. The effect of the course which was being adopted was, that considering the measure on the spur of the moment, as they were obliged to do, Irish Members were unable to make up their minds one way or the other in reference to it. The subject was one which had been very little discussed in Ireland. There was a great deal of force, he believed, in what had fallen from the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) and the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) as to the great distances that, in some instances, the ballot boxes had to be carried after dark, and as to the delay in ascertaining the results of elections in consequence. There might be, also, a question as to additional expense to candidates in consequence of the prolonged hours the polling clerks and other officials would have to work, for he took it for granted that the fees for these long hours would have to be considered, and made greater than those which were now granted. On the whole, his own opinion strongly tended in favour of the Bill; for while he perfectly agreed with the hon. Member for Louth that under present circumstances the polling was practically over when the hour for closing the boxes arrived, yet they could not forget that the electorate at forthcoming elections would be an entirely different one, and that it might be a great convenience to many to have an opportunity of voting after their work was over, and after the present hour for closing the boxes. He thought that, considering that the principle of the measure had been already applied to towns, and that now it was sought to extend the hours of polling in counties it was desirable that it should be passed. He could conceive it possible that the present hours might have the effect of disfranchising many of the agricultural labourers in Ireland, who lived by their day's work, and who, perhaps, would scarcely be prepared to give up a day's wages, or half a day's wages, for the privilege of recording their vote. To that whole class, whose work did not finish until 6 o'clock, and who, at times, worked at long distances from the polling stations, the enlargement of the hours of poll to

8 o'clock might be a very important boon. For that reason he was inclined to favour the principle of the Bill. At the same time, Members representing Ireland had had such little opportunity of considering it, that he confessed he could not see why the hon. and learned Member who introduced the Bill could not consent to forego for that night his chance of getting this very important stage of the Bill. Let the consideration of the Bill be resumed in February on the same terms as that night. Hon. Members would then come to the discussion with their minds made up on the subject and having ascertained the feeling of their constituents. The hon. and learned Member (Mr. Elliot) would have lost nothing in regard to the progress of the Bill. On the contrary, he would have done a great deal of good, as such a course would, probably, result in his securing the unanimous support of the Irish Members. There was no special hurry for the passage of the Bill. There would be no General Election until the end of next year or the beginning of the year after next; therefore, there could not be said to be a killing hurry for the Bill. He would submit to the hon. and learned Member, therefore, that it would be worth his while to consider in this matter the strongly expressed opinion of the Irish Members.

MR. CAINE said, that in regard to the question of expense, which had been mentioned by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. O'Brien), there had been a great deal of experience of the working of the Hours of Poll Act in the Metropolis, and they had found that the extension of the hours had not increased the expenses. It had been just as easy to get clerks, and so on, for 12 hours as it had been to get them formerly for the shorter period. He would remind hon. Members that those who had charge of the Bill had no intention of proceeding with the Committee stage until March next.

MR. KENNY wished to know whether it was to be understood that those in charge of the Bill agreed that it would be expedient for the Irish Members to ascertain from their constituents whether they desired that the Bill should not extend to Ireland, or should be modified in regard to that country, and that the Government would then accede to the representations of the Irish Members? Was he to understand that, or that the Government would take the Bill into consideration, and would be prepared, when the House re-assembled in February next, to state whether or not it should extend to Ireland? Because, on the one hand, if the Government expressed their determination to accede to the wishes of the Irish Members, as expressed, two or three months hence the reason for opposing further progress would be diminished. But, on the other hand, if the Government were to reserve the right to say whether the Bill should extend to Ireland or not, it was only fair that Members should not be precluded from discussing the principle of the Bill. With Mr. Speaker out of the Chair it would not be possible to place on the Paper that Notice of objection which would ensure its being considered at a reasonable hour. To his mind the expediency of extending the Bill to Ireland was very greatly in question. He was inclined to believe that in the industrial parts of Ireland the present hours of polling were quite sufficient—certainly were not such as precluded the voters from going to the poll. Even the labouring part of the population, who would be so soon admitted to the right of voting, would not be prevented from voting within the nine hours which were at the present time allowed. He had frequently witnessed contested elections in Irish counties; and he could corroborate the statement of the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) that a great portion, if not absolutely the entire portion, of the polling had taken place two hours before the limit of time had been reached. He was afraid that extending the hours of polling in the Irish counties would give opportunities to certain agents for the exercise of corruption and other undue influences in Irish constituencies; and it was, he thought, the duty of the Irish Members very carefully to consider whether the extension of the hours of polling to 8 o'clock at night would not have the effect of demoralizing the Irish electors to a greater or less extent. English Members did not understand the real condition of things in Ireland, just as many Irish people did not understand the condition of things in England. There was great danger in some districts of Ireland of the agents and candidates exercising corruption, or intimidation, or inciting to riot—proceedings which there would be no reason to fear in England—by reason of continuing the excitement of the elections so long into the night in the country. Then there were the objections which had been stated to the measure by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway County (Colonel Nolan)—namely, the dangers and inconveniences which would result from conveying the sealed ballot boxes from the various polling places to the central district—sometimes a distance of 40 miles. In some cases the central districts were more than 40 miles away from some of the polling stations —indeed, he knew instances where they were over 60 miles away. In Mayo and other places they were sometimes 70 miles away. The dangers attendant upon carrying the boxes in these remote districts such long distances was, of course, extremely great. As to the objections which had been urged to extending the hours of polling in view of the fact that the Prevention of Crime Act was in operation in Ireland, and that persons engaged in elections might be arrested, he thought that if the Bill were extended to Ireland when it became an Act it would exist for a much longer time than any exceptional legislation in the nature of a Coercion Act; and that, therefore, there was no danger in that respect in the future, though there might be at the present time. It seemed to him that this proposal to extend the hours of polling to 8 o'clock at night, while it might be most excellent and desirable in England and Scotland, was one which would have to be considerably modified in its application to Ireland.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he rose in consequence of the speech which had been addressed to the House by the hon. Gentleman the junior Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Caine). The hon. Gentleman had referred to his experience in connection with Metropolitan electors. He was quite aware that the hon. Gentleman was a candidate for the representation of Middlesex; but he was not aware that he had ever yet contested any seat in the Metropolis, although he had fought an election at Liverpool and a good many at Scarborough. There was no doubt, therefore, that the hon. Gentleman had had a considerable amount of experience in connection with electioneering matters, although he had not had any experience so far as the Metropolis was concerned. He would prefer, therefore, to appeal to the hon. Member for Tewkesbury (Mr. R. Biddulph Martin). The hon. Member and himself were opponents at the last General Election; and he thought the hon. Member would admit that in the contest they had fought the election was practically over by 4 o'clock in the afternoon. At that hour a very few electors indeed remained to be polled, although they included one or two Cabinet Ministers. That fact, however, made no impression on the result, and towards the close of the poll the clerks were found sitting in the polling booth doing absolutely nothing. From the personal experience he had gained in connection with Parliamentary elections he could only say that these long hours were altogether unnecessary; and he did not think that the hon. Member for Tewkesbury, who really understood the question, would differ from him so far as his experience went in regard to elections in the City of London. He was glad to have an opportunity of making that remark, after the magniloquent speech they had heard from the junior Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Caine).

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he would not dispute that arrangements which were desired by the majority of constituencies might not be desired or even necessary so far as that very anomalous constituency, the City of London, was concerned. He had risen now to answer the speech of the hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny), who wished to know if the Government would give an assurance that they would consult the Irish Members in February, or, at any rate, before March, when the Bill would come up for its further stages. He thought that his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had already made that promise. If, however, there was any doubt on the subject, he was ready to say, on the part of the Government, that they certainly would desire, and would take an opportunity in the meantime, of learning what the wishes of the Irish Members were; and he would point out that, in regard to a similar Bill brought in for the boroughs, that was the course actually taken by his right hon. Friend. At the outset the Irish Members were a little divided, and it was doubtful whether the provisions of the Bill would be extended to Ireland; but, in the course of the discussion which took place upon it, it was found to be generally popular, and, ultimately, by general consent, it was made to apply to Ireland as well as to England and Scotland. That being so, he was satisfied that his hon. and learned Friend in charge of the Bill and the Government would be anxious to consult the wishes of the Irish Members if the Bill now went into Committee before March next, when the natural proceedings in Committee would take place.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he rose for the purpose of emphasizing the statement made by his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) that it was wrong to infer that the Irish Members on those Benches were opposed to the Bill. On the contrary, he believed that a great majority of the Party to which he had the honour to belong were altogether favourable, under certain circumstances, to the provisions of the Bill. It must not be understood by any hon. Members opposite, by any Member of Her Majesty's Government, or by the hon. and learned Gentleman who was responsible for the Bill, that the action of the Irish Members was indicative of their opposition to the principle of the Bill. On the contrary, they had not yet had sufficient time to consider the principle of the Bill. As a matter of fact, the Party who sat on those Benches had not had an opportunity of meeting for the purpose of discussing the Bill since it was introduced yesterday; and all they asked was that sufficient time should be given to them so that they might make up their minds as to whether they considered that the measure ought to be extended to Ireland or not. There was one assurance which might be given by some Member of Her Majesty's Government with reference to the Bill, or by the Gentlemen who were responsible for its introduction, which would, he thought, to a very great extent, insure the co-operation of the Irish Members in the progress of the measure; and that was the assurance already asked more than once by hon. Members on those Benches—that a provision would be inserted in the Bill when it came into Committee to provide that the clauses of the Prevention of Crime Act, which now made persons in Ireland liable to arrest for being out after dark, should be suspended altogether in localities where elections were taking place during the time that elections were in the course of procedure. It was quite possible, and he sincerely hoped that it might be so, that the Prevention of Crime Act would cease to exist before this Bill came into operation; but in the event of that Act being still in existence in Ireland when the Bill became law the Irish Members ought to have an assurance to the effect that a clause would be added to the Bill to provide that the "Curfew" Clauses of the Act would be suspended in those districts in Ireland in which elections were taking place while such elections were actually proceeding. He thought that such an assurance would give great satisfaction to the Irish Members; and he trusted that some Member of Her Majesty's Government would feel himself in a position to make it.

MR. MOLLOY said, he was one of those Members who had always supported the views of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had introduced the present Bill into the House, and he was inclined to continue his support in the Committee stage of the Bill; because, while he considered that some Amendments of a valuable character might be introduced, the principle of the Bill was one which appealed strictly to every Member of the House. He might say of his hon. Friends sitting on those Benches that not one of them had ventured, during the short time they had had an opportunity of considering the measure, to declare his opposition to the principle of the Bill. He begged to assure the hon. and learned Member in charge of the Bill that his support of the measure, as far as its principle was concerned, was very sincere indeed. He had supported it from the beginning, and he certainly took strong interest in its provisions. He was quite as anxious to see it passed into law as the hon. and learned Member who had introduced it, and he believed that in doing so he had the support of a good many of his constituents. Even in his own county, where, perhaps, an extension of the hours of polling was less required than in some other constituencies, the Bill would be really a very valuable one. There was, however, one point which he wished to put to hon. Members opposite. There was

Means to be postponed until "this day;" but that fact does not prevent the House from postponing the consideration of those Orders for a longer period. The hon. Member is not in Order in saying that the Speaker, when acting under an order of the House, has committed a breach of faith. The House is fully competent to give what order it pleases.

MR. SEXTON said, that undoubtedly the Speaker acted upon the order of the House; but when the right hon. Gentleman had notified the order of the House, the House was entitled to expect that that order would be carried out. In this case the order was that the adjourned debate on the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill should be taken upon this day; and this day was Friday, and not Saturday. In his four or five years' experience of the House he had never known an order of the House, after having been ratified by the voice of the Speaker, endeavoured to be defeated by the Government. He had never known such an attempt to be hitherto made. There were several questions down upon the Paper for consideration on Friday, the first of which was a proposal, on going into Committee of Supply, by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock)—

> "To call attention to the state of Forestry in this country; and to move for a Committee to consider whether, by the establishment of a Forest School or otherwise, our Woodlands could be rendered more remunerative."

He should have supposed that that was a question of very great interest in Scotland, and in every district where people had so little to fall back upon, except the pursuits of agriculture. It was most undesirable that the question should be shelved, owing simply to a desire on the part of the Government to adjourn until Saturday. In the second place, there was a Notice by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan)—

> "To call attention to the necessity of providing sites for certain public purposes in Ireland; and to move, 'That increased facilities should be afforded for acquiring sites for schools and churches, and also for the residences of teachers and clergymen.'"

As the House had that night refused to give a second reading to a Bill for improving the position of the National School teachers of Ireland, the least they could do was to devote a couple of hours to-morrow to an endeavour to provide improved sites for their schools. Unless the Government were prepared to drive home to the minds of the persons concerned, the male and female teachers of Ireland, the conviction that their interests were of no moment to the British Parliament, they would do well to recall the Motion of the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor), and sit to-morrow (Friday). Before the adjournment for the Recess he had intended to call attention to the action of the Government in connection with some of his constituents. Secret inquiries had been held; the endeavour had been made to get perjured and suborned evidence against them; but at the end of seven months the Tubbercurry prisoners were liberated, the Crown being obliged to confess that they had no case against them. He had hoped to be enabled to lay before the House some faint idea of the course pursued by certain officials of the Crown in the subornation of evidence, and to show the necessity of compensating the Tubbercurry prisoners and their families for the loss they had sustained. Perhaps he might have an opportunity on Saturday of calling attention to the subject. With regard to the particular Motion now before the House, he appealed to the Government to withdraw the Motion made by the noble Lord, and allow the House to meet as usual at 4 o'clock to-morrow (Friday), when the second reading of the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill could be taken.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, that nothing could have been more distinct than that to-morrow (Friday) was fixed for the second reading of the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill. There was at first some misunderstanding as to what day was fixed; but he maintained that the Question that the Bill be fixed for Friday, and not for Saturday, was distinctly put from the Chair, and agreed to. Under those circumstances, he held that to be as formal a decision of the House as could have been arrived at. He should like it to be understood by the Irish people that the House of Commons refused to sit two or three hours to-morrow (Friday) to consider the grievances of a very useful class of public servants in Ireland.

MR. O'BRIEN was astonished that the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor) did not, when he made this proposal, offer to the House any substantial reason why they should adjourn over to-morrow (Friday). As long as hon. Members had to be in attendance on Saturday, he could not see what inconvenience they would be put to by attending to-morrow (Friday) to discuss a matter of great importance. The National School teachers had in their hands the education of the minds of the young generation of Ireland; and he hoped they would take to heart the conduct of the Government that night. He trusted that the school teachers of Ireland would bear in mind that the Government had that night deliberately destroyed the chances of having a Bill passed this Session for the amelioration of their condition. He had no doubt the Irish school teachers would contrast their treatment by the Government with the treatment which the claims of the Royal Irish Constabulary received at the hands of the same Government. It was nothing short of a disgrace to this English Government that its policemen were better paid than its school teachers. No doubt, such was the character of English rule in Ireland. The English had a substantial reason for the difference in their treatment of the two classes of persons; they could do without teachers—they were not afraid of the teachers — but they could not do without policemen, and, therefore, they treated policemen with consideration. But the policemen of Ireland, when they had grievances, went about the right way to get them redressed—they struck all through the country; and, within a very few days, they had ample assurance that their claims would be considered. Their claims were considered, and very promptly settled. The teachers, on the other hand, had to adopt a humbler tone. They had had to submit year after year. Their claims, admittedly just, were, upon one pretext or another, thrown aside, and the promises of the Government came to nought. The House of Commons had already, by legislation, admitted the justice of the claims of the teachers; it had made a bungling attempt to satisfy those claims. That attempt had manifestly broken down. The Bill which had been under consideration that night would cure the defects in the legislation already adopted by the House of Commons on the subject; but it was met with the miserable technical objection that though it was only 30 or 40 lines in length, it had been but a short time in the hands of Members. That objection would be amply met if the House were to meet to-morrow (Friday). By 4 o'clock to-morrow the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have every opportunity of pondering over the Bill, and would, he (Mr. O'Brien) hoped, be in a position to tell the teachers of Ireland honestly whether the Government meant business. His hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had mentioned another topic of very great interest to Ireland, to which he intended to call attention if the House sat to-morrow (Friday). He (Mr. O'Brien) had a good deal to say on that subject too. He and his hon. Friends had had no opportunity of pointing out to the House that the verdict of a special jury in Dublin, the *crême de la crême* of jurors in Dublin, had stamped the conduct of the Crown in the case of Mr. Fitzgerald and the other Tubbercurry prisoners as a disgrace to public justice. Mr. Fitzgerald was seized in the streets of London without a warrant, thrust into a cab, dragged over to Ireland, taken from his own part of the country—namely, Cork, to Sligo in the extreme West, examined there at least half-a-dozen times at secret inquiries, and it was now admitted at the end of seven months——

An hon. MEMBER wished to know whether the Question before the House was not the adjournment of the House; and, if so, whether the hon. Member was addressing himself to that Question?

MR. SPEAKER: The Question before the House is the adjournment of the House.

MR. O'BRIEN said, he could readily understand the hon. Member's difficulty in appreciating the situation. Mr. Fitzgerald was again and again examined at secret inquiries in the depth of the prison itself, no reporters being admitted. Again and again Crown officials visited men detained in that prison upon the same charge, and held out inducements of all sorts to them to turn approvers and to invent evidence. They succeeded in the case of one wretched man named Moran. They went then to the convict prison in Dublin, and they fished out of that establishment one of the Phœnix Park murderers—a man who was, on his own confession, a murderer of the blackest dye—and they got this man to prop up their case against Fitzgerald. The Crown refused to try Fitzgerald at two Commissions; they postponed his trial to the very last moment; and then, when the matter came for trial, the whole evidence against this man, who was ruined in his business, whose health had been destroyed by incarceration, and whose character had been laid under the most fearful imputation—the whole evidence the Crown produced against Fitzgerald was that of this murderer and of the scoundrel Moran, who, it turned out, was actually in the pay of the police when he pretended to be a conspirator. This was only a small example of the system of administering justice which had been completely unmasked in Ireland during the last year. It must be remembered that it was not he and his hon. Friends who were accusing Earl Spencer's administration of foul play; it was their own jurors in Dublin; it was the men who, of all others, they had most reason to trust, men selected from the class who, of all others, ought to take the most favourable view of the conduct of Crown prosecutions in Ireland. Two verdicts of special juries had recently been given which directly impeached the manner in which Crown prosecutions were conducted in Ireland. There was the double charge against the Government—there was the charge against certain Crown officials that they had fabricated or suborned evidence against political opponents like Mr. Fitzgerald; and there was the charge that they had suppressed evidence against persons of their own class, the governing class in Dublin. These accusations were now upon record in the verdicts of two special juries in Dublin. What more was there to be charged against the Government? They had never had the slightest explanation of the allusion in Detective French's letter from prison to his friend. On the contrary, evidence was accumulating that the man McDermott, to whom French referred in that letter as a police spy, was a police spy. That man, at the time he was in the employment of Detective French and paid out of the Secret Service money, was going about Cork inveigling people into conspiracy. He succeeded in doing so. He got some wretched young men to engage in a dynamite conspiracy. Two of his victims were tried in Liverpool and sentenced to penal servitude. [An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] One of the two had since died. An hon. Member cried "Hear, hear!" No doubt the men who joined a dynamite conspiracy deserved penal servitude; but the man who got up the conspiracy deserved it also. More than that, the Crown officials who employed this police spy deserved it also; and, if justice were done, some of the persons who had lately been restored with honour to high places and great emoluments in Dublin Castle would be sent to join their victims in Chatham or Portsmouth. Then, again, there was the case of the man Noonan. There was evidence that he was deliberately paid to make an attack upon Judge Barry. That was not the first case of the kind that had happened. The man Delany, who afterwards turned out to be a murderer, first became notorious because he attacked Judge Lawson in the street. Judge Lawson's life, however, was not endangered at all, for Delany pulled a detective by the sleeve before attempting to make the attack. Now, it was perfectly plain, by the light of all that had been discovered in Ireland since, that the attack was an attack very much of the same character as Noonan was engaged to make in Cork upon Judge Barry. The whole system was, from beginning to end, a system of crime, manufactured and organized, no doubt, by inferior instruments of public justice in Ireland. Now, they would have had an opportunity to-day (Friday), if the House had sat, of going into these matters in more detail than was possible at that hour of the morning; and he thought that sooner or later the Government would find there was not much to be gained by attempting to smother these matters. Sooner or later Earl Spencer would have to take some better means of defending himself than supplying to *The Times* long columns from Irish Nationalist newspapers. The noble Earl might, sooner or later, have to face honestly the public judgment on his administration in Ireland, and the conduct of the officials he had screened and, in some instances, promoted. To the

Irish Members it was perfectly—or it was almost—a matter of indifference whether he faced them honestly, or whether he shirked them and allowed judgment to go by default. In either case the action of the Irish Members towards him would have been perfectly justified. But to English Members it was another thing whether they were content that 19-20ths of the Irish people should believe, as they did in their hearts at that moment, that the whole system of government in Ireland, from beginning to end, was a system of injustice and foul play, and that the very Detective Department itself was used for suborning false witnesses, in organizing crime, and in going about the convict prisons getting convicts to swear away the liberties of their political opponents. He would not go farther into the matter at that hour of the morning; but he hoped that even now the Government might see the advisability of accepting the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and give them an opportunity to-day (Friday) of discussing these two matters of vital importance—namely, the condition of the teachers in Ireland, and the administration of justice in that country.

MR. LEAMY wished to suggest this—would the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) consent to keep a House on Saturday to allow the Irish Members to discuss the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill? Hon. Members must have heard Mr. Speaker fixing the adjourned debate for "this day," and it was perfectly open for them at the time to propose some other day. If other days had been proposed, the Government, with their followers at their back, could have carried any day they most approved of. The Irish Members had been under the impression that the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill would come on to-day. They took very deep interest in the measure, and its discussion might be left entirely to them—that was to say, if it were put off until to-morrow, and the English Members felt it was no concern of theirs, they might stop away from the House. Let them leave it to the Irish Members whom it did concern. When they considered, first of all, the action of the Chief Secretary, who had not even allowed the Bill to be seconded or to be adequately explained, or allowed the Irish Members to express their views upon it, but had moved the adjournment of the debate at once, and when they considered that the Motion now made was one which would deprive them of the possibility of considering the matter to-day, they had a right to ask the noble Marquess that he would keep a House on Saturday to enable them to discuss the Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The hon. Gentleman has asked if the Government can undertake to keep a House on Saturday. I am afraid I can give no such pledge, as it would be an undertaking beyond our power. Hon. Members are aware that at such a season as this, when there is no Government Business on the Paper, it is absolutely impossible for the Government to secure the attendance of a sufficient number of Members to go on with other Business. I altogether deny that anything in the shape of an understanding was arrived at that the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill should be taken to-day by the fact of the hon. Member in charge of it deferring it until to-day. The fixing of the day is always left to the discretion of the hon. Member in charge of a Bill, and neither the House nor the Government have anything to do with it. The hon. Member (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) fixed "this day," knowing that the Prime Minister had given Notice, at an earlier period of the evening, of the intention of the Government of moving at the end of this Sitting the adjournment of the House until Saturday. There are Orders of the Day fixed for Monday and Tuesday; but there is nothing to prevent us, if we think fit, from adjourning over the days for which Orders are put down. Further, I must observe that my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant will not be in a position, either to-morrow or on Saturday, to enter into a discussion of the Bill the second reading of which was moved this evening. My right hon. Friend did not allege as the only ground why it should not be discussed to-night that it was only printed this morning. He stated very frankly that this was a Bill to which the Irish Government could not possibly give its assent, or on which it could express a final opinion, until it had had an opportunity of consulting the Treasury and the Board of Education in Ireland. It must be evident to Members of the House that a Bill which proposes a large expenditure of public money cannot possibly be assented to by the Government off-hand with only a day's consideration—and this Bill does affect the taxation and expenditure of the country. It is said there is other Business of importance to be discussed to-morrow, or that other Motions of great interest and importance can be brought forward. But it is well known that, at this period of the year, it is not possible to secure the attendance of Members in sufficient numbers to continue discussions when the Business which has brought the House together in extraordinary Session is disposed of. When we meet to-morrow, therefore, the House will not be disposed to discuss ordinary Business. Hon. Members would have had some reason to complain if the Motion now made had been brought forward at this period of the morning without Notice. But they are perfectly well aware that Notice of the Motion was given early in the Sitting when the House was quite full. Every Member was fully aware of the intentions of the Government; and I cannot help thinking, therefore, that we must accede to the proposal.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, he thought the National School teachers of Ireland had a great deal to complain of as regarded the action of the Government. The manner in which the Government had met two most reasonable propositions which had been made from the Irish Benches showed, he thought, that they were perfectly indifferent to the condition of the Irish National teachers. They wished the Irish Members to believe, no doubt, that they did not feel this indifference, but were very anxious to improve the condition of these people. Any traveller in Ireland, however casual an observer he might be, must have noticed that the state of the teachers, on whom the condition of the country so largely depended, was, to a great extent, a miserable one. Their salaries were—as had been shown by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien)—considerably below those enjoyed by ordinary sub-constables; and the houses they occupied, in the vast majority of cases, were nothing better than hovels. In his own neighbourhood a man teaching an important school had to travel three and a-half miles to his school every day throughout the year, and three and a-half miles back, which it was unnecessary to tell hon. Members was a considerable labour. But the Government, no doubt, wished to persuade the National teachers that they were favourably disposed towards them, and admittedly they were up to a comparatively recent date. Some of his friends who knew the feeling of the Irish National teachers, and the feeling in general of the people of Ireland, said that the apathy which the Government now displayed had arisen within the last year or so, owing to the fact that at a certain banquet the Irish National teachers refused to drink the health of Earl Spencer. That appeared a very ridiculous proposition; but the facts, he thought, had borne out the truth of the assertion. The very fact of the National School teachers refusing to drink the health of His Excellency had prejudiced the Government. He knew that in the Union to which he had the honour to belong one gentleman, who at one time occupied a seat in that House, and was a very distinguished Member of the House, and who was in the habit of making himself annually very busy in regard to these teachers, stated publicly at the Board that, owing to the conduct of the teachers in not drinking the health of this nobleman who had shown such impartiality in the disposition of the destinies of the Irish people, he doubted very much whether he would continue to take the least interest in their case. This gentleman said he doubted very much whether he should, as he was in the habit of doing, move that the Union be contributors. However, he was steeped to the lips in pledges, and he did move that the Union should be contributors; but he did it with no heart, and the Motion he was able to carry in other years fell to the ground. Well, under those circumstances—which might account for the apathy and indifference of the Government to the claims of the National teachers — they were told that it was their own fault that these teachers were not in a better position than they were, and that they had it in their power to pay them result fees. Without going into the matter deeply, there appeared to be a certain amount of good argument in that statement; but hon. Gentlemen who told the Irish Members that it was their own fault that the National teachers were in the condition they were in should remember that the Guardians of Ireland would be stultifying themselves if they became contributories to a system they disliked. The system was called the "Irish National System;" but anyone acquainted with its curriculum and the mode of proceeding would acknowledge that instead of its being called the "Irish National System" it ought to be called the "Anti-Irish National System." It would be hard for it to be otherwise, looking at the composition of the Board which ruled the Education Question in Ireland. The most candid man would admit that there were very few on the Board who, in the slightest degree, enjoyed the confidence of the Irish people. He would admit there were many on the Board who enjoyed the confidence of what was called by some, and what they might call themselves, the garrison in Ireland. But we were not supposed to be educating the garrison. The garrison had means of its own. We were supposed to be educating the people; but he imagined that the Board of National Education was packed and filled with men selected from their anti-Irish spirit. Under these circumstances, it would be apparent to hon. Members that the Unions had a great many reasons for not becoming contributory, and that there was a necessity for fresh legislation on the subject. Certainly, it did not appear, from the conduct of the House that night in rejecting the moderate proposals of the Irish Members, that they had any idea of changing the system of Irish National teachers; and he could only repeat what he had said at an earlier period of the evening—namely, that he hoped those teachers would have learnt, from the course adopted by the Government, the lesson that the only way of bettering their position was by resorting to pressure. Certainly, from the Government point of view, he believed that no more injurious lesson could be taught to any people. The Irish people had been taught by the past that they would not obtain justice — that their demands would not be listened to — that they would not get justice to remedy their grievances until they had been driven to the eve of revolution. An influential elector of the county of Waterford, a gentleman who was somewhat an opponent of his (Mr. P. J. Power's), and a great believer in the Prime Minister, had said to him the other day that he was almost coming round to the way of thinking of the Parnellites, that he had watched Her Majesty's Government for a considerable time, and was forced to admit that nothing could be got out of them for Ireland unless the country was kept on the eve of revolution. From the Government point of view, what more foolish lesson could be taught to men? Nothing that he could conceive could be more dangerous to the well-being of a State than that the people should have this conviction; and he certainly thought that the manner in which their most moderate proposals were received and put down, and the indifference with which their claims were treated, justified the Irish Members and the Irish people in coming to that conclusion. The Irish people had learnt and were daily learning the lesson more and more; and the following of the Prime Minister in Ireland, he was glad to say, was daily becoming beautifully less. It would be in the recollection of the House that they had had reforms from time to time, connected probably with the Prime Minister's name, some of the facts in connection with which had been most peculiar. The Irish Church Act, no doubt, was a step in the right direction; and he thought history recorded that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) used some rather ominous expression in regard to that Act in reference to Clerkenwell. Then, again, it must be in the recollection of most hon. Members of the present Parliament that the year before the Irish Land Act was introduced the Prime Minister put down his foot in the most positive way and declared that the Irish Land Question was settled, and that the agrarian question would never again be re-opened. Yet the year after that most positive statement the right hon. Gentleman came down with a measure dealing with that very subject. This, and other events which had occurred, and were occurring daily, had impressed on many people, as he was sure they would continue to impress upon them, that there was not much to be had from this Parliament by argument, seeing that, as a rule, the arguments put forward by the Irish Members were not listened to. He might remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that they had expressed their surprise just now that in speaking of the extension of the hours of polling which was proposed in the Bill introduced by an hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot), some of the Members sitting on those Benches should have taken exception to such a measure. Personally, he had thought, at first sight, that there could be no doubt as to the usefulness of the measure; but he felt that, with the franchise as it now existed in Ireland, it would be of very little use. Of course, with an increased franchise, and with a great number of working men upon the roll of electors, he had no doubt that the provisions of the Bill would be of advantage. But in connection with that matter his hon. Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had pointed out that the Prevention of Crime Act might be used, and, in all probability, would be used, as a means of intimidating the National electors, and of preventing them from recording their votes. Hon. Members opposite, who were not averse to any measure which proceeded from Dublin Castle, looked upon that assertion as an extravagant one; but those who lived in Ireland felt no surprise at any step which the officials of Dublin Castle took in order to carry out the views of the Executive. Even upon that very subject of the "Curfew" Clauses of the Prevention of Crime Act, to which his hon. Friend had alluded, they might, undoubtedly, be made an engine for preventing the free exercise of the electoral franchise by the National electors. He might mention that not many months ago two respectable electors of the county he (Mr. P. J. Power) had the honour to represent (Waterford) were found out at 11 o'clock at night by some busy sub-constable, who handcuffed them forthwith, and dragged them some miles to a neighbouring village, where they were thrust into a filthy cell. They were men of position, character, and of the highest respectability; but they were retained in custody for some hours, and brought before the Justice of the Peace in the morning, when they were discharged, the magistrate remarking that, as far as he was concerned, he saw no necessity for arresting these men, and added that if the police thought they had a case for prosecution they should proceed by summons. That fact only showed the extraordinary length to which some portions of the Executive in Ireland would condescend to proceed under the monstrous laws which now prevailed in that country, and which would not be tolerated in England for one moment. It was much to be regretted that the Government and the House of Commons would not listen to the statements which were put before them by the Representatives of the Irish people. So long as that state of things prevailed they must expect to meet with determined opposition from the Irish Members. He hoped, however, that the Government would take a lesson from the past, and endeavour to display a more conciliatory spirit in the future.

Mr. KENNY said, he saw the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant in his place; and he wished to put a question to him on a matter which he had already brought to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman, and in regard to which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be in a position to offer some explanation. The subject he desired to call attention to was the composition of the magistracy in Ireland—a question which was last year under discussion in that House. Attention was drawn to it not only by Members sitting on that side of the House, but also by Members from Ireland who happened to sit on the other side. A Return had been supplied to the House setting forth the names of the gentlemen who, at the present moment, held the position of magistrates—that was to say, gentlemen who were Justices of the Peace, and not stipendiary magistrates. One fact was clearly proved by that Return, and it was that the number of persons professing the Roman Catholic religion who were Justices of the Peace in Ireland were remarkably small. Indeed, while the Catholics in Ireland were four-fifths of the population, four-fifths of the magistrates were Protestants. He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary did not appear to take much interest in the matter; but if the right hon. Gentleman would spare a moment in order that he might listen to the case that he (Mr. Kenny) was about to place before him he should feel obliged. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman to-day, in regard to the recommendations which were made to the Lord Chancellor by Local Bodies, what action the Lord Chancellor had taken in certain special cases? As he had expected, the Chief Secretary stated, in reply, that the Lord Chancellor had refused to appoint certain gentlemen of position to the Commission of the Peace, because the Lord Lieutenant of the county had refused to recommend the appointment of the gentlemen named. Now, if there was one point made more clear than another by the Predecessor of the present Chief Secretary last year it was this—that whenever a case could be established for the appointment of Catholics to the Commission of the Peace in Ireland the Lord Chancellor would exercise his inherent right to appoint without regard to the opinion of the Lord Lieutenant of the county. What were the facts? One of the cases he had submitted to the right hon. Gentleman was a case in which two gentlemen who happened to be Catholics were recommended by the Board of Guardians to the Lord Chancellor as suitable for appointment to the Commission of the Peace. He understood that by law the question of property qualification had a good deal to do with appointments to the Commission of the Peace in Ireland, especially when Catholics were recommended. In this case, however, no objection could be taken to the gentlemen proposed on the score of the property they were possessed of, for it was well known and distinctly stated that the rateable value of the property held by one of these gentlemen was about £500 a-year, while the rating qualification of the other gentleman was about half that sum. There were in the county of Clare many Protestant magistrates whose rating qualification was absolutely nothing; but they were recommended for appointment by the Lord Lieutenant on account of their connection with certain families in the county. Now these men, whose case he had brought under the notice of the Chief Secretary, were men of intelligence, of considerable education —men of good circumstances and position in society, and neither of them had ever attached himself, in any way, to what might be termed the Nationalist section of the community in Ireland. He put forward their case as a typical case, because, although they were recommended to the Lord Chancellor by the only local representative Body in the district, although their claims and qualifications were unquestionable, yet, because the Lord Lieutenant declined to back up the recommendation of the Board of Guardians, the Lord Chancellor refused to give his sanction to the appointment in direct contradiction to the engagement given by the Government last year—that the Lord Chancellor would exercise his inherent right to appoint to the Commission of the Peace in Ireland whenever a claim was made out that there were Catholics duly qualified to fill that position. In regard to the particular district for which these gentlemen were recommended, it extended for 20 miles in every direction —North, South, East, and West; and throughout the whole district there was only one regular Justice of the Peace. There was another who had a mansion in the locality, but he seldom resided there; and, in addition, he was a County Court Judge for the next county—the county of Galway. The result was that there was only one resident Justice of the Peace in the district, which extended, as he had pointed out, in every direction, for 20 miles. In addition to that fact, it was the duty of the Resident Magistrate to attend the Petty Sessions Court held in a particular place once every fortnight; and the inconvenience of the arrangement was made manifest by a recent circumstance that took place. Four men were arrested on separate charges. Two of them were arrested on a charge of firing into a house, or something of that nature; at any rate, it was a very serious charge. Those two men were taken to a village in the centre of the district; but no magistrate could be found to return them for trial. The result was that they had to be taken a distance of 20 miles to the nearest magistrate, in order that they might be remanded. Two other men were arrested on a trivial charge, under one of the provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act. No distinct crime was alleged against them, but they were simply charged with a trivial violation of an exceptional law; and in the face of the fact that the charge was of a trivial and trumpery character these men had also to be taken a distance of 20 miles, to be taken before the only magistrate that could be found, and although in this district the scarcity of magistrates would be admitted, even by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary himself, the Lord Chancellor had refused to appoint gentlemen who had been recommended to him by the only representative authority in the district. He had also refused, in the face of the pledge given by the Irish Government, through the late Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan)—that they would appoint wherever a good case could be made out —nevertheless, they had refused to appoint these gentlemen simply because the Lord Lieutenant of the county declined to give his sanction to the appointment. And what was the reason? He thought they were fairly entitled to inquire into the reason why the Lord Lieutenant of the county had refused to sanction the appointment of these gentlemen. The Lord Lieutenant of the county was a gentleman who held extreme Tory and Orange views; and he had repeatedly, not only privately but publicly, stated, until it had become notorious throughout the whole district, that he would not sanction the appointment of any person to the magistracy who was not a thick and thin supporter of himself and his Party. He would only say this—that if the Lord Chancellor departed from the pledge given to the House by the Irish Government, which he himself, as a Member of the Irish Government, was a party to, and if he refused to appoint to the magistracy any gentleman recommended to him, whenever the Lord Lieutenant chose to interpose his veto, the pledge made to the Irish Members last Session was a mere sham and humbug. He might instance another case which occurred in the county of Lietrim. In that county a number of gentlemen were recommended to the Lord Chancellor under some similar circumstances. He would take the case of two of them. There were five recommended altogether; but he would not press the claims in the other three cases, because, from information he had received, he believed there might be objections to three of the gentlemen recommended. There could, however, be no objection to the other two, and if the Lord Chancellor had been allowed to be guided by his own discretion he would have appointed them to the position they were recommended to discharge. But in this case, again, the Lord Chancellor had departed from the promise given by the Irish Government, and instead of making the appointment he consulted the Lord Lieutenant of the county. Again, the Lord Lieutenant, being a violent Orange partizan, of course refused to sanction the appointment of these gentlemen to the Commission of the Peace. The result was that the Lord Chancellor yielded to the views of the Lord Lieutenant of the county, and refused to sanction the appointment of these gentlemen. If he were to cite all the instances which had been brought under his notice, he would be compelled to detain the House for an inordinate length. The cases he had mentioned were only specimens of what had taken place in Ireland within the last six months; and he would ask the present Chief Secretary, who was responsible for the due observance of the pledge given to the House by his Predecessor, and who was responsible to the House for the action of the Irish authorities, whether he concurred in the policy now being pursued, which was, undoubtedly, a distinct violation of the guarantees and pledges by thd Irish Government during last Session? This was a question which was regarded with a great deal of interest and anxiety in Ireland. The composition of the magistracy, though it might seem to the English people a matter of trivial importance, was to the people of Ireland a matter of the most vital concern. In Ireland the administration of the law was almost invariably used as an engine by which to strike terror and to create fear. It was, therefore, of the utmost consequence to the people that there should be persons engaged in the administration of the law who would be above the suspicion of being the creatures of any section of the ruling authorities. While the composition of the Irish magistracy was allowed to remain, as at present, practically the monopoly of one clique, and that clique opposed in every respect to the traditions and feelings, both religious and political, of the vast body of the Irish people, there could never be anything like confidence or trust in the administration of the law. He impressed upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary the importance of this question, and he asked of him some expression of opinion with regard to the course of procedure which now seemed to be adopted by the Lord

Chancellor. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was now prepared to make an announcement in direct conflict with the pledges which the Government had given within the last three or four months? He knew that this was an inconvenient time to press forward so important a matter; indeed, it was only the serious and grave character of the question which had prompted him to rise on the present occasion. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was not willing at the present time to enter into any lengthened defence of the action which had been pursued by the Lord Chancellor, perhaps he would give such an indication of his views on the subject as would enable the people of Ireland to come to a conclusion as to whether the pledges and guarantees which were given by the Irish Government last Session were to be adhered to.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he was glad to be able to remove from the mind of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Kenny) the misapprehension under which he appeared to labour. He was sorry, however, the hon. Gentleman had felt it his duty to elaborate at considerable length an accusation against the Government, because, as a matter of fact, there was no foundation whatever for that accusation. The hon. Gentleman referred to two answers he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) made at Question time to-day; but, as it was not always easy to hear what was said in the House, probably the hon. Gentleman did not catch what he said. What he said was that, in the case of the two counties to which the hon. Gentleman had alluded, the names of gentlemen had been submitted by the Boards of Guardians for appointment to the Magisterial Bench; but they had been objected to by the Lord Lieutenant of the county, and the Lord Chancellor thought that the objections taken by the Lord Lieutenant of the county were reasonable. The Lord Chancellor inspected the cases himself most carefully, as he inspected all such cases; and as to the claims and qualifications of the gentlemen proposed, he came to the same conclusion as the Lord Lieutenant arrived at. It was quite true that the Lord Chancellor had it in his power—and he did occasionally exercise the power—of overriding the objection made by the Lord Lieutenant of a county. No one had ever set up the idea that the veto of the Lord Lieutenant of a county was final. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) also stated earlier in the day that in these cases the names had first of all been submitted to the Lord Lieutenant; that the Lord Lieutenant objected to them on certain grounds; and then the Lord Chancellor confirmed the opinion of the Lord Lieutenant. The Lord Chancellor had taken great pains, in cases where the composition of the magistracy was unsatisfactory, to find proper persons for appointment, and if the names of any gentlemen were submitted to him he would himself investigate their qualifications. There had been no intention on the part of the Government to depart from the terms of the understanding which was arrived at last Session.

MR. KENNY asked the right hon. Gentleman to state whether any means could be devised by which the objections of the Lord Lieutenants of the counties to gentlemen who had been recommended for appointment by Local Bodies or otherwise could be notified to the gentlemen recommended, in order that the objections could be met, if it was right and proper they should be met, or, in other words, that the gentlemen recommended should be in a position to state their case to the Lord Chancellor directly?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he did not think anything of that kind could be allowed. The investigations were of a confidential and somewhat delicate nature. The Lord Chancellor judged each case himself, and did his best to find properly qualified Justices.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, the speech which had just been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and the speech which was previously made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny), contained a good deal of matter which was highly interesting to Irish Members, and no doubt to other hon. Members of the House; but both the speeches were somewhat beside the mark. The question which had come to the front was—Would the Government give to-morrow (Friday) for the discussion of the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill, or would they keep a House on Saturday for the discussion of that measure? It was with extreme reluctance that he and very many of his hon. Colleagues were compelled, in the performance of that which they considered to be their duty, to trespass upon the attention of the House at that late hour (4.30). They had, however, felt it incumbent upon them to press upon the attention of the Government and of the House the claims of the National School teachers in Ireland. The question asked in this country and in Ireland to-morrow would be—Why did the Irish Members persist in prolonging this Sitting to such an extent? When the news of this discussion reached the people of Ireland and of England, what reason would be assigned for the present action of the Irish Members? The reason assigned would be that Her Majesty's Government refused the most reasonable demand of the Irish Members to have the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill discussed to-morrow (Friday), or, failing to-morrow, upon Saturday. Two hours ago he left that Chamber under the impression that to-night's Business was over; and he was led to that conclusion because of the very distinct statement he heard from the Chair that the second reading of the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill was set down for to-morrow (Friday). He was leaving the premises when he was called back and told that the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor) had moved the adjournment of the House until Saturday. He did not know how Her Majesty's Government explained the inconsistency which prompted them to allow the second reading of a Bill to be fixed for to-morrow (Friday), and then prompted the noble Lord to move the adjournment of the House until Saturday. Well, in the face of the apparent inconsistency on the part of the Government, what was the action of the Irish Representatives? They were willing to come to a compromise. His hon. Friend the Member for Waterford City (Mr. Leamy) made a speech which had for its object the effecting of a compromise in the matter. What did the hon. Gentleman suggest? He suggested that if they consented now to the adjournment of the House until Saturday, in accordance with the Motion of the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor), the Government should undertake to keep a House on Saturday for the second reading of the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill. He did not think that ever before had a more reasonable demand been made upon Her Majesty's Government by any section of Members; but what was the reply given by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington)? He told them that Her Majesty's Government could not keep a House for the second reading of the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill, because, forsooth, the Session being nearly at a close, hon. Members would be leaving town, and could not, for one reason or another, be expected to attend on Saturday. That was no answer to the demand for justice which the National School teachers made upon the House. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland what would be thought by the National School teachers of Ireland and their friends when the news reached them to-morrow that, in reply to the very reasonable request made on their behalf that Saturday should be set apart by the Government for the discussion of the second reading of this Bill, a responsible and leading Member of Her Majesty's Government told them that because Members of the House wanted to get to their homes in the country for the Christmas holidays a House could not be kept? Of course, it was within the power of the Government to treat any class of the people of Ireland in the same way. He was very much mistaken if the Chief Secretary did not find out that the National School teachers did not harbour feelings of great resentment to the Government for the action they had pursued that night. He never heard in the House of Commons any clearer argument in favour of Irish National Self-Government than the reply of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington). Here were a class of people in Ireland who were suffering very great grievances, and a Bill, the principle of which did not meet with any opposition from the Government, was introduced for the amelioration of their condition. They asked that the Bill should be discussed in the Imperial Parliament, which arrogated to itself the right to rule Ireland; and what was the answer the Government gave? Why, that the Imperial Parliament could not, so to speak, make it convenient to keep a House on Saturday for the consideration of the Bill. A better argument for Irish Home Rule could not be advanced. It proved that though this class were suffering great grievances, the Government and the bulk of the Members of the House cared so very little for those grievances that they could not cut short by one day their Christmas holidays to remove those grievances. He emphasized that, and asked the National School teachers of Ireland to remember that when the Irish Members endeavoured to induce the Government to give facilities for the discussion of the second reading of a Bill calculated to improve their condition, the Government absolutely declined, upon the ground that it was not convenient to the House. He hoped that the National School teachers would in future find it convenient to band themselves together, and to agitate in a manner which would effectually prevent, in days to come, any action upon the part of the Government such as had been experienced that night. But he might say it was not only with reference to the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill that Irish Members were anxious to keep a House on Saturday. It was quite true that if they had been able to keep a House to-morrow (Friday) or on Saturday, the first measure which would have occupied their attention would have been the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill; but there were other matters of the gravest importance and interest to the people of Ireland which it was intended to proceed with on either of those days. After the National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill had been disposed of, attention would have been called by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) to the case of the Tubbercurry prisoners. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was laughing. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was laughing at what he (Mr. William Redmond) was saying or not; but he assured the right hon. Gentleman that the majority of the people of Ireland, and the majority of the Irish Members, did not look upon the wrongful imprisonment of any man as a matter for laughter, especially on the part of a right hon. Gentleman who was directly responsible to Her Majesty's Government for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Allow me to say I was not laughing at anything the hon. Gentleman was saying.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, if the right hon. Gentleman was not laughing at his remarks, it was quite evident he was not paying any attention at all to what he was saying. If by any strange accident—and it would, indeed, be a very strange accident—he (Mr. William Redmond) ever succeeded to the position of the right hon. Gentleman, and desired to keep the confidence of the people of Ireland, he would, at least, listen to what the Representatives of the country had to say in the House. The case of Mr. Fitzgerald had never been thoroughly discussed in the House of Commons. Since the Tubbercurry prisoners, after their long imprisonment, were discharged by a picked jury, or, if he might not use the word "picked," he would say by a jury composed of the especial favourites of Dublin Castle, no proper opportunity had been afforded to the House to go fully into the case. The case of Mr. Fitzgerald had been ably and very clearly stated that night by his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien). The hon. Gentleman had shown the House how Mr. Fitzgerald was arrested in London without a warrant, and no time allowed him to appeal or to give an explanation; how he was put into prison and kept there for seven months, without a single tittle of evidence against him which could have secured a conviction by any jury, however biassed; the hon. Gentleman had shown that, at the end of seven months, in spite of the efforts made by Crown officials to send him to penal servitude, this unfortunate man, together with the other Tubbercurry prisoners, were released. Now, the principal point which would be raised in the case of the Tubbercurry prisoners would be, what compensation did the Government propose to give to Mr. Fitzgerald and his fellow-prisoners for their continued and unjust incarceration? Mr. Fitzgerald was a gentleman of high principle and much honour, and it was doubtful whether he would, under any circumstances, consent to take any compensation; but it was well it should be known whether Her Majesty's Government intended to offer if not pecuniary compensation, at least some compensation in the shape of a statement which should go forth to the world proving the innocence of Mr. Fitzgerald, and proving also the truth of the statements made by Irish Members in the House regarding Mr. Fitzgerald while that gentleman was in gaol awaiting trial. It was all very well for English Members in the House to consider the imprisonment of a mere Irishman for seven months a light matter, and a matter which should not occupy the time of Parliament. He could assure hon. Gentlemen that if an Englishman had been treated in any part of the British Empire with one quarter of the heartlessness and injustice which had been meted out to Mr. Fitzgerald that gentleman's case would ring out through the whole Empire, and any Motion in the House condemning his treatment would meet with the support of the vast majority of Members. Probably those Gentlemen who were now opposed to granting Mr. Fitzgerald full justification were so opposed simply because he was an Irishman. He (Mr. Redmond) had no doubt whatever that if an Englishman had been taken off the streets of the City of London, without a warrant, and without evidence, and kept in prison for seven months, and at the end of that time it had been found that there was no evidence to justify his imprisonment, there would have been many Englishmen to take up the case, and urge it with far greater warmth than he (Mr. Redmond) and his Colleagues urged that of Mr. Fitzgerald. He did not doubt that the Radical and liberty-loving inclinations of the hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), whom he saw sitting opposite to-night—sitting there, in defiance of his Radical principles, for the purpose of voting down a measure which was to give relief to the unfortunate school teachers of Ireland—would induce him, as well as other Members of his section of the House, to take up the case of any Englishman in the position of Mr. Fitzgerald. No doubt, if such an Englishman there were, the hon. Baronet would make the rafters of that House ring with his wrongs. He (Mr. Redmond) would, however, pass from that case. There was great interest attached by many Members to the decision of the Government not to allow the House to sit that day. There were many Members of the Irish Party who had on the Paper for that day (Friday) Questions of considerable importance, and of considerable interest to their constituents and to the people of Ireland. He, himself, had intended to ask a Question and to make an explanation in regard to some queries which he had addressed to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland the other day as to a gentleman of the name of Haughton, who had been a Court Valuer, and who was dismissed by the Land Commission from that position without the slightest reason being assigned. What was the case of Mr. Haughton? Why, he was not apprehended in London and imprisoned for seven months—he was not summarily arrested—but his case was, nevertheless, one of very great hardship. He was a Court Valuer because of his high character, and because of his great experience—his great practical experience—in connection with agricultural matters. This gentleman filled the office of Court Valuer with satisfaction, so far as it could be ascertained, to everybody with whom he came in contact, including those whose land he was called upon to inspect and value. Well, this gentleman had been dismissed from his position. He (Mr. Redmond) had asked in that House why he had been dismissed, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had replied that Mr. Haughton had been sent away because the Land Commission had thought fit to dispense with his services—that he had been dismissed, although his integrity had never been called in question. If Mr. Haughton was not dismissed because of anything wanting in himself—if he was not dismissed because it was necessary to call his integrity in question—if there was nothing to be charged against him, why was he dismissed? If he had not transgressed in any way there was only one reason for his dismissal, and that was that the Land Commissioners found that they had a sufficient number of Court Valuers and could dispense with the services of one. Was that why Mr. Haughton was dismissed? No, it was not; because Mr. Haughton was not, by two or three, the last of the Court Valuers appointed; and if the Land Commissioners found that they could do without one Court Valuer they were bound, in common fairness and honesty, to dispense with the services of the gentleman last appointed. Instead of doing that, they went back over the heads of two or three of the more recent appointments, and dismissed

Mr. Haughton from their service. He (Mr. Redmond) had asked in that House the reason of that dismissal—what the man had done that his appointment should be taken from him—and he was answered, in a flippant tone, that there was no reason to be given. "The Land Commission wished it, and no one must question the Land Commission." He maintained that the Government had a duty to perform towards the man. What was the effect of a summary dismissal from a position such as that of Court Valuer in Ireland? It might seem a light decision on the part of the Land Commissioners and to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but to the man who was dismissed what did it mean? It meant that a whisper would go round the country side, and would reach his home where he was well known—a whisper to the effect that he had been guilty of some evil doing. His neighbours would ask, "Why is he dismissed?" and the answer would very naturally occur to their minds—"He would not have been dismissed if he had not done something wrong—if he had not overstepped the bounds of his duty." Mr. Haughton, being dismissed without reason assigned, was left to suffer all the inconvenience of having his neighbours and the country side believe that he had done something contrary to the duties of the position which he held. He (Mr. Redmond) maintained that the Government had a right to press on the Land Commissioners to give a fair and solid reason for Mr. Haughton's dismissal. If the Government would say —"This gentleman was sent away because he did so and so or so and so;" if they would give a fair reason for the dismissal he (Mr. Redmond) should be perfectly satisfied. The Government had no right to support the Land Commissioners—they had no right to be satisfied with such a thing as the dismissal of a gentleman of high character and eminently qualified for his position, without the assignment of the slightest reason. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would pursue this matter, and urge on the Land Commission the necessity, in common fairness, of assigning some reason for the dismissal of Mr. Haughton; but he could assure the right hon. Gentleman of one thing—namely, that he (Mr. Redmond) should spare no trouble or pains to make this case as inconvenient as he possibly could to Her Majesty's Government until he obtained a full and fair answer. On the Motion for Adjournment he had already stated why the Irish Members wanted a Sitting that day, or, failing that day, why they asked the Government to keep a House for them to-morrow. A great and deplorable delay had taken place in dealing with the grievances of the Irish National School teachers, and the Irish Members were extremely anxious to make some progress with the Bill dealing with that subject. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland might say it was a matter of indifference whether the second reading of the National School Teachers' Bill took place to-day or in March—that it would make no difference, so far as the objects of the Bill were concerned. But it made this difference—it would give the National School teachers great satisfaction, and some confidence in the intentions of the Government, if they could to-morrow read that the Bill had been read a second time. Such news coming to them might induce them to refrain from perpetrating acts which he sincerely and truly feared they might allow themselves to be led into if Parliament and the Government turned a deaf ear to their appeals, cared nothing for their grievances, and persisted in their refusal to allow the Bill to be read a second time. There had never been at any time in Ireland a more exemplary class of people than the National School teachers. They had been hard working, they had been long suffering, and they had at no time been led by any considerations into transgressing the laws of the country. The tenant farmers of Ireland had had a grievance which they could not get redressed until they stirred up an agitation which shook the British Empire to its foundations. The farmers could not get their grievances remedied until the agrarian cry was rampant. He wished to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they would give the teachers in Ireland some promise or some guarantee that their grievances would be attended to before they were compelled to resort to criminal acts? He had no doubt in the world that if these people, who were living on the verge of starvation, and occupying miserable hovels, were excluded much longer from the consideration they deserved they would be induced to break the law of the country, and resort to measures which would more earnestly attract the attention of Parliament than could the merits of the men sent to Parliament to represent the Irish people. He would earnestly ask the Government to allow the Irish Members to take the discussion of the Irish National School Teachers Bill on Saturday. He warned the Government that if they persisted in their refusal to allow the Irish Members to have a full and fair discussion of the merits of the Bill on Saturday the consequences would be not altogether satisfactory to the prospect the Chief Secretary for Ireland had before him in regard to the administration of law and order in Ireland. ["Oh, oh!"] He was sorry that his remarks were unpleasant to some hon. Gentlemen opposite. He was exceedingly sorry, because he felt that it was his duty to say these things. He felt that the course that the Irish Members were adopting was somewhat extreme; but bitter experience had taught them in Ireland that only extreme courses were ever likely to win anything from England. It was the duty of the Irish Members—and it must be for ever their duty so long as it was their misfortune to remain in that House—to show English Members and Her Majesty's Government that they would continue doggedly and sullenly to press the redress of the grievances of the people of Ireland on the people of England until sufficient remedies were applied. He did not think that a more reasonable compromise was ever suggested than that which was proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Waterford. Surely the Government, exercising that great influence which the Government of Her Majesty was always known to exercise over the Whig and Radical Party, might, as the House was to meet on Saturday, either by coercion, wheedling, or entreaties, get 40 of their followers, who were always so ready to muster whenever there was a Coercion Bill before the House, to make some little self-sacrifice, and come down and sit here for a few hours to allow the grievances of numerous classes in Ireland to be fully and fairly discussed. If the Government objected to the Irish National School Teachers Bill, why did they not manfully say so? They were afraid to do so. The Chief Secretary for Ireland was afraid to stand up and say that Her Majesty's Government could not accept the Bill. What did the right hon. Gentleman do? Why, in a sort of silent way, he killed the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman did not want it to be said in Ireland that Her Majesty's Government refused to consider the Bill; and yet he did not want to have it considered. At any rate, the result of that night's proceedings would be to convince the people of Ireland that the Irish Members had done everything in their power to press the urgency of the demands of the National School teachers on the Government, and would also convince the people of Ireland that Her Majesty's Government were absolutely neglectful of the representations of the Irish Members and of the grievances which had led to them.

Mr. CALLAN said, that although, perhaps, no Member of the House had suffered more through his stay that night in the House than he had done, yet it was one of the first few nights he had remained so long unwillingly. He yet anticipated that much good would result from these discussions. If the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had that night been as dull as usual—had he been less lively, had he restrained himself in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Gladstone), whom he (Mr. Callan) was sorry to find was not in his place, but to whom he hoped the conduct of his subordinate the Chief Secretary for Ireland would be reported—if the Chief Secretary for Ireland had displayed a little of the dullness which was so characteristic of him when the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) moved the second reading of the Irish National School Teachers Bill, and if he had in his condescension permitted the discussion, and had not rushed at the Bill at once with all the fury of a M'Gregor, this prolonged Sitting would not have taken place. Had the right hon. Gentleman remained in his place until the Bill had been some time under discussion, had he heard the opinions of the Irish Members, and had he been guided by circumstances, and been actuated as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been, all this unseemly wrangle would have been prevented. Why could he not have contented himself with pointing out that the fact of permitting the discussion would not advance the Bill—that they would be no nearer passing it into law by carrying the second reading before the adjournment than if they allowed the stage to stand over?

Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. CALLAN, resuming, said, that he was about to remark, when the attention of the Speaker was drawn to the fact that 40 Members were not present, in ignorance on the other side of the House of what the result might have been, that he hoped, to-morrow, the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would be called to the circumstances which had occurred that evening, and to the nature of that prolonged Sitting. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had not assumed such a magniloquent air towards the Irish Members, but if he had allowed them, and given them his own gracious permission, to discuss a Bill in which the Irish people were deeply interested, and from the discussion of which the Government might have learned something more than he fancied the right hon. Gentleman at present knew in reference to the wishes of the Irish people with regard to the National School teachers of Ireland, and had then, after the discussion had continued for a short time, pointed out that it was being improperly or inconveniently gone into, it was highly probable that all this unseemly and prolonged harangue would have been saved. There was an old saying in the country that it would take a very considerable amount of force to knock a joke into a Scotchman's head; but he thought the five hours' debate which had now taken place ought to teach the Chief Secretary for Ireland—Scotchman though he was—that whenever an Irish question was brought before the House, so long as representative institutions existed in Ireland, it was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to pay deference to the opinions and wishes of the Irish Members. If the right hon. Gentleman would take that lesson to heart—and he was sure that when the attention of the Prime Minister was called to the facts of the case he would be ordered to take it to heart—it would teach him something which might save him from many unnecessary hours of prolonged discussion in the coming year. With regard to the adjournment of the House until Saturday, he (Mr. Callan) objected to it for this reason. That evening he had prepared a Notice to place on the Table of the House for the discussion of a most important question which he was anxious to bring forward on Friday. If necessary, he would raise the question as a matter of Privilege for the ruling of the Speaker at the first Sitting of the House. On the 23rd of August, 1883, on his Motion, the House ordered that a Return should be forthwith made of the Grand Jury Panels in Ireland for the years 1882 and 1883, specifying the amount of property for which each Grand Juror was rated, and stating whether he was usually resident or non-resident, and also the names of cesspayers which did not appear on the Grand Jury Panels, together with the names of all persons on the Grand Jury Panels, distinguishing those who were in the Commission of the Peace. It appeared that during the *régime*—the unfortunate *régime* he might call it—of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland, now Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), a good many things ordered by the House were not attended to by the Irish Executive. Unfortunately for the right hon. Gentleman, he (Mr. Callan) obtained that Return, and, having obtained it, he wanted to utilize it, and to see it placed in the Library of the House. Upon making inquiry, however, he found that the Order of the House had been deliberately disregarded. He, therefore, went to the present Chief Secretary for Ireland to make inquiries, and what did the right hon. Gentleman say about the Return? He absolutely said that he knew nothing whatever about it.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Gentleman says it was a Return obtained in August, 1883, when I had no connection with the Irish Office.

MR. CALLAN said, that was so, no doubt; but he had gone to the Irish Office to obtain information, and, being unable to get any, he had intimated that he would call attention to the matter at Question time. At a subsequent period he was told by the right hon. Gentleman that the Return was in the Library. He accordingly went to the Library; but found that there was no such Return, so that an Order of the House, made on the 23rd of August, 1883, and which he knew had been furnished by the Clerks of Unions in Ireland 12 months ago to the Chief Secretary's Office, had been, despite the distinct Order of the House, deliberately suppressed by the Irish Office. As he had already stated when he informed the Chief Secretary for Ireland that it was his intention to bring the matter forward in the House, he was told by the right hon. Gentleman that he had the Return already at his disposal; but, on inquiry, he found that no such Return was in existence, and that the Order of the House had been quietly set aside. For a period of 15 months the Chief Secretary's Office had set at defiance the Order of the House; and the question he (Mr. Callan) desired to raise was, whether the Irish Executive was entitled, with impunity, to set at defiance the Order of the House? That was one among other matters which he desired to bring forward on Saturday. He had certainly not felt it incumbent on him to give the right hon. Gentleman Notice of his intention to bring forward the question, because he considered that it was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to see that the Orders of the House were not disregarded. With regard to another matter—a question which had already occupied the attention of the House in the course of the evening—he had not supposed that any Member of the Irish Party, or any Member of the House, would have been treated with greater consideration than his hon. Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy). The hon. Member was the respected Vice Leader of the Party, who entertained for him the highest respect, and reposed the greatest confidence in him. Indeed, every Irish Member on that side of the House would resent, as a personal insult, to himself any slight attempted to be passed by Her Majesty's Government upon his hon. Friend. Nevertheless, the Chief Secretary for Ireland had refused to allow a Bill which had been introduced by his hon. Friend, and in which the Irish people took a deep interest, to be discussed. If the House had sat that day he had intended to call upon the Chief Secretary for Ireland for an explanation of the reasons why the Irish Office had suppressed a document which had been ordered by the House to be laid upon the Table, and which had already been furnished to the Irish Executive by the Clerks of Unions in Ireland. He was afraid that these were circumstances which did not afford a happy omen in connection with the inauguration of the right hon. Gentleman as the new Chief Secretary for Ireland. He feared that the right hon. Gentleman was inclined to follow the old lines of officialism hitherto practised with such disastrous results by the officials of Dublin Castle. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to follow the excellent example of the Chief Secretary for Ireland who, for a long series of years, had given the most satisfaction to the Irish Members and the Irish people—he referred to a Conservative Chief Secretary — the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). If the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland would consent to follow the course of conciliation pursued by that right hon. Gentleman towards the Irish Representatives, he would find that the more attention he paid to the representations made to him, and the more courtesy he displayed towards the Irish Members, the smoother would be his career in Office.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he hoped the House would allow him to say one word in the way of personal explanation—not in regard to any matter which had been brought forward by the hon. Member who had just addressed the House (Mr. Callan), because the hon. Member promised to bring his complaints fully before the House on the first opportunity, but simply a word to explain that, in the course he had taken, he had intended to throw no slight upon the hon. Member who had introduced the National School Teachers Bill. His object in rising now, as soon as the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) had sat down, was to prevent any misapprehension from existing. He must honestly say that he had not anticipated that there was any desire or intention to proceed with the Bill of the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) in the little time which was at the disposal of the House at the time the second reading was moved. He might have been mistaken; but he had thought it courteous, under the circumstances, to take that course at once. Having had the opportunity of making this personal explanation, he had nothing further to say.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 43; Noes 9: Majority 34.—(Div. List, No. 23.)

WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION).

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE moved—

> "That the Committee on Westminster Hall (Restoration) have leave to sit and proceed, notwithstanding any Adjournment of the House."

Motion *agreed to*.

House adjourned at a quarter after
Five o'clock in the morning
till Saturday.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 5th December, 1884.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, *nominated*.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Second Reading — Committee negatived—Third Reading*—Yorkshire Registries Act (1884) Amendment (14), and *passed*.

Third Reading—Representation of the People * (5); Consolidated Fund (No. 1), * and *passed*.

YORKSHIRE REGISTRIES ACT (1884) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 14.)

(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a, and that Standing Order No. XXXV. be considered in order to its being dispensed with."—(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, that the Bill ought not to be allowed to gallop through Parliament without notice, or some explanation. The Act which it was intended to amend had only been passed in the First Session of 1884; and though, no doubt, it was a complicated measure, those who were responsible for it should not have allowed a piece of legislation of such a slovenly character as to require a special Bill to amend it. Some Member of the Government ought to be responsible for the careful and proper drafting of Bills.

LORD FITZGERALD, in explanation, said, that the object of the Bill was merely to correct a clerical error in the Act of last Session with regard to dates. If the error was not provided against at once, some deeds of consequence relating to property in Yorkshire might be defeated or materially delayed in registering. The Bill had passed the other House without any dissent.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly; Committee *negatived:* Then Standing Order No. XXXV. *considered* (according to order), and *dispensed with;* Bill read 3^a, and *passed*.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS AND OFFICE OF THE GENTLEMAN USHER OF THE BLACK ROD.

APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) moved that the Lords following be named of the Committee:—

Ld. Chancellor.
Ld. President.
D. Richmond.
D. Saint Albans.
D. Bedford.
M. Lansdowne.
M. Salisbury.
M. Bath.
Ld. Steward.
E. Devon.
E. Tankerville.
E. Carnarvon.
E. Belmore.
E. Bradford.
E. Camperdown.
E. Granville.
E. Kimberley.
E. Redesdale.
E. Lathom.
V. Hawarden.
V. Hardinge.
V. Eversley.
Ld. Chamberlain.
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Monson.
L. Colchester.
L. Ker.
L. Aveland.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, that he did not object to the Committee being appointed; but he hoped that the noble Lords on it would find a convenient room for Members of the House to write and sit in when they had business to attend to.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that he noticed among the names of the proposed Committee that of the Marquess of Lansdowne, who was not now in England, and was not likely to be so for some years to come, and who, therefore, could not attend the meetings of the Committee. For that reason he begged to move the omission of the name of the Marquess of Lansdowne, and the substitution of that of Lord Sudeley.

Moved, "To leave out the name of the Marquess of Lansdowne."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

The Earl of REDESDALE (Chairman of Committees) said, that no doubt the Marquess of Lansdowne would not be able to attend the Committee at the present time; but the practice had always been to appoint the same Peers on the Committee from year to year, and it was not usual to put one noble Lord off and another on.

Earl GRANVILLE said, that it was very desirable to nominate the same Peers on the Committee; still, it would be better to appoint Peers who could and would be likely to attend the Committee.

Lord BRABOURNE said, that before the Motion was agreed to he wished to point out that there was no Representative of the Cross Benches upon the Committee.

Earl GRANVILLE desired to ask the noble Lord whether he could say who was the Leader and who were the Representatives of the Cross Benches? On the previous evening three Peers belonging to it spoke in three different senses.

Lord BRABOURNE said, that the same Peers sat in not inconsiderable numbers upon the Cross Benches, and it would not be difficult to find a Representative. Moreover, as it was the noble Earl himself who had given to the Cross Benches a Parliamentary "status" by his frequent reference to them and his allusions to the Cross Bench "mind," to no one better than to the noble Earl could be left the selection of a Peer who might duly represent that disposition.

On Question? *agreed to.*

Then the original Motion, as amended, was *agreed to.*

Committee appointed accordingly.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—ADMIRALTY INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN wished, before the House adjourned, to ask the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty a Question of which he had given him private Notice. In the course of the debate on the state of the Navy the other night allusion was made to the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty by a noble Lord on the Opposition side, but on that occasion his noble Friend did not refer to the remarks made on that subject; and he therefore thought it would be of advantage if the First Lord of the Admiralty would now give the House such information as he could with regard to the constitution of the Intelligence Department at the present time. It had only been constituted some two or three years; and he knew nothing about it except what he had heard outside the House.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK said, he was much obliged to his noble Friend for putting that Question. In the interesting discussion of the other night he was afraid that he had inadvertently omitted to notice an observation of the noble Viscount (Viscount Sidmouth) in respect to the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty. That Department had only been formed about two years ago; and the Board of Admiralty was much indebted to his gallant friend Admiral Tryon for the pains he had taken in organizing it. The Intelligence Department had done most excellent work since then. The head of it was Captain Hall, a very able officer, who had had charge of it for the last two years. The work of the Intelligence Department did not come before the public, being performed for the confidential information of the Board of Admiralty; and he was speaking the opinion of Sir Cooper Key, who superintended the work of that Department, when he said that they were much indebted to Captain Hall and the staff under him for the manner in which the important and valuable work of that Department had been commenced and was now being carried on with great advantage to the Public Service.

EGYPT—EMPLOYMENT OF ENGLISH OFFICIALS.—QUESTION.

Lord TRURO asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether the cadets who went out to Alexandria a year ago, in view of police service, did so on any given understanding; and, if so, whether, in contravention of such understanding, they had been peremptorily dismissed; and, if so, on what grounds? The noble Lord explained that he put his Question in consequence of a paragraph which he had seen in *The Times* relating to that subject.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, he must explain that he answered this Question, not because he was a Member of Her Majesty's Government, or considered that Her Majesty's Government were called upon to give any explanation on a matter which affected, not Her Majesty's Government, but the Government of the Khedive of Egypt; the only reason that he rose to answer the Question was because he happened, when in Egypt recently, to have conversation on the subject with the Khedive, and with his Prime Minister, Nubar Pasha. He was not able to tell their Lordships exactly why those young men were sent out from England to join the Police Service of Egypt. It was not, of course, a matter with which the English Government had anything whatever to do. When he was in Egypt, the Khedive and Nubar Pasha —indeed, he might say all the Egyptian Ministers—often told him that they felt very greatly indebted for the services of the many able and distinguished men, English, French, German, Austrian, Italian, and others, who were in the Egyptian Service. The Khedive and the Ministry recognized that in many branches of the Administration it was necessary for the benefit of Egypt to obtain the services of men of experience who were not natives of that country in the different branches of the Administration. For example, no body of men anywhere engaged in Egypt had acquired for themselves a higher reputation and had done such good service as Sir Evelyn Wood and the officers of Her Majesty's Army under him—the very best officers we had got—who had been lent to the Egyptian Government for the purpose of organizing the Egyptian Army. He merely gave this as an instance. There were other officers equally distinguished in other branches of the Administration, and their services were recognized by the Khedive and by the Egyptian Ministry, and, he might say, by everyone with whom he had come into contact in Egypt. On the other hand, however, the Khedive and the Egyptian Government considered that it was not fair to the Egyptians that young men, whether Englishmen, Italians, French, or German, should be taken into the Egyptian Service for the purpose of being trained and instructed to fill offices in the Government of the country. They said that when young men were to be employed they should be Egyptians; that they should be natives of the country; and that they should be introduced to the lower grade in the different branches of the Services, and should be trained and promoted to be higher officers. What was wanted, they said, was not young men, but men who had acquired knowledge and experience which might be brought to bear on the different branches of the Egyptian Administration. Those were the views of the Khedive as expressed to himself more than once, and with which, he might say, he not only entirely agreed, but which he felt assured would meet with the sympathy of every person in this country, because he was certain that nothing could be further from the minds of their Lordships or from the minds of the English Government and the English people than that Egypt should be made a preserve to which young men should be sent for the purpose of getting employment at the cost of the country, unless it should be clearly shown that it was for its benefit. But it was not for the benefit of Egypt to employ those young men in the Egyptian Administration, whereas it was to the benefit of Egypt to employ trained and experienced men. He was unable to explain the circumstances in which those young men were sent to Egypt; but they received a tolerably high rate of salary, as high as men who were much older, and a higher rate than the natives of the country would receive. Those young men were employed in connection with the reorganization of the Egyptian police. It was determined that the Egyptian Government should dispense with the services of those young men; and although the Question was put to him, and although he had no authority to give any expression of opinion on the part of the Government, yet, speaking as a private individual, he thought that in this matter the Egyptian Government were perfectly right, and that it had been a wise step to take. No blame attached to the young men in question, and he had no doubt the Egyptian Government had dealt with them fairly and liberally in this matter. This was all he knew of the matter, and that was the only answer he could give his noble Friend.

Lord TRURO said, he gathered from the observations of the noble Earl that he was not able to give an answer to the Question which he had put. He wanted to know whether or not there was any distinct engagement on the part of the English Government, or on the part of the Khedive's Government, that those young men went out to render service and to receive appointments in the Police Service? He inferred from the answer of the noble Earl that he was not in a position to say whether this was so or not.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, the question raised by the noble Lord is, no doubt, important as regards these young gentlemen themselves. It appears to me, however, taken in connection with the answer of the First Lord of the Admiralty, to show that questions of public policy of very considerable importance have been brought to the front. I think that some of the observations made by the noble Earl rather indicate an important change of policy on the part of the British Government. As I understand him, it is now admitted that we are not to press for the employment of British subjects except in the one case where men of considerable age and experience are required, and where there are no Egyptians who have been educated to the work. That is, undoubtedly, a very important decision. There is no doubt that there is something to be said for it. The constant appointment of foreigners is very galling to a certain number of the Khedive's subjects in Egypt, and also the burden of paid salaries, which are very heavy, has pressed severely on the finances of the Government of Egypt; but still it is a resolution which ignores the motives which many years ago induced the Government and Europe to urge or favour the appointment of Europeans to take service in Egypt. I am not sure whether Her Majesty's Government have sufficiently contemplated all the results which must flow from this decision. In the first place, I hope the decision will not apply to Englishmen alone. I hope it is understood that no favour will be given to foreigners as against Englishmen in the employment of the Government of Egypt. If the Egyptians are always to have preference I hope it will be a preference over Frenchmen, Austrians, and Italians, just as much as over Englishmen; for our position in Egypt, however long we stay there, will be one of extremest difficulty if we allow all the offices to be filled by those who are hostile to our policy and to our presence in the country. There is another matter of importance, and that is the question, what does the noble Earl mean by an Egyptian? Does he mean a man born in Egypt? I think the present Prime Minister of Egypt will hardly satisfy this requirement. Nubar Pasha is an Armenian. But the noble Earl, when he talks of natives, does he mean Egyptians, or does he mean subjects of the Sultan? If he means subjects of the Sultan, I do not dispute that internationally his view is correct; but I fear that his views will not carry much solace to the people of Egypt if they know that Turkish *employés* are to be more numerous than they have hitherto been. But the decision taken by the Government implies the abandonment of many of the reforms for which the Government have hitherto pressed. Does the noble Earl really believe that European ideas of government, European ideas of punishment, European ideas of sanitary questions, of gaols, of criminal prosecution, or of law, can be taught as you can teach the three R's to a number of Egyptians admitted to a school? Does he believe that you can transfuse the traditions of one race of men to men of another race by the simple process of education in a school? I think it is a chimerical idea to indulge in if he thinks such a result is possible. If you make up your minds to have Egypt administered by Egyptian *employés*, you must make up your mind to have it administered by Egyptian ideas. You must not complain if, from the point of view of humanity, or from the point of view of liberty, your European ideas are thwarted and affronted at every turn by the course which is taken by the purely Egyptian Administration you are setting up. The noble Earl indicated this policy as though it was a matter of course to which he had assented without very much thought, in a spirit of good nature, with the idea that it was painful to the Egyptians to see Europeans placed over them. I do not deny that some movement in that direction is desirable, or that there is an evil in the undue employment of Europeans.

But if there is a change of policy, as the noble Earl's words would seem to indicate, I think there are many consequences likely to flow from it for which the mass of the English people are hardly prepared. I should be very glad if some touchstone or test were given to us by which we could know where Egyptian responsibility commences and where English responsibility ends. What is the Egyptian Government? Is it independent, or does it act according to the wishes of the English Government? Are we responsible for what it does, or are we not? Is it absolutely independent? Because, if it is, then, no doubt, all questions in Parliament as to what the Egyptian Government does are superfluous, and even impertinent. But we have seen in the past that the largest questions of policy —even such a question of paramount interest as the choice of a Minister—may be decided in accordance with orders transmitted by telegraph from Downing Street. Are we, with that state of things before us, to believe that the Egyptian Government is independent? If it is not independent, it is no longer answerable for its own acts; someone else is answerable—the Power on which it is dependent is answerable. Somebody must be responsible for what is done. It is the person with whom the power lies; with whom does the power lie—with England or with Egypt; and on whom does the responsibility rest? I do not think this matter is treated with sufficient clearness and freedom from ambiguity by Her Majesty's Government. If they would plainly tell us that the Egyptian Government is independent and can do as it likes, they would put a stop to a world of inconvenient questions; but if they cannot do that, I do not think it becomes them to decline responsibility in the manner in which the noble Earl has declined it.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I am really quite relieved by the observation the noble Marquess has made. If there could be some understanding between us as to the Egyptian Question, our respective situations would be perfectly harmonious and not misunderstood. The noble Marquess, whether he qualified it afterwards or not, in his preliminary observation appeared to point to this—that what was desirable in Egypt was that we should take advantage of the exceptional position we hold there to have a complete English Civil Service commissioned in Egypt.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: No!

EARL GRANVILLE: The noble Marquess says "No!" But it is a monstrous thing if he thinks that to every junior office in the lowest grade of the Egyptian Civil Service an Englishman should be appointed. I think that is very much what he did argue for. I quite admit, and we have felt from the beginning, that it is an evil, on the one hand, to have a large number of foreigners gradually introduced into all the offices. I am not speaking of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Austrians, and Italians; but there were too large a number of Europeans, exciting very naturally discontent and dissatisfaction on the part of the people of that country. It is not denied by us, or by the Khedive, or by the Government of Egypt, that it is excessively important that some of the offices which depend very much on the sort of experience and knowledge which is obtained in European countries should be filled by Europeans; but to insist that Englishmen are to be put in every small place that can be held is a proposition with regard to which I entirely dissent from the noble Marquess. If the noble Marquess were in the Office which I now have the honour to hold, he would be aware that almost daily I get piles of applications from every sort of person asking me to give them every sort of place in Egypt, and I entirely decline any responsibility for recommending them at all. What I believe the noble Marquess wants is that we should define our responsibility, and that I can only do in a broad way. We are in an exceptional position; we are in military occupation of that country; and, according to the great rules of policy, while we are there we are certainly responsible to give the best advice, and we have a right to expect that that advice should be taken. But I entirely decline the responsibility of deciding from Downing Street whether a young policeman is to be retained or dismissed from the service of His Highness the Khedive?

House adjourned at a quarter past
Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a
quarter past One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Saturday, 6*th December*, 1884.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS — *Second Reading* — Scottish and Irish Peerages * (10), *discharged.*

Royal Assent—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 2]; Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act Amendment [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 5]; Yorkshire Registries Act (1884) Amendment [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 4]; Representation of the People [47 & 48 *Vict.* c. 3].

Their Lordships met;—And the Commons being come with their SPEAKER, and a Royal Commission to that effect having been read, the ROYAL ASSENT was given to several Bills.

On the Motion of The Earl of KIMBERLEY,

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock, to Thursday the 19th of February next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 6*th December*, 1884.

The House met at a quarter after One of the clock.

Message to attend The LORDS COMMISSIONERS:—

The House went;—and being returned;—Mr. SPEAKER *reported* the *Royal Assent* to several Bills.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: As I understand that it is the general desire of the House to be released at once from its labours, I beg to move the adjournment of the House. [*Cries of* "No!" *from Irish Members.*]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The Motion just made by the noble Lord may be in Order; but I can scarcely describe it as particularly courteous to the House. There stand upon the Paper Notices of no less than 52 Questions, and five Orders of the Day. The Questions refer to almost every Department of Administration, especially in reference to Ireland. The House is about to separate until late in February; and the Irish Administration will practically be freed, for a considerable period, from that close supervision of Parliament which is the only guarantee we have against reckless despotism practised in that country under the present system of coercion. I complain that the Government are exhibiting a want of common decency in endeavouring to shirk the important Questions proposed to be put to them in this House in regard to their action in Ireland. I will certainly express a hope that if the Irish Members oppose, as they undoubtedly intend to do, the Motion for Adjournment, they will receive the assistance of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I wish to put a Question to you, Sir, on a point of Order. In the Rules of Procedure laid down in November, 1882, the Ninth Standing Order provided that—

> "No Motion for the Adjournment of The House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion have been entered upon, except by leave of The House."

There is no qualification whatever to the Rule that no Motion for the Adjournment shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of; and, under the circumstances, I submit to you, Sir, that the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor) is not in Order in moving the Adjournment of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Under the exceptional circumstances of the case, the noble Lord was justified in making the Motion. Of course it may be objected to—as, indeed, it has been objected to—by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor).

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I would ask, Sir, with all due deference to your opinion, what are the exceptional circumstances which would warrant a Member of the Government in flying in the face of a distinct Order of this House made two years ago, on the Motion of the Government themselves? I would humbly ask you, Sir, to explain what the exceptional circumstances are which would justify the setting aside of the Rule?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: May I ask, Sir, if, in the face of the Standing Order, there are in this case any exceptional circumstances that would justify its being set aside? Has not a single Member a perfect right to call upon you, Sir, to enforce the Standing Order?

Mr. SPEAKER: The exceptional circumstances, which, in my view, justify the course which has been taken by the noble Lord, are that it is the close of an exceptional Sitting of the House, and also the announcement that no Government Business will be taken to-day. The Standing Order applies solely to Motions made for the purpose of raising a debate, and not to a Motion made by the Government for the purpose of closing the Business of the House.

Mr. CALLAN: May I ask, Sir, whether the exceptional circumstance of the Government having no Business is not met by the words—

> "No Motion for the Adjournment of The House shall be made until all the Questions on the Notice Paper have been disposed of, and no such Motion shall be made before the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion have been entered upon, except by leave of The House."

Do not the words "except by leave of The House" provide for such an accidental matter as there being no Government Business? I wish to know whether the Sittings of this House are merely for the convenience of the Government, to enable them to meet and discuss their Business only; and if it is in the power of the Government to move the Adjournment of the House whenever they have no Business on the Paper and have an objection to discuss Questions proposed to be raised by other Members, which do appear on the Paper?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I must ask the Speaker for a decision on the point of Order which I submitted a short time ago — namely, whether a single Member has not the right of calling on the Chair to enforce the Standing Order?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Before, Sir, you give your ruling upon the point of Order, I desire to call attention to the concluding words of the Standing Order, which, after providing that no Motion for Adjournment shall be made before the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion have been entered upon, "except by leave of The House," goes on to say—

> "unless a Member rising in his place shall propose to move the Adjournment for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and not less than Forty Members shall thereupon rise in their places to support the Motion."

Allow me, Sir, to recall your recollection to the circumstances under which that Order was passed. It was passed distinctly for the purpose of putting an end to the practice of making Motions for Adjournment during Question time, or during the progress of Business. In order to save the time of the House from being unnecessarily wasted, but not with a view of too largely gagging Motions for Adjournment, but of preserving perfect freedom of action to the House, a special Rule was made in which it was permitted that Motions for Adjournment might be made under certain conditions; and this Rule was laid down distinctly—first, that the Member proposing an Adjournment should state that it was for the purpose of "discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance;" and, in the next place, if the statement was challenged, not less than Forty Members were required to give their sanction to the Motion for Adjournment.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL: I wish to call special attention to the words of the Standing Order, which are—

> "That no Motion for Adjournment shall be made before the Orders of the Day or Notices of Motion have been entered upon."

A certain exception is provided in the Order; but it has not been obeyed in the present case, because there are Orders of the Day down upon the Paper. Therefore, I submit that this Rule really does apply in every single word to the present case. [*Cries of* "Withdraw the Motion!"]

Sir HENRY TYLER: Perhaps the Speaker will be kind enough, under the circumstances, to put the Question to the House, whether the Motion of the noble Lord was made with the leave of the House. [*Cries of* "No!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: No; I shall not adopt that course; but I will point out to hon. Members who have spoken what was the spirit of the Ninth Rule, which is now a Standing Order of the House.

It was passed in order to prevent vexatious or obstructive Motions for the Adjournment of the House.

Mr. CALLAN: Such as this. [" Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: And, further, to prevent the interposition of such Motions at Question time, it was laid down that it must be a "definite matter of urgent public importance." If hon. Members will look at the Rule they will see it is specified there—

> "unless a Member rising in his place shall propose to move the Adjournment, for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance."

That was to be the operation of the Rule. As I have stated before, the noble Lord (Lord Richard Grosvenor), at this period of the Session, when there is no Public Business, and no matter of public importance to be brought forward by the Government, is justified in the course which he has taken.

Mr. CALLAN: What justification can the Motion of the noble Lord have, except a vexatious interference with the rights of hon. Members?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to use that expression, nor to argue with the Chair.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST: I beg to call your attention, Sir, to the fact that there are not Forty Members present.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF (speaking seated and covered): May I ask a Question of you, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER (also seated): The hon. Member cannot speak now, until I have ascertained if there is a quorum of the House.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF (still seated): I wish to call attention to a point of Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: No question of Order can be raised at this stage.

House counted, and Mr. Speaker declared that 37 Members only were present.

Mr. CALLAN: I desire, Sir, to call your attention to the fact that there are several Members behind your Chair who have not been counted.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I wish to ask you, Sir, as a matter of Order—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! As there are only Thirty-seven Members present, the Sitting is suspended until Four o'clock, when the House will be adjourned.

Lord HENRY LENNOX: Can the Standing Order be taken at Four o'clock in the event of there being a House?

Mr. SPEAKER was understood to reply in the negative.

Mr. CALLAN: Mr. Errington, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Blennerhassett, and the Government "Whips" were behind the Chair.

The Sitting was then suspended at five minutes to Two o'clock.

CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTIONS.

Address for "Returns showing (1) present number of registered electors in boroughs in which corrupt practices were reported by a Royal Commission to have prevailed during the election of 1880, and (2) the number of persons whose names were included in the Schedules of each such Report respectively as having been guilty of corrupt practices at such election."

"And, showing (1) the number of male householders now registered as qualified to vote at municipal elections in the borough of Great Yarmouth, and (2) the number of persons whose names were included in the Schedule of the Report of the Election Commissioners appointed to investigate the last election for that borough."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

POPULATION AND REPRESENTATION.

Return *ordered*, "of the Population of England, Scotland, and Ireland, as estimated by the Registrar General for the middle of the year 1884, together with the number of Members of Parliament which each of the three kingdoms would obtain if 670 Members were allotted according to the population of each." —(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

SOUTH AFRICA (ANGRA PEQUENA).

Copy *presented*,—of a Despatch from the Right honourable the Earl of Derby, K.G., to Her Majesty's High Commissioner in South Africa, relative to the establishment of a German Protectorate at Angra Pequena and along the neighbouring Coast [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Copy *presented*,—of Further Correspondence respecting the settlement at Angra Pequena on the South West Coast of Africa (in continuation of [C. 4190] August 1884) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (OVER-PRESSURE).

Copy *ordered*, "of Return of Cases which have been reported to the Department in which Over-pressure has been alleged as the cause of illness."—(*Mr. Mundella.*)

Copy *presented* accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be *printed*. [No. 44.]

The House was adjourned at two minutes after Four o'clock till Thursday 19th February.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 19th February, 1885.

MINUTES.]—*Sat First in Parliament*—The Earl of Scarborough, after the death of his father.

Took the Oath—The Marquess of Ripon; The Earl of Northesk; The Earl of Orkney.

EGYPT.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, although, for reasons of a domestic character, I should have preferred not being present to-night, yet I feel that in the present critical circumstances, on which the attention of this country and of Europe is concentrated, it would not be respectful for me not personally to lay Papers affecting Egypt on your Lordships' Table, and not to make a brief statement on behalf of Her Majesty's Government to your Lordships. Among the complicated questions in connection with Egypt, two have been pre-eminent in their importance and their urgency. One is the financial difficulty, and the other the military operations undertaken to relieve General Gordon—that heroic soldier, that great Englishman, in whom genius and virtue and disinterestedness were combined to an extraordinary degree, and whose struggles and whose loss have excited an enthusiastic sympathy and an unanimous regret. My Lords, as late as the first day of this very month we had some hope that both these subjects were in the course of practical settlement. With regard to the financial difficulties, we hoped that, in concert with the Powers and with Turkey, we were approaching a settlement. That hope has not been destroyed. Although it is impossible to speak with any certainty until all the final details are settled, yet I do expect in a very short time to lay before Parliament Papers which will show that we have come to a settlement advantageous and even necessary to Egypt, consistent with public engagements, and honourable to this country —an arrangement which, we trust, will find favour with Parliament, without whose sanction it cannot be carried out. Three weeks ago we also had hopes of a practical settlement of the military question. We had cheerful messages from General Gordon, with whom at last we had got into somewhat closer communication, and our troops were triumphing over many material and military difficulties. It was on the 4th of this month—at a moment when we were expecting to hear of the meeting between Sir Charles Wilson and General Gordon—that the dreadful news arrived that what military attacks and attempts to starve the garrison had failed to do was accomplished by an act of treachery against one of the greatest of our countrymen. This danger had hung over General Gordon's head for weeks and months. It could not have been averted by any precipitate action on our part; indeed, it appears to have been accelerated by the approach of our troops. I have been in the Public Service for many years, and in my own experience I do not remember such painful circumstances in which a Government was called upon to form a very serious and grave decision. Before stating that decision, perhaps your Lordships will allow me very briefly to refer to the character of General Gordon's mission. When that distinguished man, in a spirit of perfect unselfishness, volunteered to go to Egypt, his instructions were to go to Suakin and report. He was also authorized to comply with the wishes of the Egyptian Government, which might be communicated to him by Sir Evelyn Baring. It was also left to him to decide whether either he or Colonel Stewart should proceed to Khartoum. On his arrival in Egypt, with the full concurrence of Sir Evelyn Baring and the Egyptian Government, and in consequence of his own suggestion, he received full powers from the Khedive as Governor General of the Soudan. It was understood that the operations were to be of a pacific character. The General expressed himself confident that the power of the Mahdi had been exaggerated; and he believed that with time and patience it was possible to evacuate, the garrisons and also to establish some form of Native Government in the Soudan. He telegraphed that he considered there was no danger of the massacre of women and children. He was asked whether the report of the sending of an armed force to Suakin would be of use? His reply was that he valued much more the rumour of the force than the force itself. His first Proclamation was of a pacific character; but he soon afterwards sent to us a proposal that Zebehr Pasha, to whom he had been formerly opposed, should be sent to the Soudan. I have always myself been of opinion—and I know that that opinion is shared by some of his family—that that request was probably prompted, or, at all events, greatly strengthened, by a chivalrous feeling towards one whom he had considered his greatest foe. We knew that Zebehr Pasha was the deadly foe of General Gordon—we knew it from his own words. We also knew that he was a great General, and we considered that his appointment would have constituted a danger to General Gordon of a very urgent character, a menace to Egypt, and a great encouragement to the Slave Trade. My Lords, we agreed to any other form of assistance which he might prefer; and we placed at his disposal a sum of money which might be required for any purpose he deemed necessary. There was an alternative suggestion made—namely, to send Native soldiers to Wady Halfa—and he also suggested the opening of the Berber route by some Indian troops. It was the unanimous opinion of the Military Authorities, including Sir Evelyn Wood and General Stephenson, that, although the Expedition to Berber might take place, it was one of great danger on account of the climate, and also one of extraordinary military risk. It would have been quite possible to send out a few hundred men—Cavalry—who might arrive at Berber; but I venture to ask your Lordships what would have been their position if they had arrived? With regard to General Graham's Force, it was impossible at that time to send that Force for the purpose. When it was finally decided, in August, to send out an Expedition for the relief of General Gordon, the great preponderance of military opinion was in favour of that Expedition taking the Nile route. This opinion was confirmed by many eminent men, among others by Mr. Stanley, the African explorer, and by others who were competent to speak on the subject. There were not only military advantages, but political advantages, connected with that route. The object of sending the Expedition was primarily to rescue General Gordon and those to whom General Gordon considered himself in honour bound, and also to provide for defence against an attack on Egypt. There were other aims—namely, the evacuation of the garrisons, the establishment of some form of orderly government, and the checking of the Slave Trade. The fearful news of the 4th of this month required the whole consideration of Government. There is hardly any doubt as to the loss of General Gordon; and, supposing that to be true, there were three ways in which we could deal with the matter. In the first place, we could instruct Lord Wolseley to retreat; in the second, to concentrate his troops for the purpose of negotiating with the Mahdi. As to the first alternative, it seemed to us that there were overwhelming objections to it, both military and political. It would not only have exposed Egypt, which we are bound in honour to defend, to great danger of invasion, but it would also have exposed us to injury and insult probably in different parts of the world. We rejected that course. Well, with regard to negotiations, we never shut the door to them either through General Gordon or Lord Wolseley. But what overtures has the Mahdi ever made towards negotiations? And even for the purpose of negotiation how could we have taken up a worse position than, notwithstanding our military successes, to have shown ourselves in a position of collapse in consequence of one act of treachery far from our troops? My Lords, the decision we came to, after grave consideration, was that we were bound to tell Lord Wolseley what our political object was. We told him that it was to check the advance of the Mahdi, and for that purpose to destroy his power in Khartoum. We desired to give Lord Wolseley the fullest discretion as to the military means which he might ask for, and as to the support which we were to afford him. We have certainly not exposed ourselves in doing this to the just censures which in *Croker's Memoirs* the Duke of Wellington is said to have passed on the Government of the day for not having consulted him when in responsible command in Spain. We have left entirely to Lord Wolseley the discretion of either attacking Khartoum at once, or, what more probably we believe will be his decision, making the attack at a later period in the autumn of this year. I am not able to tell your Lordships what decision Lord Wolseley has come to. We have given him, at his request, a large Force to be sent to Suakin; and a railway is being made from that port to Berber. And I cannot help alluding to offers which have been made by some of the greatest of our Colonies—offers which, I believe, in many ways, will have a very great effect. My Lords, we believe that if these military operations succeed we shall be in a position to carry out some of the principal objects which we have always had in view. Before sitting down I wish, perhaps with an unnecessary degree of caution, to guard myself against any misconstruction of the strong words which I have used as to the great disaster at Khartoum. That disaster, great as it is, does not, in the slightest degree, affect the military reputation and honour of the British arms. An act of treachery concocted in the centre of Africa, far from our troops, can have no such effect at all. I venture to say that that comparatively small Force under skilful Leaders, whose names I will not mention because they are in everyone's mouth, have shown a power of endurance, a steadfast courage, and a brilliant dash, which have never been surpassed in the military annals of this country. No words of admiration from me can have any real weight. I prefer repeating the opinion of the most competent judge in Europe, who, I am assured, has given as his opinion that the British Army in the Soudan is not an Army of soldiers—it is an Army of heroes.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, everyone present will feel that we meet on this occasion in one of the gravest conjunctures of public affairs that even the oldest among us can recollect. The noble Earl has laid Papers on the Table. I know not what they contain, and he has made a statement which it will become us to reflect upon. I do not propose now to anticipate the discussion which inevitably must come later, or to inquire what course this House will take, although I think it improbable that they will pass over this matter in silence. I only wish to point out that the gravity of our position does not merely arise from the condition of things in Egypt. It arises from the position which the policy of this Government has procured for the country in more than one portion of the world. In Europe we are isolated; and that boasted Concert of Europe, of which we used to hear so much, now appears to be a Concert of Europe against England. In Asia movements deeply threatening the safety of our Indian Empire appear to be progressing; dark and sinister rumours prevail; and there is ground for thinking that the emergencies of the hour may be deeply aggravated by those who know how to make the best use of them, and that the recklessness which five years ago abandoned the forward position which we occupied will meet a bitter Nemesis this day. Of our position in the rest of the world, of the insults which our Colonial fumbling has brought down upon us, it is not necessary that I should speak at length. All these things I have no doubt will pass under your Lordships' review. But I cannot accept some of the observations which the noble Earl has made in respect to the position of things in Egypt at this time. He appears to have shown to his own satisfaction that it was impossible to have relieved General Gordon earlier; that it was impossible to have sent General Graham's Force to advance from Suakin; that it was impossible to have reached him by the Forces up the Nile earlier than they actually did. A year ago we were indeed told that it was impossible for a Force from Suakin to cross the Desert to Berber. But we are relieved from the trouble of considering whether that excuse was correct or not, because Her Majesty's Government are now about to undertake that very work. It might have been argued a-year ago that it was impossible to send an Expedition up the Nile; but we are again relieved from the necessity of discussing that question, because the Government decided to send an Expedition up the Nile; but they only took care to come to what they called the "final decision," at the time when the waters of the Nile were already falling. The noble Earl spoke, and spoke with justice, of the sympathy and the deep regret with which we, all of us, have heard of the fall—I might say of the sacrifice—of our Christian hero. But these are not the only feelings which have been excited in the breasts of the people of this country. There has not only been sympathy and regret, but bitter and burning indignation. General Gordon has been sacrificed to the squabbles of a Cabinet and the necessities of Parliamentary tactics. For these things, undoubtedly, unless the machinery of our Constitution is an absolute failure, unless the people of this country have lost all control over the policy pursued on the nominal responsibility of their Rulers—for all these things an account will assuredly be exacted. What, however, concerns us now mostly is the future. We are told that Expeditions are going out to Suakin. We want some security that they will not return with such a record of useless slaughter and fruitless effort as the last Expedition did. We hear that great efforts are to be made to defeat the Mahdi at Khartoum. We wish to know that these exertions, which, without doubt, will cost us so much in precious treasure and far more in precious blood, will not be absolutely thrown away, and that we shall not retire from Egypt leaving behind no record of our presence, except the mischief and the confusion we have wrought and the bones of the unhappy soldiers who have been slain. My Lords, I will not now pursue this subject further. We are meeting not only in a great crisis, but under pressure of great sorrow. We have lost men belonging to this House, whose presence was highly valued, whose memory will be held dear, whose honour is an honour to the class to which they belonged. We lament their loss and the loss of many other valuable soldiers whose lives are not too valuable if they have been sacrificed really to the interests of their country, but whose fate bears with it a terrible demand of reckoning and indignation if they have been sacrificed to the imbecility of a Ministry, or to the necessity of keeping a Party in power. We shall have an early opportunity of discussing these questions. I will only express the hope that the Papers on which those discussions are to be founded may be circulated without delay, and that we may address ourselves at an early period to the discussion of the question who it is that is to blame for all these things, how these faults have been committed, and, what is still more important, what results are to come to this country from the great efforts we have been making? From the closing words of the noble Earl I drew the conclusion—I know not whether it is just—that the further exertions which this country will be called upon to make will simply be directed towards re-establishing our *prestige*, and towards punishing the opponents with whom we contend. I do not deny that these are the imperative necessities of the moment; but there is something beyond. There are British interests to secure, there is good government, there is security, there is safety from foreign and external influence hostile to English power which it is our duty, our imperative duty, to ensure; and while I believe this country will grudge no efforts which these objects will demand, I am sure it will visit with bitter censure those who shall make useless and bootless but vast efforts involving the terrible sacrifices which this country has been hitherto called upon to make.

THE EARL OF JERSEY: My Lords, at a time when troops are being hurried off from almost every part of the country the noble Earl opposite says a few words about General Gordon; but he tells us not a word about the policy which the Government intend to pursue in Egypt. The noble Earl says there are two questions, the political and financial. Nothing, however, was said about the financial question. The noble Earl said that he hoped it would soon be concluded; but if it is concluded on the terms which we have read in the Press it will be a capitulation worse than the fall of Khartoum. Are we going to capture Khartoum, to smash the Mahdi, and then to hand Egypt over to Foreign Powers? No doubt it is a time of great difficulty; but I am sure that real danger to England does not lie in the Soudan, but it lies on the Ministerial Bench. It is their vacillating and half-hearted method of conducting affairs which has brought us to this position of affairs, and now not a word has been said as to any change of policy. One of Her Majesty's Ministers told us the other day that their policy was an unselfish policy. I quite agree that it has been an unselfish policy according to the way in which they carried it out; but if the policy has been unselfish, the expense has been most partial. We have had to bear all the expense, and then it is suggested that we should hand Egypt over to Europe. I think it is against this policy that we are bound to protest. I think the noble Earl might have told us something more with regard to what the Government are going to do in Egypt. I am glad to hear that the noble Marquess intends to take another and a fuller opportunity of having this question discussed in this House. If it is not debated in this House it will certainly be debated very much in the country, because it is impossible for any body of Englishmen to be satisfied with the manner in which our foreign affairs have been conducted, not only in Egypt, but in other parts of the world. It is time that a Constitutional way of having those matters discussed should be arrived at; and I am glad we shall have an opportunity of doing our best to arrest a policy which causes pain and sorrow to many an English home, and which is filling with shame and disgrace the pages of English history.

THE EARL OF **HARDWICKE**: I wish to ask the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Government have received any information from Lord Wolseley as to the report in several of the morning papers to the effect that General Buller has been obliged to make a retreat from his position on the Nile to Abu Klea?

THE EARL OF **MORLEY**: The only information we have received at the War Office has been already published in the morning newspapers. It is the case that we received a despatch from Lord Wolseley last night stating that General Buller considered it desirable to evacuate the position at Gubat, and we are glad to hear that he has arrived at Abu Klea in safety.

THE MARQUESS OF **SALISBURY**: Were any orders sent out from this country directing him to abandon his position?

THE EARL OF **MORLEY**: No; General Wolseley is left absolute discretion as to how he should meet the military necessities.

LORD **ORANMORE** AND **BROWNE**: I wish to ask whether there is any truth in the statement published by *The Morning Post* to-day that, in consequence of the disturbed state of Ireland, Her Majesty's Government are unable to move those regiments which were to go to Egypt, and that their departure has been stayed?

[No reply.]

REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR SCOTLAND.

The Clerk of the Crown in Chancery delivered his certificate that the Earl of Northesk and the Earl of Orkney had been elected Representative Peers for Scotland in the room of the Earl of Morton and the Earl of Dundonald deceased.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 19*th February*, 1885.

Mr. Speaker took the Chair at a quarter before Four o'clock.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRITS ISSUED—*For* Tipperary County, *v.* Patrick James Smyth, esquire, Secretary to the Loan Fund Board in Ireland; *for* Gloucestershire (Western Division), *v.* Colonel Robert Nigel Fitzhardinge Kingscote, C.B., one of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues.

NEW MEMBER SWORN—Robert Gunter, esquire, *for* Knaresborough.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage (Ireland)* [50]; Crown Lands* [51]; Board of Works (Ireland)* [52]; Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation* [53]; Shannon Navigation* [54]; Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland)* [55]; Dean and Chapter* [56].

Second Reading—Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment [7]; Copyhold Enfranchisement [26].

Committee—Report — Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) [40-49].

NOTICES.

ARMY AND NAVY EXPENDITURE.

SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE **CHANCELLOR** OF THE **EXCHEQUER** (Mr. CHILDERS): I beg to give Notice that, in fulfilment of the pledge given to the House last year, I shall on Monday move for a Select Committee on Army and Navy Expenditure; and I also give Notice that, on the same day, I shall move for the appointment of a Select Committee on the Miscellaneous Estimates.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg leave to give Notice that on the earliest day which I can obtain, and which I hope will be Monday next, I shall move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them, to assure a good and stable Government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—EMPLOYMENT OF INDIAN TROOPS.

Mr. J. K. CROSS: On Monday next, I propose to make the usual Motion respecting the employment of Indian troops, consequent upon the decision of the Government to despatch Indian troops to the Soudan.

QUESTIONS.

——o——

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND—LEGISLATION.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If Her Majesty's Government will re-introduce the Bill for the Scottish Minister immediately after the Recess, if not in this House, then in the other House of Parliament, so that it may be ready for consideration in this House as soon as the state of Business permits?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes; it is intended to introduce this Bill at an early date in the House of Lords.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I beg to ask the noble Marquess opposite, If he can inform us whether there is any information to confirm or modify the statements that have been made in the Press with regard to the movements of Sir Redvers Buller?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: A telegram was received this morning, and portions of it have, I believe, been published in the newspapers, stating that the Force under Sir Redvers Buller has evacuated Gubat and retired to Abu Klea. I think that is substantially the information which is in our possession; but it is probable that the movements of Sir Redvers Buller's Force will be continued to Gakdul, or probably to Merawi or Korti.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I wish to ask whether the Government have received any communications from Lord Wolseley on the subject, and of which they are able to inform the House? Of course, I do not ask for any information which it would not be safe to give.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I think the House will agree with me that it is necessary to exercise extreme caution in giving any information as to the despatches, or any discussions of military movements which have taken place between Her Majesty's Government and Lord Wolseley. If the right hon. Gentleman will give Notice of his Question, I will see whether it is desirable to give any information or not. I will endeavour to-morrow to put before the House so much information as can be given without injury to the Public Service.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Prince Hassan, brother of the Khedive, had been appointed High Commissioner in the Soudan; and, if so, was it by the Khedive, the Sultan, or Her Majesty's Government; and, whether the appointment of Prince Hassan was an indication that Her Majesty's Government desired to place the Government of the Soudan in his hands, or in the hands of some member of the Khedive's family?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Prince Hassan is about to join the Forces under Lord Wolseley as High Commissioner under him, with authority over the Egyptian Mudirs and officials. The office has been conferred upon him by the Khedive, and nobody else. The presence of Prince Hassan is not to be taken in the sense indicated by the hon. Member.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Has he any authority over the Mudirs in the Soudan?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: He has authority over the Egyptian Mudirs and Civil authorities generally.

MR. RITCHIE asked what policy rendered the appointment of Prince Hassan necessary now which did not make it necessary previously?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that the Question raised matter of debate, and could not be answered with propriety.

MR. GORST asked whether the noble Lord would state whether Prince Hassan had any authority over the Mudirs in the Soudan?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I answered that Question distinctly in the affirmative.

SIR JOHN ST. AUBYN asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, Whether he was in a position to give the House any information with respect to General Brackenbury's column?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No information of importance as to the movements of General Brackenbury's column has been received since that published in the newspapers. As to instructions given to him, or which may be under consideration, I think the answer which I gave to the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) just now applies in this case, and that it will be very undesirable, without full consideration, to make any statement on the subject of the instructions now given to the troops.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—CONTRACTS.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Can my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty state to the House what steps the Government have taken to give effect to the engagements made by the Government in December for the increase of the Navy, and for what ships contracts have already been taken, and the time at which they are to be completed?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The programme of additional shipbuilding work was proposed to Parliament and approved on the 2nd of December. No time was lost in pushing forward the designs and completing the specifications in more detail, in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee on Contracts and Repairs. Additional draftsmen have been employed, and long extra hours have been worked. The drawings for the *Scout* class were completed at the close of the year, and on the 5th of January tenders were invited for their construction from 37 firms. The seven weeks given for preparing the tenders expire on the 24th instant. The orders will be placed as soon as practicable after that date. On the 2nd of March we shall be ready to invite tenders for five belted cruisers and two ironclads. Tenders will be immediately invited for 10 powerful torpedo boats, armed in accordance with the recommendations of a Special Committee. Five additional torpedo boats of the first class will be ordered in the course of the year.

In reply to Sir EDWARD J. REED,

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said: There will be no objection to place in the Library a copy of the sketch design of an iron-clad shown to my hon. Friend, and described to Parliament in December, and of the more accurate and detailed design which is now in course of completion.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Are we to understand that at this time no contract for any one ship or torpedo boat has been entered into by the Government?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: That is the case.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY asked, Whether the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War could give any information about the condition of General Sir Herbert Stewart?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I regret to say that the news received this morning, and which is published, is less favourable than previous accounts, inasmuch as Sir Herbert Stewart is subject to an attack of fever.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—OCCUPATION OF MASSOWAH BY ITALY.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, Whether it was the case that Italian troops had gone to Massowah by arrangement or Treaty with the Turkish Government; whether the Italian Government proposed to occupy Kassala; and, if so, whether any arrangement to that effect had been made with the Sultan of Turkey? He also asked when

Papers respecting Egypt would be in the hands of Members?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE asked the hon. Member to postpone the first Question until to-morrow. Further Papers with regard to Egypt would be in the hands of hon. Members by Monday. They would include the despatches of General Gordon, and particularly the telegram of November 4.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—KHARTOUM—GENERAL GORDON'S DIARIES.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Are the Government in possession of any diaries of General Gordon? If so, will they publish those of public interest, and take care of those which are not of public interest for members of his family?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; the Government is not in possession of the diaries of General Gordon. With regard to the further Question, I must make inquiry before answering the Question.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Does my noble Friend imply that the diaries are not in the possession of Sir Charles Wilson, or any of the officers of Her Majesty's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; I did not mean to imply that; but if the right hon. Gentleman will put his Question to-morrow, I will give him all the information I can on the subject.

THE VOTE OF CENSURE AND BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: It will be a convenience to know when the Government can give me a day for bringing on the Motion of which I have given Notice. I shall be glad to bring it forward on Monday if possible; if not, on the very earliest day I can get.

MR. GLADSTONE: The desire of the right hon. Gentleman to have as early a day as possible for the Motion of which he has given Notice is also the desire of the Government. It is a most natural desire, and the wish of the Government is to second that desire by every means in their power. I know of no reason for any hesitation, except it be that I presume—I may be corrected in that matter, and if so I shall take notice of the correction—the House would wish to be in possession of the Papers relating to Egypt before it comes to the debate. My noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) has just made a statement with regard to the Papers which leads us to suppose that Monday will be the latest day when they will be in the hands of hon. Members. There is, however, I believe, some information over and above that which is contained in these Papers, which concerns the War Department as much or rather more than the Foreign Office, properly so called, and I am not quite certain whether that information will be in the hands of hon. Members on Monday. I think, perhaps, the most convenient course will be to allow this question to stand over till to-morrow, with the understanding that we shall certainly give the first day upon which the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Members generally will be in a position to approach the consideration of the question. As I have been asked this Question as to the course of Business, it will probably be convenient that I should enter more at large into the arrangements for the Business of Parliament. On a former occasion when Parliament met in February for what may be called a continuing Session, the right hon. Gentleman who was at the time the Leader of the House made a statement with regard to the Sessional Business, which statement conveyed the same information as would ordinarily have been conveyed in a Queen's Speech. But the circumstances of the present case are, however, materially different. They differ in this most important respect—that one large and somewhat complex Bill, which might occupy a moderate time or might occupy a long time, is already in the hands of the House; and it is quite understood, apart from necessary calls, such as that conveyed by the Notice which has been given by the right hon. Gentleman, that that Bill—namely, the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—is a Bill which the Government are pledged to push forward, and which it will be their desire to ask the House of Commons to expedite, even if it is thought fit to do so by means involving some departure from the usual arrangement of Business. We have come, therefore, to this conclusion—that, so far as this House is concerned, time available for the purposes of important legislation—I do not now speak of secondary Bills—the time at the disposal of the House for Bills of the first-class will really depend upon the rate of progress which the House may make on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. Consequently we could not venture to arrive positively, even in our own minds, at a conclusion upon legislation of that class—as to the introduction or non-introduction of Bills—until we shall see, from the advance actually made with that Bill, what time is likely to be at the disposal of the House. I do not propose, therefore, to make any statement, so far as this House is concerned, except one, and that refers to a subject which must be considered of primary importance in regard to its pressing and urgent character, and with regard to the pledges given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the part of the Government—namely, that we intend to introduce in any circumstances, and, as we hope, to pass, in this House, a measure relating to the relief of the crofters in the Highlands. We hope, however, that some use may be made of the time of Parliament, at least in the other House. I do not think I am guilty of any irregularity in stating that it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce promptly into the other House the following Bills:—A Bill to enable the Australian Colonies to associate for certain purposes; secondly, a Bill for the amendment of the Lunacy Laws; thirdly, an Extradition Bill; and, fourthly, what is known as the Secretary for Scotland Bill. These are the Bills with regard to which, it appears to us, it may not be inconvenient that they should be introduced in the other House of Parliament.

MR. ONSLOW: The Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. J. K. Cross) has given Notice of a Motion for next Monday on a matter of some importance; and my right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) has also given Notice of a Motion which he may probably bring on upon that day. If the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman should come on upon that day it would be inconvenient to the House and the Government that the two Motions should be before the House at the same time. May I, therefore, ask the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary to defer his Motion until some other day?

MR. GLADSTONE: We will endeavour to make the best arrangement in our power. I do not state anything positive at the present moment; but I do think with regard to what I may call a Constitutional point, such as the Notice of my hon. Friend, we ought not lightly to lose any time in submitting the Motion to the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Can the right hon. Gentleman name a date when it will be convenient to lay on the Table the provisions of the Crofters Bill?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; from his experience of the House of Commons the hon. Gentleman will understand that we could not think of producing the provisions of the Crofters Bill until we produce the Crofters Bill itself. That is a Rule of the House, especially where you have to deal with a matter of great difficulty and importance, and no one knows better than the hon. Member that this is a matter of very great difficulty, which must be dealt with in the most serious manner. We are desirous not to lose any time in proceeding with that Bill; but as regards the Bill we are substantially dependent upon the progress that may be made with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. Subject to that one consideration, I do not at present know of any other subject of importance to which we should wish to give precedence over the Crofters Bill.

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE: When will the Report of the Boundary Commissioners for England be laid upon the Table?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It has been laid upon the Table to-night. I have laid four documents upon the Table, the Report of the Boundary Commissioners for England in two parts, one for the counties, and one for the boroughs; and the Reports of the Boundary Commissioners for Scotland and Ireland. The English Reports for the counties, and the maps, will be circulated to Members to-morrow morning. The second part of the English Report will be circulated, I hope, on Saturday morning. The whole of the Scotch Report will be ready to-morrow morning. Of the Irish Report, 100 copies will reach here to-morrow from Ireland, and will be sent to the Vote Office, where

Members will be able to receive them, as far as they go, their names being taken, so that copies may not be left at their residences. I cannot say when all the Irish copies will be received for distribution, as there has been considerable delay in the printing in Ireland.

MR. MACFARLANE: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Crofters Bill is not to be printed until the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill has been practically disposed of? I can quite understand that it would not be taken up seriously until progress was made with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill; but I do not understand why it should not be in the hands of Members until that Bill has been almost disposed of.

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I did not state that, nor anything approaching to it; but what I said was that it was necessary to ascertain our position practically by the actual progress which we make, and by the disposition the House may show as to proceeding rapidly with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, before we could make any arrangements with regard to the other Bill. I did not mean to say that the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill should be passed through the House before the Crofters Bill was introduced, for, of course, there ought to be ample time for the consideration of the Crofters Bill before we proceed with it. We are unable at present to measure our own time; and it is only by measuring our own time, and taking into consideration the requirements of the House, that we are able to proceed with the Business of the House. I think the Crofters Bill is a question that would be better dealt with by Notice to the House.

MR. RICHARD: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill on the subject of Intermediate Education in Wales; and, if so, when?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to that subject, I am afraid it is included in that category of measures with respect to which, important as they are, and urgent as they are, I am obliged to withhold any declaration on the part of the Government until we can form some judgment of the time likely to be at the disposal of the House. I am sanguine enough to hope that the House may be disposed to proceed with considerable promptitude in dealing with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill; and if that is the case—and hon. Gentlemen will feel the immense importance, on every ground, of proceeding with that measure rapidly—the manifestation of such a disposition would enable us to judge of the time at the command of the House for other Business.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for India, whether it is proposed to authorize any payment out of the Revenues of India for the Expedition to the Soudan?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The proposal to be made on Monday will be made upon the basis of the proposal that was made with regard to the Abyssinian Expedition.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Does that proposal involve the authorization of the expenditure of any part of the Revenues of India upon the Expedition?

MR. J. K. CROSS: A full explanation will be made on Monday; but I may say now that all the extra expenditure will be charged upon the Revenues of this country.

MR. FINCH-HATTON: Is it by inadvertence that the right hon. Gentleman has omitted any reference to the renewal of the Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I did not consider that the moment had arrived when it was necessary, or would be convenient, to make any declaration on that subject.

MR. PARNELL: I would ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Government have drafted a Bill on the Report of the Select Committee on the Labourers' Question? The Report was framed by the Solicitor General for Ireland, and adopted by the Government. If they have not yet drafted a Bill, do they propose to do so, and to press the measure forward until it is passed?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes; it is my intention—and I have already given Notice of it—it is my intention to ask for leave on Monday to introduce a Bill to amend the Labourers' Act, and also to introduce a

Bill for the establishment of local Bankruptcy Courts in Ireland. Perhaps I may be allowed to say that to-morrow it is my intention to move for a Select Committee to inquire into the Laws relating to Salmon and Trout Fishing in Ireland; and, in these circumstances, I assume that the Bill on the Paper relating to that subject will not be pressed.

MR. THEODORE FRY: Is it the intention of the Government to proceed this Session with the Sunday Closing (Ireland) Bill?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I am not prepared to make a full statement on that subject.

MR. KENNY: May I ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Shannon Navigation Bill this Session?

MR. HIBBERT: Yes, Sir; it is my intention to introduce a Bill to-night on that subject.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE —IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN CATTLE.

MR. CHAPLIN: I have to apologize for having addressed a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster before the Notices on the Paper had been disposed of. I have now to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether it is true that animals suffering from foot-and-mouth disease have been landed in England, at Deptford and Hartlepool, from three separate foreign cargoes on the 11th, 12th, and 17th of this month; and whether, prior to the 11th of February, the country was not free from that disease; what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken, or are taking, to give effect to the Act of last Session, which provides that the Privy Council shall prohibit the landing of foreign animals from any foreign country, whenever they are not satisfied that the condition and circumstances of the same are such as to afford reasonable security against the importation of foot-and-mouth disease; whether, in this case, they were satisfied that there was such reasonable security, and the grounds upon which they formed that opinion?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is true that three cargoes of sheep, in each of which one animal affected with foot-and-mouth disease was detected, were landed at Deptford and Hartlepool on the 11th, 12th, and 17th of this month. It is also true that, so far as the Agricultural Department is aware, there was no centre of foot-and-mouth disease in this country since the middle of December last. As soon as it was known that an animal affected with foot-and-mouth disease had been landed on February 12, an Order was passed prohibiting the importation of sheep from Hamburg, from which port the cargo had been brought. The cargo landed on February 17 came from Bremen, and immediately on the discovery of the disease among these animals an Order was passed prohibiting the landing of sheep from that port.

MR. CHAPLIN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government are at the present moment satisfied that there is reasonable security against the introduction of this disease from any ports of the German Empire not now closed?

MR. TREVELYAN: In reference to the importation of sheep from Germany in the past, the Government are satisfied that reasonable security against the introduction of disease did exist, on the ground that the German Government have taken the most stringent measures to prevent the exportation of disease, and that since October 29, 1883, no case of foot-and-mouth disease was detected among animals landed from any port in Germany, during which time a good deal more than 500,000 sheep came from that country. As regards precautions for the future, the German Government have been informed that the prohibition will be extended to all other German ports unless the Imperial Government can satisfy us that there is reasonable security against the introduction of disease. Special measures have been taken to obtain telegraphic communications from our Consuls abroad direct to the Privy Council of any outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in their respective districts, and all European Governments will be asked to furnish similar information. The Government are perfectly prepared to take any step, however rigorous, if they have reason to believe that sheep affected with disease are likely to be sent to this country from any German port.

Mr. CHAPLIN: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Government are satisfied that at the present moment there is no risk of disease being imported into this country from any German port whatever?

Mr. TREVELYAN: I have given the House the grounds on which the Government consider they have had reasonable security in the past. It is obvious that at this moment the same grounds do not exist; and, therefore, the Government have not lost any time in taking the steps to which I refer, which, I think, are very strong steps, and which, I believe, will be most effectual.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I beg to give Notice that I will call further attention to the matter, as I think it has been proved by past experience that the steps taken by Her Majesty's Government have been totally ineffectual.

Mr. R. H. PAGET: What has been done with the animals in the three ships in which disease was found to exist? Were they all slaughtered, so as to prevent the possibility of the spread of disease?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The animals were all slaughtered, and the usual precautions were adopted in each case. The Inspectors at the ports showed great diligence in the matter, the ships being disinfected, and an embargo placed upon them to prevent them from being used in the traffic for a reasonable time.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that Her Majesty's Government have called upon the German Government to satisfy them that no danger exists from the importation of animals from other German ports. Time is the essence of the matter, and I should like to know how long it will be before the Government make up their minds to prohibit the importation from any other German ports?

Mr. TREVELYAN: That would depend upon the Reports which Her Majesty's Government receive from their Consuls, and upon the state of the cargoes that may come from the ports. It is most essential for the interests of the German Government, and for the protection of the German sheep trade, to satisfy Her Majesty's Government in the matter instantly, and in the most satisfactory manner.

SUPPLY—ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES (SUPPLEMENTARY).

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I wish to ask the Prime Minister or the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Supplementary Estimates for the Army and Navy, which, it is understood, will be asked for, will be laid upon the Table?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I am not in a position to say precisely, as it is hardly my business to be informed upon such subjects from day to day; but I believe that the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates will be in the hands of Members to-morrow, the Navy Estimates in a few days, and the Army Estimates a few days later.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Will the Estimates include any provision for the fortification of our coaling stations abroad?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I cannot answer that question as to the Supplementary Estimates; but they will cover all expenditure unprovided for in the original Estimates which come in course of payment up to the end of March.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I will repeat the Question to-morrow.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): It had better be addressed, not to me, but to the Representative of the War Office.

Mr. CUBITT: May I ask the Secretary to the Treasury to postpone the Vote for the National Gallery?

Mr. HIBBERT: The Estimates will be down on the Paper to-morrow, and if the opportunity is afforded we propose to take all the Votes we can. If the right hon. Gentleman wishes to have the Vote for the National Gallery postponed, I shall be glad to make any arrangement that may appear desirable to the House.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—GENERAL BRACKENBURY'S COLUMN.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: With reference to the Question put to me earlier in the evening, I may say that, since it was asked, I have received a telegram from Lord Wolseley, dated the 19th (to-day), in which he states that a message, dated the 15th instant, had been received from General

Brackenbury, whose Cavalry had entered Salamat, and found it deserted. He left his Infantry five miles from Salamat, and his horses and camels passed safely through the Shukuk Pass, which was also deserted. General Brackenbury hoped to be at Abu Hamad by the 25th instant, and to concentrate his troops before the 1st March. The delay was caused by the necessity of crossing mounted troops to the other side of the river. Any estimate of time was necessarily uncertain owing to the state of the river.

MOTION.

EGYPT.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

MR. GLADSTONE: Certain Papers and Correspondence relating to the affairs of Egypt have been presented to Parliament, and I rise to make a formal Motion that these Papers do lie upon the Table for the purpose of submitting to the House a very brief statement, of a description not controversial, but occasioned by circumstances, which I will in a very few words explain. The House will readily understand that it is not the established practice to submit telegrams relating to military operations and military measures to Parliament in the same way as it is to submit telegrams and communications relating to those matters which are civil in their character. It will be readily understood that a far greater reserve is often necessary in respect to matters of that class than with respect to public intelligence of interest in general. On that account, as military decisions of importance have been required to be taken within a very recent period, Her Majesty's Government have thought that it would be but just to Parliament that they should communicate, in a shape which can be open to no objection connected with the public interest, the substance and effect of their decisions so far as is in their power. Sir, that is the purpose and the justification, I hope, of my making a Motion which is not very often made, but which is, I believe, perfectly regular and perfectly Parliamentary, in relation to the cause which has called for such a proceeding. I need only remind the House that the policy declared by Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Soudan has always been the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt and its restoration. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *from the Opposition Benches.*] That policy has received the approval of the Khedive and of the present Egyptian Government. It has undergone no change. I am not about to argue it or to defend it, but merely to state the fact, which is the point on which I set out, that it has undergone no change. But events from time to time have occurred to prevent its immediate application. During the adjournment of the House up to the 3rd of February, circumstances appeared to justify a sanguine hope on our part that the military problem was near its solution, and that little, in comparison, would remain to be done. The news of February 4 entailed new duties and led to new decisions—I mean, of course, the news of the loss, and, as it has now been shown to be, the betrayal, of Khartoum. The nature of the military object in view underwent in connection with, or in consequence of, that news a considerable change. The Mahdi outside Khartoum, a repository of arms and stores, was a different person in point of power and influence, as well as of what is called moral effect, from the same Mahdi in Khartoum in possession of the place and in possession of the arms and stores which it contained, as well as being reinforced — to what extent we are not precisely informed—by men he found within the walls. Under these circumstances, and receiving as we did communications from Lord Wolseley, it was our duty to arrive at decisions which are strictly military decisions. It became, as Lord Wolseley explained to us, a necessity for him to know whether he was to shape the measures that he might have immediately to take upon the supposition that he was either now or eventually to proceed to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, or whether he was to proceed upon the opposite supposition, because the framework of those measures and their character would essentially depend upon our adoption of the affirmative or the negative of that important point. The Government, giving the best consideration in their power to the question from the state of facts before them, decided in the affirmative —that it was their duty to instruct Lord Wolseley to frame his military measures upon the expectation and upon the policy sion of the subject. My object in rising is simply this—that I wish to take the earliest possible opportunity of giving expression to what I am sure are the sentiments not only of the whole House, but of the whole country, with regard to the great loss we have sustained in the death of that gallant officer, General Gordon. Whatever may have been our controversies with regard to other matters, the personal feeling which General Gordon has evoked throughout his career, and more especially during the last 12 months, has been of the most marked and highly-deserved character. I am glad to take this early opportunity of saying that; and I must, at the same time, take the same opportunity of expressing the sense of all of us in regard to the valour, the conduct, and the discipline of our troops, and the very sincere sympathy which we feel for those who have fallen in our service—especially let me mention that lamented and gallant officer, General Earle. I fear that we cannot but express, also, great uneasiness with regard to Sir Herbert Stewart. [*Cries of* "Burnaby."] There are other names I do not mention in particular; but these two, who have taken such a prominent position, are entitled to receive the special notice of this House. There is another matter about which I will say a word of congratulation—I mean the gallant and spirited overtures which have been made to us on the part of many of the British Dependencies to rally round the flag of the Empire and bear their part in our burdens. I do not think I could omit to make these observations; but, at the same time, I do not wish to pursue this subject further on the present occasion.

MR. MAC IVER wished to apologize to the House, but desired to say that he thought they ought there and then to pass a Resolution something like the following:—

> "That this House deplores the betrayal of General Gordon and the purposeless destruction of life in the Soudan, and disapproves of the continuance of military operations as proposed by the Prime Minister."

He had no desire to make a speech; all he wished to state was what he thought the judgment of the House ought to be.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.—[BILL 40.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I rise for the purpose of moving that the Speaker leave the Chair in order that this Bill may be reprinted and corrected with the Amendments which the Government have thought it right to make in it. The Motion will, therefore, be in the nature of a *pro formâ* Motion, and hon. Members will have the ordinary opportunity of debating the question on the Speaker leaving the Chair; but, at the same time, it may be convenient, perhaps, that I should say a few words as to the Amendments which it is proposed to introduce in the Bill. The proposed Amendments are chiefly in connection with the Schedules; and as they are of much more importance than any of the others I will mention them first. Schedules 1, 2, 3, and 4—Schedule 1 relating to disfranchised boroughs; 2, to boroughs with a reduced number of Members; 3, to boroughs with an increased number of Members; and 4, to new boroughs, are practically unaltered, only a few mistakes are corrected. Schedule 5 relates to the existing boroughs where the boundaries are altered. The Boundary Commissioners have recommended that alterations be made in the boundaries in the case of certain boroughs mentioned in the Schedule; and the whole of the recommendations of the Boundary Commissioners for the three countries have been accepted by the Government, and introduced into the Bill. I am happy to say that the Boundary Commissioners have been unanimous throughout in their proceedings; and the Amendments made in the Bill by the Government are made with the unanimous authority of the whole of the Members of the Commission. The principal alteration of boundaries which will be made in the Bill, as compared with the original boundaries, relates to Preston and Wakefield, the boundaries of which are substantially altered. As regards Preston, a part on the other side of the river which appears to have no special unity of interest with the borough is taken out of the Bill on account of the Report of the Commissioners; but, on the other hand, the Local Government district of Fulwood, and a portion of Preston, which is within the municipal boundary of Bellview, have been added to the Bill. There are other changes in Bury, Lancashire, in Cardiff, in King's Lynn, and in Newport, Monmouthshire, in all which cases the boundaries have been altered to make the Parliamentary and municipal boundaries the same. At Cardiff, Darlington, and Preston, the boundaries have been altered for the purpose of excluding from the boroughs small detached parts of parishes. At Newcastle-under-Lyme and Manchester detached pieces have been added to the boroughs, which, although surrounded by, were not part of, the boroughs. A considerable mistake as to Liverpool has been corrected. The mistake was that certain Local Government portions had been included in the Bill, while large portions which were rural had also been included, and the Commissioners have recommended only the inclusion of the urban population. There are certain Amendments in the Bill which may be considered as contingent on the Amendments in the Schedule. Owing to the alterations of the boundaries, it has been found necessary to adapt enactments disqualifying certain voters for corrupt practices to the new state of things. We have thought it right to introduce no very disputable matter into the Bill, such as a modification of the clause relating to corrupt voters; but I understand my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General will be very willing to consider the matter in Committee, although he has not thought it desirable to introduce Amendments on his own responsibility on the present occasion. As to the Amendment intended to carry the principle of unity of divided constituencies, the Bill retains the unity for certain purposes of successive occupation as between one part of a borough for another, which was intended to be covered by the Bill, and probably is covered by the Bill as drawn, but the words used were not very clear then. Then we have thought it right to put into the Bill two or three Amendments which have been suggested to us. One of these is to apply the provisions of the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883 to all election agents, voting clerks, and officers, whether in counties or boroughs, so that no abuse can arise. It has been pointed out to us that unless the Bill be amended in this fashion it would be possible to employ men in one division of a constituency and poll them in another; and we intend, so far as we can, to give effect to this suggestion. Of course, if there be any strong opposition to it, we are not prepared to adhere to it too rigidly, or to insist upon it. Then there is another Amendment to be introduced in regard to freemen. It appears that it is necessary that in a small number of constituencies the method of polling the freemen in, say, two divisions should be fixed. The hon. and learned Attorney General has drawn up an Amendment under which the freemen in each borough or city would be polled alphabetically. Then there is a further Amendment, perhaps, of only local interest. I refer to the Amendment which makes the High Bailiffs of Westminster and Southwark the Returning Officers in those constituencies. There have been other Amendments suggested; but I do not think it necessary to introduce them in the Redistribution Bill, because they will be dealt with in the Registration Bill. 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As to the Amendment intended to carry the principle of unity of divided constituencies, the Bill retains the unity for certain purposes of successive occupation as between one part of a borough for another, which was intended to be covered by the Bill, and probably is covered by the Bill as drawn, but the words used were not very clear then. Then we have thought it right to put into the Bill two or three Amendments which have been suggested to us. One of these is to apply the provisions of the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883 to all election agents, voting clerks, and officers, whether in counties or boroughs, so that no abuse can arise. It has been pointed out to us that unless the Bill be amended in this fashion it would be possible to employ men in one division of a constituency and poll them in another; and we intend, so far as we can, to give effect to this suggestion. 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Parliamentary representation, they ought to be completely divided; and he did not see how it would be fair to make successive occupation qualify voters for different parts of the boroughs, when those parts were divided into separate constituencies, any more than in the case of separate parts of counties when they were divided into separate constituencies. What he was anxious to say was this—that he hoped the Bill would, as amended, contain information not only of the area of the divisions, but also of the population of those divisions, &c. They were not yet in possession of the Schedules of the Bill, showing the exact proportion of representation.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Report on the counties of England will be out to-morrow, as well as the Report on Scotland, and the Report on the English boroughs on Saturday. To-morrow there will be 100 copies issued of the Report of the Irish Boundary Commission.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, they could judge of the Amendments when they saw them, and not before; and he, therefore, hoped the Committee stage of the Bill would be postponed until the Bill was reprinted. The Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) would occupy several days; and it would be highly inconvenient to commence the debate on this Bill, and then break it off for the purpose of proceeding with that Motion.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked, whether the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) could give the House any information, in the shape of a Schedule or Return, of the population of the whole of the constituencies of the country, including those not affected by it, as they would be after the Bill was passed? Such a Return would be very convenient.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought such a Return might very properly be prepared, as no waste of time would be caused by it. It would, however, be a considerable work, as the Census Returns did not tally with the divisions the Boundary Commissioners recommended.

Colonel MAKINS said, he wished to point out that, on many occasions, a strong expression of feeling was shown before the Commissioners that the names of the divisions should follow the points of the compass rather than the name of some place in the division. He wished to ask, whether the Government intended to adhere to the instructions given to the Commissioners strictly, even where the feeling in a locality was that the name should follow the point of the compass?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Government would be guided in the matter by the general sense of the House.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, he had to complain that the proposals with regard to Newcastle-under-Lyme were objectionable.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: There can be no objection to remedy anything that is improper in the scheme.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I wish to reply to the appeal made by the right hon. Baronet opposite the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who says, with a good deal of reason, I think, that it would hardly be convenient to commence the debate upon Mr. Speaker leaving the Chair, and then to interrupt that debate for the purpose of proceeding with the Vote of Censure which the right hon. Baronet opposite the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) intends to move. I think there is a great deal of force in the observation of the right hon. Baronet; and, on that account, I do not propose to put this Bill down for to-morrow, but I wish to explain the attitude of the Government upon the question as they conceive it to be with regard to this Bill. I look upon it as standing in a different position to Government Bills in general, on account of the communications that have taken place between the Government and hon. Gentlemen opposite upon it; and, in our view, it is an obligation of honour incumbent upon us to do the best we can to expedite the Bill. Consequently, I am disposed to ask the House to-morrow not, in any case, to go on with the Bill to-morrow, but to assent to the principle that precedence shall be given to the Bill, at any rate for the Committee and, probably, the Report, stage, on those days when it is put down. Of course, certain days will have to be given up to Supply, and of course it will be understood that the Egyptian debate of the Vote of Censure would in no way be interfered with. But I think I may as well give Notice of a Motion of that kind to-night, so that I shall be able to see to-morrow whether the House will be disposed to accept in principle all the features of such a Motion. If so, it might be debated to-morrow; but, if not, under no circumstances could the Bill be taken to-morrow, because it will not be upon the Paper.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Bill would be circulated to-morrow morning.

MR. J. LOWTHER asked whether the precedence the right hon. Gentleman spoke of would apply to Tuesdays and Fridays?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee, and *reported;* as amended, to be *printed* [Bill 49]; *re-committed* for *Monday* next.

House *resumed.*

MR. RAIKES said, he presumed the House might understand that the Bill would not be put down for to-morrow?

MR. GLADSTONE: No.

In reply to a further Question from Mr. RAIKES,

MR. GLADSTONE said, they must endeavour to inform themselves as to the time the debate on the Bill would occupy. He did not think there would be any contest upon the question of precedence.

MR. J. LOWTHER: To put it plainly, I suppose the Bill will not be taken until after the Vote of Censure?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot say that. The only object of the Government is to make the best arrangement they can to save the time of the House.

MR. COURTNEY: With respect to the Motion of precedence of which my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) has given Notice for to-morrow, I would suggest that it would be rather premature to ask the opinion of the House on the Motion to-morrow, and that it would be time enough, in going into Committee on the Bill, to make the Motion, and thus there would be less deprivation of private Members of their rights.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Courtney) must bear in mind that fact to which the Prime Minister has alluded—namely, the peculiar character of this Bill and the position in which we stand. It was distinctly understood before the Recess that the Government undertook as a matter of honour to proceed with the Bill as quickly as possible, and that, in the absence of any disturbing circumstances, it would be incumbent upon them to proceed at once with the Bill, and upon all days reserved for Government Business. But it so happens that we have reassembled under circumstances which will necessarily interfere with the Government giving it many days at the beginning of the Session, and I think it is only fair and reasonable that the proposal of the Prime Minister should be accepted. On behalf of ourselves, I wish to acknowledge the friendly and co-operative manner in which the Prime Minister has made the suggestion; and I am sure the House will, upon reflection, see it is a reasonable proposal to make.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he did not think the suggestion was reasonable; but, at any rate, he hoped the Government wonld consider the appeal made by the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney). That was the first occasion in history on which the Government had proposed to take the whole of the time at the beginning of a Session for one measure.

In reply to Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON,

MR. GLADSTONE: The terms of the Motion will be—

> "That the several stages of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, up to and including the Consideration of the Bill, as amended, have precedence of all Orders of the Day, and Notices of Motions, on every day on which it shall be set down, by the Government, as the first business of the day."

WATERWORKS CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 7.]

(*Mr. Daniel Grant, Mr. Torrens, Mr. Sclater-Booth, Mr. Arthur Cohen, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. William Lawrence, Baron Henry De Worms.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. W. M. TORRENS, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, explained that the object of its promoters was to substitute a rule of law for the settlement of the charges of Water Companies in the place of the present capricious process. It was desired to introduce into the Act of 1847 the principle of a statute passed at the instance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), which laid down that charges similar in nature to those made by Water Companies should be levied upon the basis of assessment. If this amending Bill were passed there could no longer be any question about the meaning of the "net annual value," which the decision of the House of Lords in the celebrated case of "Dobbs *v.* the Grand Junction Waterworks Company" made the only recognized standard of charge for Water Companies. Many disputes had arisen over this decision; and it was alike in the interest of the public and the Companies that the question of a recognized standard should be settled on some intelligible principle. He was willing this year, as last, to accept an Amendment limiting the operation of the Bill to the Metropolis; and he understood the Government had no objection to support that alteration.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time" (*Mr. W. M. Torrens.*)

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he regretted that the Bill had been unexpectedly brought on that afternoon, as he had not got his papers with him, containing the figures and other details upon which he based his opposition to the second reading; but he hoped, by the indulgence of the House, to be able to convince them that it should not be passed. He strongly opposed the second reading on behalf of all those shareholders who had invested their money in full reliance upon the Acts by which their powers and dividends were secured. The Bill, as it stood, applied to Provincial Water Companies as well as to the eight Metropolitan Companies; and he would later on point out the manifest injustice—an injustice which was admitted last year—which would thus be inflicted upon the Provincial Water Companies. But he opposed now mainly on behalf of the Metropolitan Companies, who had invested an enormous capital in securing to London and the suburbs a good supply of water. He ventured to state, without fear of contradiction, that both as regards quantity and quality of the water thus supplied, London was as well or better off than any other of the great capitals of Europe. As many adverse criticisms had been passed upon this point, he would, by leave of the House, say a few words in support of his view. In the first place, as regarded the quantity supplied, it was as large as in any other town; and he need only point out that during this last summer of exceptional heat and drought, during which many places, such as Bradford and Manchester, had been reduced to such extremities, the full supply to London had never failed, to show how well these Companies had performed the duties imposed upon them by the Acts which it was now sought to repeal. In the second place, as to the quality of the water supplied. The low death rate of London, which compared so favourably with other great towns, was in itself a proof—and a convincing proof—that the water supplied could not be as bad as it had been represented by those who had not studied the question. The truth was that, in a great number of cases where complaints had been made of the water, the water had not been analyzed as taken from the main; but it had often been standing in cisterns, of which many had not been cleaned for years, and of which many were open to the foul atmosphere and dirt of London. As regarded water taken from the mains of the Companies, he desired to point out that, for several years, the official analysis supplied to the Local Government Board had been supplied by Dr. Frankland alone. Now, Dr. Frankland was a very able man, but he had always set himself against the Thames water, although in this view he was opposed to many skilled Members of different Committees and Royal Commissions; and he (Sir Henry Holland) could not help thinking that that rooted dislike to Thames water had, unconsciously to himself, coloured Dr. Frankland's Reports; and that he had made statements as to the sanitary condition of the water which a closer analysis would not have justified. This, at all events, was the opinion of the Water Companies; and, at last, finding that the public were, as they thought, wrongly, though not unnaturally, influenced by these Reports, they determined to have the matter more thoroughly investigated and brought before the public. They appointed, therefore, three gentlemen of equal eminence with Dr. Frankland, and equally well known as skilful and careful analysts—namely, Dr. Tidy, Dr. Odling, and Professor Crookes—to make not only monthly analyses of the water, such as Dr. Frankland had made, but daily analyses. Their Reports had been most favourable as to the purity of the water and its freedom from insanitary condition; and he hoped and believed that these Reports, though unofficial, had greatly tended to disabuse the public mind upon this important point. He claimed also for these Companies that they had most loyally performed the stringent conditions and obligations which had, from time to time, been imposed upon them by the different Acts of Parliament which gave them the powers under which they worked, and secured to them the dividend upon the invested capital. Upon that point, he had no hesitation in referring to the present and late Presidents of the Local Government Board. And not only had they performed those statutory obligations, but they had gone further, and had endeavoured to give full effect to all the recommendations and suggestions made from time to time by the Local Government Board, and by their very able officer, Sir Frank Bolton, who had the charge of supervising the supply of water to the Metropolis. He would venture to give one instance of this in the case of the Grand Junction Waterworks Company, of which he (Sir Henry Holland) was a Director. One of the main points urged by the Local Government Board upon the Companies was to substitute, as far as possible, "constant supply" for "intermittent supply." Now, in 1880, the Grand Junction Water Company had only 10,000 houses on constant supply, and some 34,000 on intermittent supply. But in the year 1884 the numbers were almost reversed, and they had nearly 32,000 houses on constant supply, and only some 18,000 on intermittent supply; and by the last Return, in February of this year, the number of houses on constant supply had increased to over 33,000. He had troubled the House with this defence of the Companies, because, though they were not directly attacked upon these points by the Bill, yet if they had failed to perform the statutory conditions and obligations, their case would not be so strong as it was at present against the proposed interference with those rights to which those conditions and obligations had been attached. How did the case stand with respect to that Bill? For the purpose of settling the rent for water supplied by the Companies, the Acts had adopted the term "annual value;" but it was not specified how that value was to be ascertained. The practice of the Companies, acting under legal advice, had been for years to act upon the assumption that "annual value" meant "gross" annual value; and he must remind the House that their construction of the Acts was upheld by the Court of Appeal. But the House of Lords, the final Court of Appeal, decided, in the case referred to by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. W. M. Torrens), that "annual value" meant "net" annual value. Immediately following upon the decision, the Companies set to work, and had a revaluation of every house supplied by them with water made in accordance with it; and it was some proof of the care and fairness with which the revaluation was made by the officers of the several Companies, that the complaints had been so very few in proportion to the number of houses—he believed some 750,000 or more, though, unfortunately, he had not the exact figures, owing to the absence of his papers. Of these complaints many were in respect of increased charges for non-domestic purposes; and there was no doubt that these charges had up to that time been rather laxly made, and that the Companies had, to some small extent, endeavoured to recoup themselves by looking more closely into these charges. But a great number of these cases had been already settled by arrangement, and a great many more would have been readily settled by the trial of one or two test cases, so that there was no need of the Bill to settle disputes, so far as this class of complaints were concerned. The larger number of complaints and disputes had, however, arisen from persons endeavouring to set up the parochial assessment as the net annual value within the meaning of the Acts. But after the various decisions of the magistrates against these attempts, they would, probably, in a short time have ceased. The Bill was, however, framed to help these complaints; and he (Sir Henry Holland) objected to it on three grounds. First, that it was in direct contravention of the decision of the House of Lords, and, therefore, of existing Acts, by which the rights of the shareholders had been guaranteed; secondly, that it was against the views of a Committee of that House which sat in 1851 and 1852 to settle the Metropolis Water Bill; and, thirdly, that it would be unfair and unjust in its operation, and confiscatory of the rights of the shareholders of these Companies. Now, as to the first objection, he would not ask the House to rely upon his own opinion, because he was in a position to state to them the opinion of that eminent Law Lord, Lord Bramwell, who was one of the Judges in Dobbs's case. Not having his papers with him, he could not quote the exact terms of the letter which Lord Bramwell sent to *The Times* in May, 1884; but he was certain he was correct in saying that Lord Bramwell wrote that the Bill must have been brought in under some misapprehension as to the effect of the judgment of the House of Lords; that "annual value" in the Act meant real actual net value; and that the "annual value" settled by parish authorities was always lower than the real annual value upon which the Companies were entitled to charge; and that this difference between it and the lower charge the Bill proposed to confiscate. He would add that in this same letter Lord Bramwell established his (Sir Henry Holland's) third objection to the Bill as he stated that this Bill was an invasion of property and a confiscation of the rights of the Water Companies secured to them by Act of Parliament. Surely the House would pause before granting a second reading of this Bill, upon so strong an opinion of such an eminent lawyer. As to his second objection to the Bill, it was to be observed that a very strong Committee of the House sat in 1851 and 1852 upon the Metropolis Water Act, and the whole position of the Companies was brought before them. The Committee approved the term "annual value;" but examined into the way in which that annual value was to be tested. Witnesses of great experience, not only connected with the Companies, but independent witnesses, such as Mr. Lee, the experienced surveyor, gave strong reasons for not adopting parochial rating as the fair test; and the Committee must have been satisfied with these reasons, or they would have pronounced in favour of this test. They would have so defined "annual value," or agreed that it should be fixed by the parish valuation. As to his third objection, he had already cited Lord Bramwell's opinion; but he would point out that the Bill in its present shape applied to all Water Companies, Provincial or Metropolitan, as did the Bill of last year. But that was proved to be so unfair to Provincial Companies, owing to the admitted lowness of parish assessments, and to the want of uniformity in such assessments, that the Amendments proposed by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), which limited the operation of the Bill to the Metropolitan Companies, were accepted by the promoters of the Bill. Now, that was a strong reason against allowing a second reading of a Bill which proposed an injustice, which was condemned last year; but it was also a strong reason, as he would now proceed to prove against the Bill even as amended, as proposed last year. It was an admission that parish valuations proceeded on no uniform plan, and that such valuations were below the true valuations, and as regarded the Metropolis, this want of uniformity was remedied by the Metropolis Valuation Act of 1869. That Act prescribed uniform scales of deductions; it defined the principles of assessment; and secured a fair rating. Now, if the Amendments had been to the effect that the rental for water supplied within the Metropolitan area should be tested by the parochial valuations within that area, instead of making the Bill apply to the Metropolitan Companies generally, the Companies might have grumbled, but the ground of complaint would, to a great extent, have been cut from under their feet, because the parish valuations within the area of the Metropolis Valuation Act were, upon the whole, fairly made; there was a quinquennial valuation provided, so that any unfairness of rates could be remedied; and, moreover, a simple form of appeal was provided. But the Amendments accepted by the promoters of the Bill last year made the Bill apply to all the Metropolitan Companies generally, and they made the parish valuations the test of "annual value" in all the districts which they supplied with water, whether within or without the area covered by the Metropolis Valuation Act. That that was very unfair to the Companies was really admitted by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board; for, in reply to a deputation last year, he admitted that outside the Metropolis valuations were undoubtedly lower than in London; but he added that they formed a mere "drop in the ocean," and that he did not think there could be any substantial grievance under that head. This was, in fact, an admission that the Bill, as amended, would be unfair to the Companies if they had any considerable interest or rentals outside the Metropolitan area. Now, as a matter of fact, their interests were not a drop in the ocean, but very large indeed outside that area. Again, in the absence of papers, he had to trust to his memory; but he believed that out of 120 square miles supplied by the Companies, 90 were outside the Metropolitan Act area, and that the number of houses outside that area were largely increasing, while the number within that area remained much the same. There was, then, a substantial ground of complaint against the Bill, even as agreed to be amended last year. On these grounds he trusted that the House would not assent to the second reading of this Bill; but if it was to be granted, he trusted that, at all events, it would not be granted unless the promoters agreed to refer it to a Hybrid Committee before whom the Companies could be heard by counsel, and before whom their case could be fully shown by evidence.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, his hon. Friend (Sir Henry Holland) stated that his object was to defend the Companies against the charges made against them; but then the object of his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Torrens) was to enable the public of London to defend themselves against the charges made by the Water Companies. This Bill had nothing to do with the purity of the water of London. He consumed a great deal of it internally and externally; and the fact that he was still alive was proof that the water was not absolutely poisonous. The question raised by this Bill was a simple one—it was, whether the constantly-increasing charges made upon the consumers by the Companies were fair or not? His hon. Friend opposite said that he had Lord Bramwell on his side. Well, he had great respect for Lord Bramwell; but they knew that he had strong views on the rights of property. He was in favour of the full pound of flesh; and he probably would have given a decision in favour of Shylock. There was a great grievance, which had been removed in certain cases by the indomitable pertinacity of Mr. Dobbs; but that was done at an enormous cost. It was idle, in view of the Dobbs case, to say that the Companies had never charged for anything that they were not entitled to charge. It had been proved that they had. This Bill provided for the cases of those who could not defend themselves against the charges which the Companies thought right to impose. This was the grievance; and there could be no doubt it was felt to be a monstrous injustice that the Water Companies should be allowed to increase their charges by an immense percentage. The object of the Bill was to define clearly what was the annual value upon which the Companies should base their charges. It was a Bill to provide a cheap and easy means of determining that annual value by simply going to the rate book. To call it confiscation was an abuse of terms. As he understood it, it would provide an impartial settlement of disputes between the Companies and the consumers, and prevent the former increasing their charges at will. The method proposed for this purpose was an inexpensive one, which a poor man could adopt; and he, therefore, should support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he was disposed to think that within the Metropolis the Bill would operate fairly; but beyond that he was not prepared to go. He wished to point out that the decision of the House of Lords in Dobbs's case had been by no means an unmixed good, inasmuch as, under the rule laid down in that case, his assessment, and those of many other residents in his neighbourhood, had been increased by about 25 per cent. He did not think the Bill, as it stood, was fit to become law; but if his hon. Friend would assent to certain Amendments being made in Committee, no one would be better pleased with the Bill than he (Mr. Sclater-Booth). The subject was one of great difficulty; and he did not think it could be satisfactorily solved, except by the Government themselves introducing legislation.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD said, he was of opinion that if the operation of the measure were confined to the Metropolis it would be unobjectionable; but if applied to Provincial areas it would create much hardship. In many instances the Provincial Assessment Committees, in making their assessments, had undervalued property by 10 per cent. Therefore, it would be perfectly right that the Bill should be confined to the Metropolitan area, as contained in the Metropolis Local Assessment Bill. He trusted the day was not far distant when a Member of the Government would bring in a measure which should reconcile the conflicting measures adopted by various portions of the country in the matter of assessment, and bring one clear and concise measure forward which would put our valuation system upon a fair basis for both local and Imperial taxation.

Colonel MAKINS said, that he should oppose the Bill, on the ground that it would be a measure of confiscation as far as regarded the water supplied by the Metropolitan Water Companies to districts outside the Metropolitan area. He opposed the Bill on general grounds as well, as it proposed to re-enact, detrimentally to the Companies, agreements made with them by Parliament.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE remarked that he hoped that the Bill would be passed this Session, inasmuch as it was most desirable that some fixed rule of valuation should be adopted, instead of each particular case having to be fought out between a wealthy Company on the one hand and a poor tenant on the other. He did not believe the Bill was one of confiscation, as some had asserted. The point that was really at issue had been fairly put, for within the area of the Metropolis Assessment Act there was a strict and accurate valuation which had been agreed to by the Companies concerned; and, as far as the valuation existed, those Companies ought to be reasonably called upon to abide by it. A slight modification of one clause in the Bill would satisfy the Water Companies and secure a large benefit to the country; but if it were understood that in Committee the Bill would be modified so as to limit it to the operations of the Metropolis Valuation Act of 1869, there would be no necessity for a division on the second reading.

Mr. W. M. TORRENS, in accepting the proposal of the hon. and learned Member, said, that it had been the intention of the framers of the Bill that its provisions should only be applicable to districts within the Metropolitan area.

Mr. COOPE said, that he should wish to see the Bill referred to a Hybrid Committee, by whom the parties interested might be heard by counsel.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday* 5th March.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 11.]

(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Parnell, Colonel Nolan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Healy, Mr. Huntly M'Carthy.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [4th December].

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that, inasmuch as Her Majesty's Government had undertaken to deal with the subject of this measure themselves, he should ask leave to postpone the further debate on the second reading of this Bill until Monday, it being, however, clearly understood that the promoters of this measure did not pledge themselves to withdraw it unless they were satisfied with the Government proposals. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Waugh, Mr. George Howard, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Ferguson.*)

[BILL 26.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*General Sir George Balfour.*)

Mr. ELTON said, he cordially approved of the measure.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, there was no necessity for prolonging this discussion, as Her Majesty's Government would consent to the second reading of the Bill. He regarded the principle of enfranchisement as one that should be encouraged.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

LAND IMPROVEMENT AND ARTERIAL DRAINAGE (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to consolidate and amend the Acts for facilitating the improvement of Landed Property, and for the drainage and improvement of Lands in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 50.]

CROWN LANDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to amend the Law relating to the management of the Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues of the Crown, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 51.]

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to consolidate and amend certain Acts and Enactments relating to the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. Bill [52.]

ULSTER CANAL AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to provide for the transfer of the Ulster Canal and the Tyrone Navigation or Coalisland Canal from the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland to the Lagan Navigation Company; and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 53.]

SHANNON NAVIGATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HIBBERT, Bill to make provision with respect to the maintenance of certain Piers and other works in the estuary of the River Shannon, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HIBBERT and Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 54.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, Bill to amend "The Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877," and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 55.]

DEAN AND CHAPTER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, Bill to make better provision respecting the repair of Cathedrals, and the Endowment of Deans and Chapters in England, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER and Mr. HIBBERT.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 56.]

House adjourned at half after Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 20*th February*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL—*First Reading*—Ecclesiastical Commissioners * (17).

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—DEATH OF GENERAL SIR HERBERT STEWART AND GENERAL EARLE.

QUESTION.

VISCOUNT **HARDINGE** asked, Whether the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War had any further information to communicate to the House relative to the position of General Buller's Force in the Soudan?

THE EARL OF **MORLEY**: My Lords, I have no further information beyond what I stated to your Lordships yesterday in regard to that Force; but before I sit down I have an extremely melancholy task to perform. I think it is my duty to inform the House of the latest information we have received from the seat of war, and that a telegram was received to-day from Lord Wolseley; and the best way I can communicate the news is by reading the telegram, which is as follows:—

"Korti, Feb. 19, 1885.

"It is my most painful duty to announce to you the death of Sir Herbert Stewart, at 5 P.M. on the 16th instant, from the effects of the wound received in the action of the 19th ultimo. Colonel Talbot, in reporting this sad event to me, says:—'I beg to be allowed to express the deep grief of all ranks who have had the privilege of serving under this distinguished officer, especially of those who have so lately followed him into action, and also their sense of the great loss which they, the Army generally, and the country have sustained.' He was to be buried by the soldiers whom he so recently led to victory at the entrance to the valley leading to the Gakdul Wells. No braver soldier or more brilliant leader of men ever wore the Queen's uniform. England can ill afford the loss of this young General, while his death robs me of the services of a dear friend and of a dear comrade. All the other sick and wounded are well."

I am unwilling to mar, by any words of mine, the effect of this most touching message, every sentence of which will find an echo in the hearts of all who read it. In a very brief period, the Army and the country have had to mourn the loss of two of its most able Generals, two of its bravest soldiers, and two of its truest men. General Stewart and General Earle died as true soldiers, leading their men to victories gained against fearful odds. It was by the skilful disposition of their troops that those victories were gained, and gained all too dearly by the loss of two such Generals. My Lords, the country and the Army have to mourn the loss of two able men and soldiers whom we can ill spare. To the deep grief of their relatives it may be, at least, some alleviation to feel that their sorrows and their losses are participated in by the Army and the country at large.

The Duke of CAMBRIDGE: My Lords, I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without paying my tribute of respect to the memory of that gallant soldier, the news of whose death has just been communicated to your Lordships by the noble Earl (the Earl of Morley). A finer soldier never existed in Her Majesty's Service. He was a young officer who, by his own merits and his personal bravery, had brought himself into a prominent position in the Army much earlier than usually happens in the ordinary course of events. I take this opportunity, also, of expressing my sense of the gallantry and high conduct of General Earle. Both those officers have served their Queen and country with that distinction and heroism, which, I am sure, is so dear to, and animates the heart of, every Englishman if in a position to show it. They have had that opportunity, they have nobly carried out their duty, and they have fallen in the service of their Queen and country. The Army is proud of such men, and I think the country must also be proud to see such men in her Army. I also wish to take this opportunity of referring to another brave officer. I fear there is now little hope of the safety of General Gordon. I would say that these were three of the finest soldiers that England ever produced from her earliest history, and the country greatly mourns their loss. Everyone in this campaign has done his duty; and certainly no man has done his duty more honestly, fearlessly, and conscientiously than the late General Gordon. Whether in China or the Soudan, his power was most remarkable; while as to his merits we know what he did in the Soudan, and that, as to his powers of controlling men, they were most remarkable, and have never been surpassed. In his case, as in the case of the other two distinguished officers I have mentioned, I must express, on the part of the Army, my sincere and deep sympathy and regret at the loss which the Army, Her Majesty, and the country have sustained.

ARMY RESERVE FORCE—THE MILITIA.

MESSAGES FROM HER MAJESTY.

The following Messages were *delivered* by The Earl Granville, and read by The Lord Chancellor:—

Victoria R.

The present state of public affairs in the Soudan, and the necessity in connexion therewith of taking steps for the defence of Egypt and for the protection of the interests of the Empire, having constituted in the opinion of Her Majesty a case of great emergency within the meaning of the Acts of Parliament in that behalf, Her Majesty deems it proper to provide additional means for the Military Service; and, therefore, in pursuance of these Acts, Her Majesty has thought it right to communicate to the House of Lords that Her Majesty has by Proclamation directed that certain persons who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in army service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient.

V. R.

Victoria R.

The present state of public affairs in the Soudan, and the necessity in connexion therewith of taking steps for the defence of Egypt and for the protection of the interests of the Empire, having constituted in the opinion of Her Majesty a case of great emergency within the meaning of the Acts of Parliament in that behalf, Her Majesty deems it proper to provide additional means for the Military Service; and, therefore, in pursuance of these Acts, Her Majesty has thought it right to communicate to the House of Lords that Her Majesty has by Proclamation ordered the embodiment of Militia.

V. R.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—MILITARY CO-OPERATION OF THE COLONIES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT BURY, who had on the Paper the following Notice:—

"To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he will lay on the Table copies of despatches or telegrams from any dominion, colony, or dependency of the Crown, offering the assistance of men and military stores, or of ships, to co-operate with the other naval and military forces of the Crown in Egypt and the Soudan or in South Africa; also, copies of the replies which have been sent to such offers?"

said, that they all had seen, in the ordinary channels of information, mention of offers of military service which had been made by many of their Colonies; and the report that they had been accepted had excited great enthusiasm. He supposed that there were none who did not feel prouder and happier in the knowledge of this conclusive evidence that blood was thicker than water, and that the scattered dependencies of the Crown considered the unity of the Empire such an accomplished fact that they desired to share with our troops the honours and dangers of the campaign in which we were engaged. He supposed that their Lordships knew pretty well the terms in which those offers had been made, and generally the answers that had been given; and he felt sure that they would all agree with him that it was only fitting that those offers and those answers should be formally laid upon the Table of the House. He therefore begged to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies the Question of which he had given Notice.

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I am glad that the noble Viscount has given me, by his Question, an opportunity of expressing, at the earliest possible moment, our deep sense of gratitude—I speak on behalf of the Government, and I believe I speak on behalf of the whole people without any distinction of Party—which was felt on account of the various offers of military assistance which have been made by the various Colonies in so patriotic and public-spirited a manner. I should be ready to lay Papers on the Table on the subject; but probably your Lordships will think it better to wait until the Correspondence, which, up to the present time, has been entirely conducted by telegraph, is, if not complete, at all events more complete than it is at present. Perhaps it will be convenient to your Lordships that I should say that the offer of New South Wales was first in point of time. That offer was absolutely accepted, the Colony undertaking to defray the whole expense, and the troops being ready to start. With regard to the other Colonies, the offers of which have come a little later, we are in correspondence about their offers. There are many matters of detail with which it will be necessary for the Military Authorities to deal. All I can now say is that we shall deal with them on the same principle, in the same spirit, and on the same footing; and that we shall do whatever lies in our power to encourage and cultivate that feeling, the display of which we have seen with so much pleasure. I quite agree with the noble Viscount that, apart from the question of increased military strength, the co-operation of our Colonies in matters of this nature carries with it an incalculable moral advantage.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON asked, when the Papers would be laid on the Table? He concluded he was right in assuming, from what the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Derby) had said, that the offers had been accepted.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, that that was the case, subject to one slight qualification with regard to one arm of the Service. In the main their co-operation had been accepted. As to the laying of the Papers on the Table, he thought it would be better to wait till the Correspondence was complete.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE: On behalf of the Army, I really hope I may be allowed to express my entire approval of what the noble Earl (the Earl of Derby) has said, because I see that it has been stated that the Military Authorities have been making some difficulties in this matter. I can assure your Lordships that the Military Authorities have not made the slightest difficulty. On the contrary, they have appreciated most thoroughly, and as highly as any of your Lordships, these very noble offers on the part of the Colonies, which are so highly creditable to themselves and so gratifying to the whole nation. As the noble Earl has stated, there are some small matters of merely military detail to be seen to before the whole arrangements can be carried out; but the principle of the offer has been cordially and cheerfully accepted by the Military Authorities.

The Earl of BELMORE asked, whether the artillery offered by New South Wales was field or garrison artillery?

The Earl of MORLEY, in reply, said that it was field artillery.

Viscount BURY asked the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) to give the names of the other Colonies besides New South Wales offering assistance? The name of one Colony having been mentioned, it would be a graceful compliment to the Colonies who had made offers that their names should also be made public in the same connection.

The Earl of DERBY: The other Colonies are Canada, South Australia, Victoria, and Queensland. Perhaps I ought to add that the conditions under which the offers are made vary in the different Colonies.

PARLIAMENT — RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE (ADMISSION OF STRANGERS)—ADMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

OBSERVATIONS.

Earl GRANVILLE, with reference to a Question which stood on the Paper in the name of Lord Oranmore and Browne—namely,

> "To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is his intention to propose any such new rules relative to admission to the House of Lords as have been made by the Speaker of the House of Commons relative to that House?"

said, he understood that the Question was to be postponed. He hoped, however, that their Lordships would not think him wanting in respect for the noble Lord if he gave an answer at once in order to save time. It appeared that in that matter there was some confusion of authorities, of whom he (Earl Granville) was not one. The authorities were the Lord Chamberlain and the Black Rod, and the police could only act under their directions. If he were asked for advice upon the matter, he would say that the Committee on the Office of Black Rod should meet and consider the subject; and it was in order that that course might be taken without loss of time, if their Lordships agreed to it, that he had now anticipated the putting of the Question by the noble Lord.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, perhaps the noble Earl, as Leader of the House, would make a Motion on the subject.

Earl GRANVILLE said, that the Committee were to meet on Tuesday, when they might take the matter into consideration.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, that having been present at a meeting of the Committee of the Black Rod on Thursday, he knew there was only one piece of Business down on the Agenda Paper for the Committee on Tuesday; and it was desirable that the Committee should receive an intimation if any other matter was to be brought before them, as suggested by the noble Earl (Earl Granville).

Earl GRANVILLE promised that the requisite Notice should be given accordingly.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—THE PAPERS.—QUESTION.

The Earl of MILLTOWN asked, Whether the Government would lay on the Table the letter from General Gordon of the 4th of November last along with the other Papers which had been promised?

Earl GRANVILLE, in reply, said, that he intended to adhere to the rule of asking the noble Earl to give Notice of his Question. On more than one occasion last year that rule was broken through—by himself, he believed, in one instance—and some public inconvenience had arisen in consequence. He was therefore determined in future, if possible, to keep to it.

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, that if the letter to which his Question referred was not included in the Papers about to be presented, he would move for its production.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE FORCE IN THE SOUDAN.

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he wished to give Notice of a Question which he would put to the Government on Monday. The British Force now in the Soudan was, in military phrase, in the air, or without a base, and was consequently in some possible danger. He would therefore ask, Whether it was part of the original plan of campaign of Lord Wolseley that a force should be sent to Suakin to co-operate with his force coming up the Nile; and, whether, in the summer of last year, a requisition was sent by Lord Wolseley to the Government, asking that troops should be sent to Suakin forthwith to co-operate with and form a base for his force on the Nile?

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for amending the Ecclesiastical Commissioners Acts; and for other purposes—Was *presented* by The Lord Bishop of LICHFIELD; read 1ª. (No. 17.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 20th February, 1885.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Mid Somerset, *v.* William Stephen Gore-Langton, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds.

SELECT COMMITTEES — Standing Orders, *nominated;* Selection, *nominated;* Salmon Fisheries (Ireland), *appointed.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1884-5)—CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS; CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee—Ordered—First Reading*—Oaths [62].

Ordered—First Reading — Corn Sales * [57]; Sites for Places of Religious Worship * [58]; Explosive Substances Act (1883) Amendment * [59]; Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) * [60]; Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment * [61]; Registration (Occupation Voters) * [63]; Municipal Voters (Relief) * [64]; Law of Evidence (Criminal Cases) * [65]; Corporate Property Security * [66].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT—STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Select Committee on Standing Orders *nominated:*—Sir JOHN MOWBRAY, Sir EDWARD COLEBROOKE, Mr. CUBITT, Mr. FLOYER, Mr. MONK, Mr. MULHOLLAND, Sir LYON PLAYFAIR, Lord ARTHUR RUSSELL, Mr. SHAW, Mr. WHITBREAD, and Mr. YORKE.

PARLIAMENT—COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

Committee of Selection *nominated:*—Mr. CUBITT, Sir CHARLES FORSTER, Mr. ILLINGWORTH, Mr. ORR EWING, Mr. MELDON, Mr. WHITBREAD, Sir HENRY WOLFF, and The CHAIRMAN of the SELECT COMMITTEE on STANDING ORDERS.

MR. SEXTON asked whether he would be in Order in moving that certain Members should be added to these Committees?

MR. SPEAKER replied, that the hon. Member could make a Motion of that kind on giving due Notice of his intention to do so.

NOTICE.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—THE VOTE OF CENSURE—NOTICE OF AMENDMENT.

SIR HENRY TYLER: I beg to give Notice that when my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition brings forward his Motion with regard to Egypt and the Soudan, I shall move to add the following words to the Resolution he proposes to submit to the House:—

> "And has further rendered it incumbent on Her Majesty's Government to take and hold Khartoum, and to open up and develop the trade route viâ Suakin and Berber, by a Railway to be constructed, and steamers to be provided, with a view to promoting the interests of civilisation and commerce in Central Africa."

QUESTIONS.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—ARMAMENTS.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, What proportion of the one million six hundred thousand pounds, asked for in the Admiralty programme for guns, is to be expended on new and old ships; and, what amount on fortifications, and where?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Of the £1,600,000 to be expended on guns to which my hon. Friend refers, £1,500,000 will be for naval ordnance, leaving £100,000 to be devoted to the extension of plant at Woolwich. The additional expenditure will be at the rate of £300,000 a-year over and above the ordinary provision of £500,000 sanctioned in the Army Estimates of the coming year. In the ordinary course the additional money will be absorbed in providing armaments for the new ships. The provision for the armaments of fortifications is not included in the amount to which the Question refers.

NAVY—TENDERS FOR SHIPS AND TORPEDO BOATS.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, If tenders for the Ships and Torpedo Boats intended to be built in private yards are to be procured by public or private tender?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Tenders are invited from known competent firms, and 37 firms have been asked to send in tenders, and there is thus limited competition.

CONVICT ESTABLISHMENTS—HARBOUR OF REFUGE AT PETERHEAD.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What preparations are made for proceeding with the Convict Establishment at Peterhead, and for commencing the harbour of refuge there?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that the Government were very anxious to get on with the work referred to in the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's Question; but some delay in the arrangements had taken place as to the Department which was to be responsible. The plans for the harbour were still under consideration.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—PROGRESS OF VESSELS BUILDING.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will state what progress has been made in the building of the additional ironclads and other vessels promised for the Navy in November?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: With regard to vessels being built under contract, I have nothing to add to the answer which I gave to the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) yesterday. With regard to ironclad vessels being built in the Dockyards, the grants of wages have been increased; and on the Estimates I hope to be able to show that satisfactory progress has been made.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BUSINESS (RAILWAYS)—RATES AND CHARGES BILLS.

Mr. ROLLS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has now considered the Bills deposited by nine of the principal Railway Companies for revision of their rates and charges; whether he is now prepared to state the course he intends to take or advise with regard to these Bills; and, whether, having regard to the magnitude of the questions involved, and the important bearing of these Bills upon the trading, commercial, and agricultural interests of the Kingdom, and having further regard to the expenses in which traders and freighters would be involved by the consideration of these Bills in detail in Committee, he will advise such steps to be taken as will insure ample notice of the consideration of the Bills, and afford to traders, freighters, chambers of commerce and agriculture, and other public bodies, every facility for watching the Bills at the least possible expense?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I have carefully considered the Bills deposited by nine of the principal Railway Companies for revision of their rates and charges; but I do not think that it is usual for a Minister to state, on behalf of the Government, what course it is proposed to take with reference to the second reading of Private Bills before the second reading stage of them has been reached. I am still in communication with the representatives of the Railway Companies, and of the trades; and I hope that some satisfactory result will come of those communications. In the case of any Bill which passes the second reading and which is referred to a Committee, there will, no doubt, be full opportunity for consideration on the part of all parties interested.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—KHARTOUM—GENERAL GORDON'S DIARIES.

Mr. SAMPSON LLOYD asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any letters written by General Gordon, which are alleged to have been handed to Sir Charles Wilson on 21st January last, or whether they have received any copies of them or of any of them; whether they have received any of the five complete monthly diaries of the siege of Khartoum (alleged to have been handed to Sir Charles Wilson) or any copies thereof; and, if they have received any of the above, whether they will communicate them to the House?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There is a similar Question on the Paper to the Secretary of State for War by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). I may, however, point out at once that it is impossible for any letters, papers, or any other documents handed over on the 21st of January to Sir Charles Wilson, near Metammeh, to be at the present moment in the hands of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. BOURKE: Will the noble Lord state whether he recollects what has become of the journals or the diaries of General Gordon?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, I cannot state from memory; but I will inquire.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BUSINESS—RAILWAY BILLS.

Sir BERNHARD SAMUELSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is correctly reported in *The Birmingham Daily Gazette* as having stated to a deputation of the Birmingham and District Railway and Canal Rates Association on the 2nd instant,

> "That Railway Bills as a matter of form were always allowed to go before a Committee, there being only one exception to this rule; but that this did not necessarily commit to any principle involved in the case of Private Bills;"

and, if the report is not correct, will he state in what respect it is erroneous?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, no reporter was present, and he could not charge his memory with all that took place. He could only say, with great certainty, that he did not use the language attributed to him in the Question.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN FRONTIER COMMISSION.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any reply has been received from the Russian Government to the request of Her Majesty's Government that, pending the decision of the Afghan Frontier Commission, the Russian troops should be withdrawn from Pul-i-Khatun; and, if he can make any statement as to the negotiations now going on with the Russian Government as to the resumption of the work of the Commission?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must answer the hon. Gentleman's first Question in the negative. With regard to the second, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that it would be injurious to the public interest if any statement were made at present as to the negotiations with the Russian Government respecting the Boundary Commission.

Mr. ONSLOW: May I remind the noble Lord that the same answer was given many months ago?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, I am aware of that; but I may remind the hon. Member and the House that there are a very great number of negotiations which last several months.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, whether the noble Lord could state, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, that they still adhered to the views expressed last year, to the effect that they intended to maintain the absolute integrity of Afghanistan?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have just said I do not think it my duty to answer Questions of this kind. If I were to answer Questions such as that I should be gradually drawn into making a full statement.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If we are to understand from the replies which he has given to Questions put to him that Her Majesty's Government are not in a position, and do not think it desirable, to give to the House of Commons any information whatever with regard to the position of the Russian Forces on the Frontier of Afghanistan at the present moment?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Question on the Paper and my answer have no reference whatever to the position of the Russian Forces on the Frontier of Afghanistan.

AFRICA—THE RED SEA COAST—OCCUPATION OF MASSOWAH BY ITALY.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Italian Government have occupied Massowah by Treaty or arrangement with Her Majesty's Ministers; whether the Italian Government propose to occupy Kassala and the fertile province of Taka; and, whether the assent of the Sultan, who is Sovereign of Egypt, has been given to this occupation of Ottoman territory?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Italian Government have concluded no Treaty or arrangement with Her Majesty's Ministers with regard to the occupation of Massowah. Her Majesty's Government have no information as to the intentions of the Italian Government with regard to Kassala and the Province of Taka; and they have reason to believe that the Sultan has not assented to the occupation of Massowah.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: As the Government have not assented or made any arrangement with regard to the occupation of Massowah, may I ask the noble Lord whether Her Majesty's Government will exercise influence with *The Daily News* and other Liberal journals to prevent them from instigating Italy to occupy Massowah?

[No reply.]

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF BRYAN KILMARTIN.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, having regard to the doubt cast by Members of the Government on the innocence of Bryan Kilmartin, of Arran Island, whose sentence of penal servitude for life was recently cancelled by the Lord Lieutenant, the Government will lay upon the Table the Report of Mr. R. P. Carton, Q.C., upon consideration of which by the Irish Executive Kilmartin was set free?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Report in question is essentially of a confidential nature, and the Government must decline to lay it on the Table. I should add that Kilmartin's sentence was not cancelled. He was simply released from custody.

Mr. SEXTON: I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this man having been sent to penal servitude and released in the third year of his imprisonment, and the Government in an official manner having cast doubts on his innocence, they will still allow that stigma to rest on him while they withhold the evidence upon which he was released?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That, of course, is an argumentative Question, which could not be answered by the production of the Report.

Mr. SEXTON: Well, then, in order to argue the question, I shall move for the production of this Report.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—STEAMERS FOR THE NILE.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any measures have been or are being taken to provide steamers suitable for military operations for traffic between Berber and Khartoum?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; Lord Wolseley has stated what he will require, and measures are being taken to comply with his request.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—THE SUAKIN AND BERBER RAILWAY.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a contract has been made for the construction of a Railway between the Red Sea and the Nile; what are generally the conditions of that contract; whether it is intended to employ native workmen; and, when it is expected that the Railway will be completed; and what will be the gauge?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: A line of railway between Suakin and Berber has been approved; and its construction under military supervision has been confided to the firm of Messrs. Lucas and Aird. The line will be made by sections of 50 miles, the plant for the successive sections being forwarded as required. Messrs. Lucas and Aird find the plant and labour, the War Department paying the actual disbursements of the firm, whether in material or wages.

The agents receive a small commission. It is intended, if possible, to employ Native labour. Until the military operations in the vicinity of Suakin have been further developed, it is impossible to form an estimate of the probable date of the completion of the railway. The gauge is 4 feet 8½ inches.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: May I ask where the money to pay for this railway is to come from?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The cost of the railway will, of course, be defrayed from Votes which Parliament will be asked to grant.

INDIA—THE RAILWAY FROM SIBI TO QUETTA.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, To inform the House generally of the progress that has been made with the Railway from Sibi to Quetta; and, whether it is now the intention of Her Majesty's Government to construct a Railway also in the direction of Candahar?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I will ask the hon. Member to postpone his Question for a few days, as a despatch on this subject, which left India on the 3rd of February, and will therefore be here in a few days, will enable me to give the latest details. I may state, however, that there is no intention to take the railway beyond the Pishin plateau.

EGYPT (THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—KHARTOUM—COLONEL STEWART AND HIS COMPANIONS.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any Despatch was received from General Gordon stating the reasons why Colonel Stewart and his companions left Khartoum; and, if so, whether he would have any objection to make that Despatch public, or to state the contents of it?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have not had time to look fully into the matter. I believe that some despatches which were among the Papers laid on the Table last night contained a statement by General Gordon with reference to the departure of Colonel Stewart and his companions from Khartoum. I am not quite certain, however, whether this was the case or not.

SIR HENRY TYLER: I will repeat the Question on Monday.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRAWLING—THE REPORT.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will state when the Report of the Royal Commission upon the Trawling Question will be laid upon the Table of the House?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I believe the Report is now in print.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—PRINCE HASSAN.

MR. RITCHIE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will explain to the House what are the circumstances which have rendered necessary the appointment of Prince Hassan as High Commissioner in the Soudan; and, what are the political consequences the Government expect to follow from such appointment?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Prince Hassan was appointed in order to facilitate communications between Lord Wolseley and the Egyptian Civil Authorities. The hon. Member's second Question involves matter of debate and argument, and I cannot enter into it within the limits usually assigned to a Question.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I beg to ask whether Prince Hassan is to have control over the Egyptian Mudirs in the Soudan; whether the Soudan is still supposed to form part of the dominion of the Khedive; and by what authority the Khedive can appoint Prince Hassan?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Question of the hon. Member appears to me to be of a very argumentative character.

MR. GOSCHEN: May I ask my noble Friend whether the despatches relating to this matter, however short they may be—even telegraphic despatches—should be submitted to the House before the expected debate, so that the House would be in full possession of all the events?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I shall, of course, be very glad to bring the matter before the Secretary of State.

ARMY—DEFENCE OF THE COALING STATIONS.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any progress has been made with the provision of the works and armaments for the defence of our coaling stations abroad; and, when an Estimate for the purpose will be submitted to Parliament?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Some progress has been made with the works at Aden and Hong Kong, and in the production of the armaments for those works generally. For this purpose a sum of £35,000 will be taken in the Supplementary Estimates for 1884-5, which will be laid on the Table in the course of a few days. The money required in the next financial year will be included in the Army Estimates for 1885-6, which were laid on the Table of the House last night. The Correspondence, which will also be laid on the Table, will show the alteration in the figures for the works.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—DEFICIENCY OF MILITIA OFFICERS.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, What steps have been taken to supply the deficiency of Militia officers, and if he will state to what number this deficiency has now risen?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Since the hon. Member put his Question to me in November I have carefully considered the replies gived by commanding officers of Militia regiments to the Circular issued to them. An overwhelming majority of these officers express strong opinions that the remedy for the deficiency of subaltern officers in this branch of the Service is to grant them greater facilities for entering the Regular Army. The normal number of Line commissions which will in future be granted to Militia officers was increased last year from 70 to 150. And, in addition to the normal number, I am now able to grant 35 commissions to the competitors who qualified, but were not successful, at the last examination. In the course of this year I shall also be able to grant a certain number of commissions in addition to the normal number; the result is that very few qualified candidates will fail to obtain commissions. When the facility with which a Line commission is obtained through the Militia becomes more widely known, I feel confident that a large number of officers will be attracted to this branch of the Service. Since November last the number of vacancies has been reduced from 857 to 773.

ARMY—THE 20TH HUSSARS AND 5TH LANCERS.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, If it is true that the 20th Hussars' departure from Aldershot for Egypt was delayed in consequence of the wrong equipment having been sent down to them from the Clothing Department; and, whether the regiment eventually marched out in Infantry helmets, and mixed equipment; and, if so, who was to blame for the occurrence?

MR. BRAND, in reply, said, no report had been received by the War Office that the 20th Hussars had been delayed in consequence of a mistake in their equipment; and, as a matter of fact, it was not the case.

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the 20th Hussars and 5th Lancers were among the regiments first on the roster for Foreign Service; and, if so, why only two squadrons of each regiment are being despatched to Egypt; and, what is the strength of the remaining squadrons in effective men and horses, and whether they are equally fit for Foreign Service as the squadrons which are now embarking?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Four squadrons only were required, and it was considered desirable that two squadrons should be Lancers. Therefore, two squadrons were taken from the first Hussar regiment on the roster and two from the first Lancer regiment. The states of the remaining squadrons have not been yet received.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked whether the squadrons of Lancers and the squadrons of Hussars were together as one regiment?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am afraid I cannot answer that Question without Notice.

EGYPT—GENERAL GORDON'S LETTERS AND DESPATCHES.

MR. BRODRICK asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the fact that telegraphic or other despatches have been received by Her Majesty's Government or Lord Wolseley from General Gordon which have not been communicated to the public press; what are the dates of these despatches; and, whether he will lay them upon the Table of the House without delay?

MR. W. E. FORSTER had also the following Question on the Paper:—If the Secretary of State for War can inform the House whether any of the Diaries of General Gordon are in the possession of Lord Wolseley or Sir Charles Wilson, or any of the officers in the Soudan; and, if so, whether the Government will lay upon the Table of the House so much of those Diaries as is of public interest, and give the remainder to General Gordon's family?

MR. SAMPSON LLOYD also asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any letters written by General Gordon, which are alleged to have been handed to Sir Charles Wilson on 21st January last, or whether they have received any copies of them or of any of them; whether they have received any of the five complete monthly Diaries of the siege of Khartoum (alleged to have been handed to Sir Charles Wilson) or any copies thereof; and, if they have received any of the above, whether they will communicate them to the House?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In answering the hon. Member, I will, if they will permit me, reply also to the Questions which stand in the names of the hon. Members for Harwich and West Surrey, and of the right hon. Member for Bradford. In the Papers laid on the Table last night are included all despatches or letters from General Gordon which have come into the hands of Her Majesty's Government, and which do not relate exclusively to personal matters. As to any further despatches or papers which may have reached Lord Wolseley, I can only state what information I have received from him. On January 28, when he reported that Sir Herbert Stewart's Force had reached Gubat, Lord Wolseley said that he had no letters of any importance from General Gordon, and that the most recent, dated December 29, contained merely one line, saying, "Khartoum all right; could hold out for years." In another telegram of the same date he mentioned letters which he had received from General Gordon, which I have not received; but to which I gather that his previous telegram referred, as being of no importance. Lord Wolseley made no addition to these statements on February 9, when he reported Sir Charles Wilson's arrival at Korti. I have received to-day a further telegram from Lord Wolseley to the effect that General Gordon's diary is in six volumes, of which only one had reached him, and which he had sent home by the last mail, but that the other five, with some other Papers, were believed to be on the way from Gubat. He would send them on as soon as they arrived. I should prefer to give no absolute pledge as to their disposal until I receive them.

MR. W. E. FORSTER asked whether the diaries, which were not of public interest, would be sent to General Gordon's family as soon as they arrived?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Of course; but I should not like to make any promise with regard to them.

MR. MACFARLANE: May I ask the noble Marquess whether the communications he has received from General Gordon are in Arabic or in English?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Both despatches I referred to are, I believe, written in English.

MEETING ON THE VICTORIA EMBANKMENT—SPEECH OF MR. H. M. HYNDMAN.

MR. BRODRICK asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a speech, reported in *The Times* of February 17, in which the following language is attributed to Mr. H. M. Hyndman:—

> "If the people wanted the Government to do anything for them they must follow the course which the Irish had adopted—'A life for a life' must be their motto. (Loud cheers.) The people were murdered by the slow process of starvation, and if those who were responsible for this state of things knew that it was life for life they would act differently. . . . His advice to them would be to try once more by peaceful means to get their grievances redressed, and if that failed he should be the first to organise a secret society to secure what a peaceful agitation had failed to accomplish;"

and, what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken to secure the observance of the law by Mr. H. M. Hyndman?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes, Sir; I saw the abominable and disgraceful language which was attributed in the newspapers to Mr. Hyndman. I am glad to say that a deputation of distressed working men, which waited on me the day afterwards, took the first opportunity of expressing their horror and disgust at that language, and the persons using it. In this country speeches of this kind are happily so rare that we have not made provision in all cases for official reports of what takes place at them. I find that in the newspapers of the following day Mr. Hyndman, to a certain degree, disputed the accuracy of the reports, which, indeed, did not agree altogether amongst themselves. This places a difficulty in the way of taking any action in the case. I wish to state distinctly that in every case where sufficient proof can be obtained of language, either written or spoken, inciting to outrage and crime, the Government will use all the means at their disposal to prosecute and punish the offenders.

Mr. O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman take the precaution of appointing shorthand writers in future to attend these popular meetings, as has been done in Ireland?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, Sir, if it becomes necessary it certainly will be done.

INDIA—ALLEGED REQUEST FOR REINFORCEMENTS.

Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Whitehall Review* of yesterday, that

> "Earl Dufferin, as Viceroy of India, has sent a demand to the Home Government for the despatch of 20,000 British Troops to India without delay;"

and, if so, if he will state to the House why the demand has been made?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: No, Sir; the statement in *The Whitehall Review* is not true.

EGYPT (THE SOUDAN)—PRINCE HASSAN.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the employment of Prince Hassan with our Army in the Soudan was at the instance of Her Majesty's Government; who first suggested his employment; what is his exact official position; has he any independent authority over anyone; and, is he under the absolute orders of Lord Wolseley?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In referring the right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University generally to the replies given yesterday to the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), I will add that the appointment of Prince Hassan was made at Lord Wolseley's suggestion; that he is a Commissioner with authority over the Egyptian Mudirs; and that he is subject entirely to the orders of Lord Wolseley.

Mr. GIBSON: From whom does he receive his appointment?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: From the Khedive.

Mr. GIBSON: Does that put him directly under the authority of Lord Wolseley?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir.

EMIGRATION TO THE COLONIES—INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. RANKIN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in accordance with the promise made on the 25th July last by his Predecessor in Office, the question of making grants of money for the maintenance of industrial schools or homes for training poor or destitute children for emigration to the Colonies has been taken into consideration by the Home Office; and, if so, at what decision it has arrived?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: The question of emigration in connection with industrial schools, together with the whole subject of reformatory and industrial schools, has been, and is now, under the consideration of the Home Office, with a view to legislation, if possible, in the present Session of Parliament.

SCOTLAND—THE SKYE CROFTERS—EMPLOYMENT OF A MILITARY FORCE.

Dr. CAMERON (for Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will lay further Papers connected with the armed expedition to Skye, brought down to date, upon the Table of the House; and, if he will inform the House at whose expense the expedition was despatched and is now maintained?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: No, Sir; I do not think it necessary to lay any further Papers on this matter before the House. In the first instance, when the Marines were sent to Skye in the vessels it was thought advisable to explain the circumstances to the House; but since then it has been a very ordinary case, such as has occurred from time to time in this country where the police required the support of the military in a riot, and that has been accorded as the usual practice when the occasion required, and I do not think it is at all necessary that further Papers be tabled on the subject.

DR. CAMERON: What was the expense of the expedition?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: In regard to the expense, as a general rule, any expense beyond the regular expense of the military would be provided by the Local Authority of the town. That rule will certainly be acted upon in this case. I do not speak of the details, because I do not know exactly what they may be; but that principle will certainly be adhered to, just as it would be in the riots where the military would be called in to assist the police.

DR. CAMERON intimated that on an early day he would ask when the Report of Sheriff Ivory to the Lord Advocate would be laid on the Table?

MR. GORST asked whether the expense of the transport of the Marines would be defrayed by the Local Authority, or would fall upon the Consolidated Fund?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he would rather not answer that Question, as he really did not know all the details. If the hon. and learned Member would put the Question on the Paper the Lord Advocate, who was more familiar with the details, would, no doubt, give him a more satisfactory answer.

MR. MACFARLANE asked if any outrage had taken place since the despatch of these forces which would justify any prosecution being instituted?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT requested the hon. Member to give Notice of the Question.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the exact position of Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission in Afghanistan; how soon it is expected that the Russian Envoy will meet Sir Peter Lumsden in order to settle the boundary question; whether Her Majesty's Government can assure the House that there is any reasonable prospect of our Mission being a success; and, whether, considering that the policy of the Mission and the orders sent to Sir Peter Lumsden are directed from the Foreign Office of this country, it is intended that the whole cost of this policy should be borne by the revenues of India?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have already said that Her Majesty's Government do not consider it advisable to make any statement at present in regard to the negotiations with Russia as to the Afghan Boundary Commission, and I must therefore decline to reply to the hon. Member's first three Questions, as I could not answer them without entering into the history of the negotiations. With regard to the last Question, it has been decided that the expenses of the British portion of the Commission will be borne by India, the boundary question being essentially an Indian one. I may add that no instructions are given by the Foreign Office to Sir Peter Lumsden without previous consultation with the India Office. I am anxious to take this opportunity of making an appeal to the House in regard to Foreign Office Questions. The old practice used to be to give at least two days' clear Notice. The present practice is to put the Questions down on the evening of the day immediately preceding that on which the Question is to be asked, and sometimes very late on that evening. In substance, this amounts to not more than five hours' Notice to the Office, because the Votes do not reach the Office till about 11 o'clock the following day. When there are Morning Sittings it amounts to two hours less. Within that short period the answer, which often requires considerable research, has to be prepared, and also to be submitted to the Secretary of State and frequently to other Cabinet Ministers. The pressure on the Office is consequently very severe, especially at a moment like the present, when the time of the Departments and of the Secretary of State is fully occupied with important business. I therefore trust I may ask hon. Members, as a rule, to give at least one clear day's Notice, subject, of course, to exceptions in such cases as may arise from time to time where shorter Notice might be legitimate. I make this appeal at the desire of the Secretary of State, and I feel sure that hon. Members will not misunderstand the motives which prompt it.

GREECE—THE ASSAULT ON MR. NICHOLSON.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay upon the Table the Correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the King of the Hellenes with reference to the assault on Mr. Nicholson by an Athenian policeman, and the reparation demanded for it?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There will be no objection to produce the Correspondence.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—MILITARY CO-OPERATION OF THE COLONIES.

MR. W. E. FORSTER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can inform the House what offers have been made by Colonial Governments to send troops in aid of Her Majesty's Forces now engaged in war in the Soudan; and, what replies have been made to these offers by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. GLADSTONE: The offers to which the Question refers have attracted much attention in this country, and likewise on the Continent of Europe. I am glad this Question has been put, because it tends to give an increased interest in the public mind to the offers themselves, which, in truth, are not to be regarded as casual events, but which appear, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, to have a real historical character. When I recollect that just 100 years ago this country had scarcely ceased to reel under the shock of a great dismemberment of the Empire—which dismemberment of the Empire had been brought about by unfortunate attempts to force on what were then the most important Colonies of Great Britain contributions in aid of the public Revenue for the military charges of this country—it is certainly a gratifying contrast which is now presented to us. Such attempts on these free communities have now become entirely obsolete; and the consequence of that abandonment of untenable claims has been to open a fountain-head of loyalty, patriotism, and public spirit, and of liberality in the Colonies themselves, which has led to these most gratifying and most important offers. Sir, I think the object of the Question of my right hon. Friend is rather to draw forth an expression of the sentiments of the Government on the general character of the transaction than to place the House in possession of particular details; because, although I will make a short statement on the subject, the Correspondence is not yet ripe for our doing that which will eventually be done—placing on the Table of both Houses of Parliament the Correspondence and telegrams. I will name the Colonies from which these offers have proceeded, and in doing so I will remind the House that the time within which it is possible that the idea could be suggested and transmitted to this country has as yet been extremely short. Therefore I do not think it is to be inferred that we have yet gone through the whole of the developed sentiments of the different Possessions of the Crown. The Colonies from which offers—varying in form, but one in spirit—have been received are, in the first place, New South Wales; in the second, Canada; thirdly, Victoria; fourthly, South Australia; and, fifthly, Queensland. I will only speak in particular of one of these offers — namely, New South Wales — not merely because it was first in point of time, but likewise because it was more completely formulated than most of the other proposals, and consequently admits of more expeditious proceeding. The offer from New South Wales may be described in these words—The Colonial Government propose that they should provide for service in the Soudan, for the military operations now in contemplation, two batteries of Field Artillery and 500 Infantry, to be landed at Suakin within 30 days after embarkation. I may say we are given to understand that that embarkation could be effected very promptly almost at once—and all expenses attendant upon this expedition to be defrayed from the Colonial funds. That certainly is a most remarkable offer; and if I refer to one other Colony in particular, and not to the rest, it is for a reason which the House will readily understand —I mean the Colony of South Australia, which has offered to provide a force of

250 Infantry upon the same footing with the offer from New South Wales. I am not quite sure that they are absolutely in the same state of preparedness, but they are upon the same footing; and the reason I mention this offer on the part of South Australia, which proposes to bear the military charges of its expedition, is because the population of that Colony is comparatively small, being only between 200,000 and 300,000. I have stated the purport of the offer of New South Wales, and I have only to add that the offer has been received by Her Majesty's Government with feelings of the liveliest gratification, and is accepted by them with those acknowledgments of the public spirit of the Colonies, and with those feelings of thankfulness on the part of the United Kingdom, which everybody will feel to be required by the occasion. The House will understand that there are many considerations of time, of place, of distance, and of climate, with respect to pending operations, which require to be made the subject of careful military correspondence; and upon all those details the Correspondence is now in the hands of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington). But I may say that this offer of New South Wales—I do not think that matters have proceeded so far, as yet, with respect to the other offers—has been made known to Lord Wolseley, and has been accepted by him with the liveliest satisfaction. I do not propose to enter into so much detail with respect to the other Colonies; but I may say that as the whole of these proposals—perfectly spontaneous on their part—have proceeded from one and the same spirit of loyalty and attachment to the Throne and the Empire, so they will be considered by us, and dealt with by us, I trust, in one and the same spirit of thankfulness. I do not know when we can present the very interesting information in due form. It will be laid before the House. I will not attempt to go further into the matter upon the present occasion, except simply to say that these proposals, while they are very instructive in their historical character, and in comparison with events of former times, so they at once bear testimony to the unity of the British Empire, and likewise powerfully tend to draw closely together the bonds of that union.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, after the statement which he has just made to the House as to the beneficial effects of self-government, whether he would be prepared to ask his Party to support the Irish Members if they brought forward a similar measure for Ireland?

[No reply.]

NEW GUINEA—ANNEXATION BY FOREIGN POWERS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will inform the House what was the evidence to which he referred, and by whom it was given, when he used these words in his reply on the 18th of August 1883—

> "The evidence on which I spoke, when I said there was no reason to apprehend any intention of a particular kind on the part of any Foreign Country to annex New Guinea, is by no means confined to mere negative evidence?"

MR. GLADSTONE: In consequence of the Question of the hon. Member, I have referred to the documents which I had before me at the time I used the words quoted; and I am bound to say that the statement I made was entirely justified by the facts; but the documents have not been laid before Parliament, and I do not think it will be fit that I should enter into further details. Since that time one Foreign Power, if not more than one Foreign Power, has seen fit to adopt intentions which at the time I spoke it had not adopted; and that change of intention has led to correspondence with Her Majesty's Government which it would not be expedient to produce, as it is still proceeding.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Will the documents referred to by the Prime Minister be presented to Parliament?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; they will.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Are we to understand that some other Foreign Power besides Germany had an idea of annexation in New Guinea?

MR. GLADSTONE: No; I did not intend to convey such an idea.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND HERAT.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the recent advances towards Afghanistan, and to past experience as to the adherence of Russia to her previous professions, Her Majesty's Government have taken, or are taking, any measures with a view to the security of Herat?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The Prime Minister has asked me to answer this Question; and I can only assure the hon. Member that, taking into consideration the repeated declarations of Russia that Afghanistan is not within the sphere of her political influence, we are bound to accept the positive assurances lately given that there is no foundation for the report of an advance against Herat, which town is now garrisoned by a considerable force of the Ameer's troops, and the attempted occupation of which by Russia would lead to the most serious consequences.

Sir HENRY TYLER: Will the hon. Gentleman kindly represent to Her Majesty's Government how important the matter is, and how necessary it is that in this matter they should not be too late?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Can the hon. Member state the date of the last assurances by Russia with regard to Herat?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: No, Sir; I cannot at present state the date; but if the noble Lord will give Notice of the Question I will endeavour to answer it.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: Is it not the fact that since the appointment of the Afghan Boundary Commission the Russians have advanced much nearer to Herat than before; and can the hon. Member say at what distance from Herat they now are?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Perhaps the hon. Member will give Notice of a Question of that kind.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Are we to understand that the answer to my hon. Friend behind me (Sir Henry Tyler) is an answer in the negative?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: No, Sir.

Sir HENRY TYLER: If it is not an answer in the negative, may I ask what measures the Government are taking?

[No reply.]

GENERAL GORDON—SPECIAL PROVISION FOR HIS FAMILY.

Mr. GIBSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government intend to recommend the grant of any special pension or allowance to any members of the family of the late lamented General Gordon?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the subject to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman has called my attention in this Question has received the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government. I may say at once, frankly and without reserve, that an offer of some pecuniary provision or acknowledgment, were it likely to be acceptable, would undoubtedly be very readily and freely made by Her Majesty's Government. I am not certain that that is the case; but I am looking carefully into the whole matter. I think that is probably the best answer I can give at present.

Mr. BOURKE said, he had not been able to gather, from any answers that had been made by the Government, whether the despatches containing General Gordon's messages would be in the hands of Members to-morrow?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE replied, that he could only confirm what he had stated yesterday, that the Papers in question would certainly be in the hands of hon. Members on Monday, and he was in great hopes that they might be ready by to-morrow.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—DEATH OF GENERAL SIR HERBERT STEWART AND GENERAL EARLE.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I beg to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has received official news of the death of that most gallant and distinguished officer, General Sir Herbert Stewart?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Although the House, generally, is in possession of the melancholy intelligence, I was about to read a telegram which I received this morning from Lord Wolseley. He says—

> "It is my most painful duty to announce to you the death of Sir Herbert Stewart, which took place at 5 P.M. on the 16th instant, from the effects of the wound received in the action of January 19. Colonel Talbot, in reporting, says—'I beg to be allowed to express the deep grief of all ranks who have had the privilege of serving under this distinguished officer, especially of those who have so lately followed him into action, and also their sense of the great loss which they, the Army generally, and the country, have sustained.'"

Lord Wolseley goes on to say—

> "He was to be buried by the soldiers whom he so recently led to victory, at the entrance to the

valley leading to the Gakdul Wells. No braver soldier or more brilliant leader of men ever wore the Queen's uniform. England can ill afford the loss of this young General, while his death robs me of the services of a dear friend, and of a dear comrade. All the other sick and wounded are doing well."

I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without referring to the equal loss which Her Majesty's Service has sustained by the death of the gallant General Earle. General Earle had certainly, in this and in previous campaigns, rendered the most brilliant and distinguished services. I am quite certain that the unfortunate, but most honourable, circumstances of his death, equally with those of Sir Herbert Stewart, will excite the universal regret of Members of this House, and their respectful sympathy with his relatives and friends.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—REPORTS OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it would be possible for hon. Members to obtain the Reports of the Boundary Commissioners separately for each county and borough, or whether he could make arrangements which would enable that to be done?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, that in a second edition of the Reports, which would be printed as soon as the first edition was completed, he should endeavour to carry out the proposal of the hon. Member.

ARMY RESERVE FORCE.

MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY.

Message from Her Majesty *brought up*, and read by Mr. Speaker (all the Members being uncovered), as follows:—

VICTORIA R.

The present state of public affairs in the Soudan, and the necessity in connection therewith of taking steps for the defence of Egypt and for the protection of the interests of the Empire, having constituted in the opinion of Her Majesty a case of great emergency within the meaning of the Acts of Parliament in that behalf, Her Majesty deems it proper to provide additional means for the Military Service: and, therefore, in pursuance of these Acts, Her Majesty has thought it right to communicate to the House of Commons that Her Majesty has by Proclamation directed that certain persons who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in Army Service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient. *V.R.*

Ordered, That Her Majesty's Most Gracious Message be taken into Consideration upon *Monday* 2nd March.

MILITIA.

MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY.

Message from Her Majesty *brought up*, and read by Mr. Speaker (all the Members being uncovered), as follows:—

VICTORIA R.

The present state of public affairs in the Soudan, and the necessity in connection therewith of taking steps for the defence of Egypt, and for the protection of the interests of the Empire, having constituted in the opinion of Her Majesty a case of great emergency within the meaning of the Acts of Parliament in that behalf, Her Majesty deems it proper to provide additional means for the Military Service: and, therefore, in pursuance of these Acts, Her Majesty has thought it right to communicate to the House of Commons that Her Majesty has by Proclamation ordered the embodiment of Militia. *V.R.*

Ordered, That Her Majesty's Most Gracious Message be taken into Consideration upon *Monday* 2nd March.

COLONEL STANLEY: With reference to the information communicated to the House, may I ask the noble Marquess whether he is able to inform the House whether it is contemplated that the whole of the Militia, or only a certain portion of it, should be called out?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I was about to say, in order to prevent misapprehension, that although the terms of the Message are the same as in former cases, it is only intended at present to embody two brigades of Militia Artillery, and six battalions of Infantry. The earliest possible Notice will be given of the batteries and regiments it is proposed to embody.

MR. M'COAN asked whether, in consequence of the calling out of the Militia, any allowance of time would be given in regard to examinations to Militia subalterns who were candidates for commissions in the Army?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON asked for Notice of the Question.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Might I ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, whether it is the intention of the Government to embody the Irish Militia regiments as well as the English; and, also, whether it is not a fact that several of the Line regiments are very much below the established strength at home?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It is proposed to embody one Irish regiment among the six which are to be called out. In answer to the second Question, there is no doubt some battalions of the Line are below their establishment; but I cannot give details on the subject at present. I should like to add that I have every reason to believe that the strength of the Army at home is not below the establishment as a whole.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE VOTE OF CENSURE.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he can now state to the House what arrangements he proposes for Business next week?

MR. GLADSTONE: There is no doubt that the latest of the Papers with respect to Egypt, of which I have spoken, will be in the hands of Members to-morrow. I understood the right hon. Gentleman said he would prefer to have Monday, if that could be arranged, for the purpose of bringing forward the Motion he is about to propose. To that arrangement we shall cheerfully make ourselves a party. Therefore, unless he should prefer a later day, in which case we shall endeavour to meet his views, it may be understood that the Motion will be proceeded with on Monday.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I beg to intimate that I shall be prepared to proceed with the Motion on Monday.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked whether it was the intention of the Government to proceed with the discussion of the Motion on Tuesday, to the detriment of the interests of private Members?

MR. GLADSTONE: I hope, considering the nature of the case, the House will be disposed to proceed with the Motion on Tuesday. It is the usual, perhaps the invariable, custom to continue such discussions from day to day.

MR. ONSLOW asked whether it was intended that the Under Secretary of State for India should bring forward his Motion with regard to the employment of Indian troops on the same day?

MR. GLADSTONE: No. I think, upon consideration, it is evident that that Motion must stand over until the policy with which it is connected has been discussed.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c).

MR. PULESTON wished to know when the Prime Minister would be prepared to make a statement as to the financial arrangements of Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I am unable to state the precise time at which that can be done. There is a good deal of detail connected with the settlement of the matter; and, although great progress has been made with it, and there is every expectation that the time will be very short, indeed, now—there will be no renewal of the considerable delay which has marked some former stages of these proceedings—still, I cannot yet name a day. All I can say is that we are very desirous to lay the Papers on the Table at the earliest moment, which, I hope, will be a very early one.

MR. PULESTON asked whether it was correct, as reported, that all the Powers were in accord upon the subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think so, Sir. I think that the points remaining for discussion are so comparatively slight that, to the best of our belief, all the Powers are in accord, though the arrangements, as I think I have said, are not complete.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REPORTED RESIGNATION OF COLONEL BRUCE.

MR. O'BRIEN: May I be permitted to ask the Chief Secretary a Question of which I have given him private Notice, but which I have neglected to put down upon the Paper? I would ask him if it is a fact, as has been stated in some of the Irish newspapers, that Colonel Bruce, Inspector General, Royal Irish Constabulary, has retired from the Force; and, if so, what were the reasons which led to the taking of this step?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. Colonel Bruce has not resigned, and there has been no question of his resigning. The statements to that effect which have appeared in certain newspapers in Dublin have, therefore, no foundation whatever.

MR. O'BRIEN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman this Question—whether he makes this statement upon the same authority upon which his Predecessors several months ago had stated—that there was no foundation for the statement that County Inspector French was about to leave the Force, but that he would remain in the Force?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I make that statement from my own knowledge.

MOTION.

——o——

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.

RESOLUTION.

MR. GLADSTONE, in rising to move—

> "That the several stages of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, up to, and including the Consideration of the Bill, as amended, have precedence of all Orders of the Day, and Notices of Motions, on every day on which it shall be set down, by the Government, as the first business of the day,"

said, he wished it to be clearly understood that this was not a Motion which the Government desired to carry by any pressure or authority on their part; but it was made in the strong belief that it would be agreeable to the general sense and convenience of the House. He was sorry to make a Motion which appeared to involve a negation of the appeal made yesterday by his hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney); but his hon. Friend knew very well that his duty was to consult the general convenience of the House and the prospects of Public Business. He rather thought that he was correct in saying that, even before the adjournment of the House in December, reference was made to the great importance of proceeding with the Seats Bill, and to the probability that the House might be disposed to give it, under the peculiar circumstances, exceptional facilities. From what he learnt yesterday he had reason to believe that it was the desire of the House that the precedence asked for should be given. If there was reason to entertain such an idea in the month of December, that reason had been greatly strengthened by circumstances which had since occurred, and which had created in the mind of the House a necessity for discussions relating to Egypt and the Soudan, which, perhaps, might not have been felt to be of equal urgency in the state of their prospects as they then stood. It was often said that private Members suffered from the adoption of a Motion of this kind; but, at the same time, what private Member was there to whom it was not of importance that this great and complex measure should be promptly disposed of? With the prospect of the natural termination of the present Parliament before them, with the certainty of a great amount of labour to be performed with regard to the varied provisions of the Seats Bill, which it was quite conceivable might lead to very lengthened discussion, and with the desire they had to deal with the question of registration, they were anxious that the period which preceded Dissolution—that which was so inconvenient to the whole country—should not be unnecessarily prolonged. On these grounds he believed that this was a case in which the House would be disposed to grant exceptional facilities for discussing the Bill. He, therefore, hoped the House would allow the Question to be put without much delay, and that the judgment of the House would be found to sustain the view he had ventured to form with regard to what he believed to be the state of opinion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That the several stages of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, up to, and including the Consideration of the Bill, as amended, have precedence of all Orders of the Day, and Notices of Motions, on every day on which it shall be set down, by the Government, as the first business of the day."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. CHAPLIN said, that in ordinary circumstances he should certainly have felt it his duty to oppose this fresh invasion of the rights of private Members, more especially as the views he had expressed with regard to the measure itself for which this invasion was to be made had not been modified by further consideration. But the circumstances under which Parliament had assembled on the present occasion appeared to be so exceedingly critical, and the prolonged existence of Her Majesty's Government throughout the course of an ordinary Session—and even, it might be, of the present Parliament—appeared to him so problematical that he thought it was desirable that the settlement of this question should be arrived at as speedily as possible. Under these circumstances, he should not take the course which otherwise he should have felt it his duty to take.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked whether it was proposed to take the Fridays and also the Wednesdays? He particularly wanted to know whether private Members who might have the first place on Fridays would be deprived of bringing forward Questions in which a large number of Members might take an interest?

Mr. RYLANDS said, that they must all be prepared to make sacrifices. He had usually opposed Motions for the appropriation of private Members' nights; but he thought, in the case of the Seats Bill, it should be proceeded with without any unavoidable delay. The public would not be satisfied if this great Bill, which was in itself a revolution, should be delayed. He should, therefore, very cordially support the Resolution of the Government.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he agreed that it was desirable that the Seats Bill should be carried through as soon as possible; but he would ask that the Navy Estimates should be laid upon the Table with the least possible delay, and that the Prime Minister should give an early opportunity of discussing questions affecting the Navy, so that it might be seen how the Government had performed their promises for its improvement?

Mr. MARJORIBANKS said, he wished to ask a question on a subject of the deepest interest to himself and many other hon. Members—he meant the subject of extending and improving our harbour accommodation. The Government, in 1883, thoroughly recognized the importance of the matter, and granted a Committee, which sat in 1883, and also in 1884, and reported in both years. Under this Resolution he would lose the opportunity of bringing the Report of the Committee before the House. He wished to ask what was the intention of the Government with respect to that Report?

Mr. Serjeant SIMON asked whether it was intended to take an early opportunity of introducing a Registration Bill with a view to a Dissolution in the autumn?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, the subject referred to by the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was, undoubtedly, one of great importance; but the probability was that by the date mentioned by the hon. Member the House would hardly be in a position to discuss the matter fairly, inasmuch as the hon. Member's Motion referred to questions upon which negotiations were still pending. With regard to the position of private Members generally, it would be very difficult for the Government to pick and choose among private Members' Motions; but he would observe that if any question of commanding importance should arise an opportunity would be given of bringing it before the House. There could be no doubt whatever that in the course of the early months of the Session some opportunity would be found, if it did not make itself, for discussing the Colonial defences. With regard to the Supplementary Navy Estimates, as the money must be obtained pretty soon, it was intended to submit a Motion on the subject before the Army Supplementary Votes were brought forward; and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would, before many days, have an opportunity of discussing it. As to the subject referred to by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Marjoribanks), he did not find on the Paper any Notice with regard to it. He had very little to say in reply to the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon) in addition to what had been stated by the Prime Minister. It was impossible for the Government at this moment to pledge themselves with regard to the proper or the best date for a General Election, or when an Election might occur under the Seats Bill. His hon. and learned Friend thought there might be great inconvenience in delay, and that it would be desirable to shorten the time. But there was very great difficulty in what was known as "shortening the dates," as it threw upon the overseers, many of whom were unpaid persons, very heavy duties. But there was a precedent in 1868, when the Government of that day rejected the proposal for shortening the dates, and only hastened the final printing of the Registers. They were by that means able to secure an Election in November, and that was a precedent which possibly the House might follow. It would, however, be premature, in the meantime, for the Government to pledge themselves to any particular course. It was the general desire of the House to get the Seats Bill through as fast as possible, not only for the weighty reasons alleged that night, but also that the various overseers might be instructed in their heavy duties, and able to discharge them. The Motion of the Prime Minister, he might add, was a general Motion, and would apply to Wednesdays and Fridays.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he was afraid, after the collapse of the champion of private Members' rights (Mr. Rylands), that his protest would be unavailing. Still, he did protest against the Government having the privilege of dropping down upon any private Member's Motion, and quashing anything which might be inconvenient. On the 13th of next month, he had the first place for a debate with regard to our relations with Germany. No question of greater importance could be brought to the attention of the public; and he hoped the Government would see their way to relaxing the Rule.

MR. GORST said, he was desirous of giving the Government an opportunity of passing the Bill quickly; but he rose for the purpose of expressing a hope that they would not abuse their power. His right hon. and gallant Friend did not refer to the Supplementary Estimates, but to the Navy Estimates of the present year, about which great interest was felt. A Vote must be obtained for those Estimates before the 31st of March; and as it was usual to have two nights for discussing them, one on the introduction of the Estimates and another when the Votes were taken, he hoped that the Government would not take advantage of their powers to curtail the discussion.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman was quite aware that he had security in this matter—namely, the provision of the law requiring absolutely that the Naval Votes should be obtained, and likewise the power of the House to govern the time when it should allow an important debate on a particular subject to be brought to a close. He did not think it would be expedient, at the present moment, that they should fix the precise length of the debate they were to have on any given subject. What the Government wished was that the great urgency of proceeding with the Seats Bill should receive every consideration that could fairly be given to it; but that this should be so employed as not to curtail legitimate opportunities of dealing with those other important and pressing questions to which Her Majesty's Ministers had referred.

MR. SEXTON said, that considering the time of the Session in which this Motion was made, and the circumstances in which it was brought forward, it was impossible not to view it as a Motion of an exceedingly objectionable character, and one the necessity for which he did not at all acknowledge. He was not aware that a similar Motion had been made on any previous occasion at the opening of a Session. It was quite true that in the course of the present Parliament, on one or two occasions after the Government had for some weeks encountered resistance to Bills of great importance, and were sternly and persistently contested by various Parties in that House, they had at last resorted to this mode of procedure. Such persistent opposition, however, did not in the least apply to the Seats Bill, and the stages of the measure up to the present had passed almost without dispute; not only so, but there was no reason to anticipate that there would be any very prolonged opposition to the future progress of the Bill. He was, therefore, at a loss to know why, on the 20th of February, with six solid months of the Parliamentary Session before them, the Government asked the House to place a blank cheque in their hands. Before the President of the Local Government Board addressed the House, he had at least imagined that the sanctuary of Committee of Supply would be held sacred by the Government; but it now appeared that not only were the Government going to take their own days—Mondays and Thursdays—but that they claimed Wednesdays, which belonged to private Members, and cancelled the precedence of Notices of Motion on

Tuesdays and Fridays. What was the breathless urgency about this Bill? The Government, he presumed, were not going out of Office and the Opposition coming in—in fact, everything tended to the conviction that the present Session would run out its natural and ordinary course. The President of the Local Government Board said the delay would prevent the overseers completing their necessary work. The Local Government Board could easily issue a Circular instructing them, and all the necessary work could go on. The overseers could safely proceed on the assumption that the Schedules of the Bill would remain substantially as they were at present, for there was no prospect of any attempt being made to alter them, except in one or two cases. Persistence in the present Motion meant a complete overthrow of the rights of private Members, and especially the silencing of Members from Ireland. Those Gentlemen would now be hindered in bringing forward various questions of public importance, which it was their imperative duty to raise. Irish Members had been successful in the ballot in obtaining the Tuesdays of the next four weeks. They had obtained the first place for the Motion for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the administration of the Prevention of Crime Act, respecting which the Prime Minister had already stated—and he thought very properly—that he could not at present bind himself to any declaration as to whether his Government proposed to renew the Act, or to allow it to lapse. It was very desirable, before the time arrived when the Government would be forced by circumstances to come to a decision one way or another, that they should have an opportunity of considering the evidence as to the necessity or superfluity of the Act. If Irish Members were allowed to bring forward the Motion, they hoped to be able to convince the Government and the House that it was just and expedient, wise and safe, that the Crimes Act should lapse; and he stigmatized it as a grievance of the very first magnitude that, by a Motion of this kind, all their chances of discussing a question of such vital importance to their country were in a moment taken away. Unless the Government would at least yield Fridays to private Members, it would be the duty of the Irish Members to meet the Motion by a division.

COLONEL NOLAN pointed out that, while the President of the Local Government Board pressed the Motion on the ground that it was necessary, in the interests of registration in Ireland, the authorities had not availed themselves of the time that had been at their disposal for proceeding with the work. The whole of the work in Ireland was to be done by the clerks to the Unions, or the corresponding officers in the towns; and yet, up to a fortnight ago, the clerk of his own Union had received no intimation from the Local Government Board on the subject. Why, then, was such extraordinary expedition to be used? Before the Parliamentary machine was stopped and the rights of private Members taken away, he urged that it was incumbent upon the Government to take every possible measure out-of-doors to expedite registration. With the Seats Bill and the Soudan there appeared little chance of discussing matters of great importance to Ireland. There was one Irish subject that had special claims upon the attention of the Premier relating to the appointment of a Select Committee on improvements in towns. A Bill on the same subject was defeated by a very narrow majority of eight last Session; and that, therefore, afforded a very fair case for inquiry. He had secured the first place on the 3rd of March, and should decline to give way unless the Government expressed themselves favourably disposed to his proposal.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON expressed a hope that if the Motion was passed, the Government would exercise the power conferred with as lenient a hand as possible, and that they would take into account, not only particular measures affecting Ireland, but also those in which English and Scottish Members were interested.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he hoped some Member of the Government would deign to reply to the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). This was not an ordinary occasion, when a measure had to be pressed on. The measure was already arranged for in most of its details. Its outlines had been shaped on the plan adopted by a Committee of both sides of the House. There was, therefore, no occasion for the expenditure of much time on the settlement of detail, and the measure ought to be gone through in a very short space of time. The Irish Members had early in the Session secured places for a great number of highly important Irish Bills, some of them of momentous importance to the country; and yet all their chances were to be swept away from them for the sake of the Seats Bill. He strongly protested against this, believing there was no need for this extraordinary speed. There was plenty of time to go through the Bill in the ordinary way, as there was hardly any other measure of importance coming from the Government; and he considered their demand most unreasonable.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought there had never been a Bill presented to the House under more favourable circumstances, or with a greater promise of an early termination of the debate upon its provisions, than the Seats Bill. The Bill was practically settled, for he understood that the Opposition were as much pledged to it as Her Majesty's Government. Under these circumstances, he was at a loss to see what risk the Government would run by departing from the usual practice; and he trusted that a Motion that usually met with strenuous opposition in June or July would be as vigorously opposed now. Irish Members had a particular claim on the Government. The Crimes Act and other legislation in Ireland practically made the Lord Lieutenant the autocrat of the country; and the only check they had on the exercise of his despotic powers was discussion in the House of Commons. During the Recess events had occurred to which they desired to call attention; and as those events raised the whole question of the administration of Ireland by the present authorities of Dublin Castle, the Irish Members would give the Motion their steady opposition.

MR. GLADSTONE: I may assure hon. Members that my Motion is one dictated not only by a general regard to the convenience of the House, but by sympathy with all those who are desirous that the time now before us, which has been described by hon. Gentlemen opposite as six solid months, should be applied in the most effective way, not merely to the Seats Bill, not merely to the necessary Business of the year, but likewise to useful legislation, and, among other subjects, to useful Irish legislation; and the object of this Motion, Sir, over and above the particular circumstances that belong to it, is, I think, to be justified in this way. This is one of those Bills involving a great multitude of details, the discussion of which must necessarily drag over a great length of time, if the Government is placed in the position of only being able to deal with it upon such Mondays and Thursdays as it can spare from the demands of Supply and other necessary Business. For example, if it were dependent on Mondays and Thursdays alone, clearly Mondays and Thursdays will be taken up before Easter by Estimates and Supplementary Estimates for the Army and Navy. We should be unable to make any effective dealing with the Seats Bill before Easter. Well, what would happen? We should have the Seats Bill on the Monday. Of course, we have the adjourned debate before going into Committee on the Seats Bill, in regard to which the most perfect liberty will be given. That debate would go on for a Monday and Thursday, and Monday and Thursday, and so forth; and in the same way, when we came to Committee, the details of this Bill, so handled, would be handled necessarily with the greatest disadvantage and the greatest waste of time. Now, what has happened before? The House has never but once, always be it recollected, had a large Seats Bill before it—never but once. That was in 1831; and what happened on that occasion? It is perfectly true that no Motion was made of the character of that which I have made; but why? Because, with the rarest exception, all other Business was put aside, and the Seats Bill was proceeded with. The mode of proceeding was different then, but the object was exactly the same. It is perfectly well known that if the Bill of 1831 had not been taken upon other nights than Government nights, the Government might as well have thrown over the Bill altogether. I rejoice to agree with the hon. Gentleman in this—that there is a greater prospect of accord between the great Parties in this House with regard to this Bill than there was then. But do they not see that, if that is so, the effect of that accord and of the gain in the immense economy of time which we shall obtain by compression will be that this Motion will cease to operate in a very moderate time, and we will then, if we only obtain these facilities, be in a condition to promise valuable and important legislation in this Session of Parliament?

Mr. SEXTON said, several Irish Members had secured the first place on private Members' nights during the next four weeks.

Mr. GLADSTONE: That may be so; but a number of Gentlemen had refrained from balloting because they knew that this Motion would be made. Our desire is to economize the time of the House, because we are certain that a great waste of time, detrimental to the House, will take place unless we deal expeditiously with the Seats Bill, and there is no way of dealing expeditiously with it except by continuous action. It is in no desire to encroach upon the time of the House that I press this Motion, and ask that you should concur in allowing it to pass.

Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY said, he must deny that the ballot for places was confined principally to Irish Members; but, even if it had been so, that was no reason why Irish Members should be robbed of their privileges. He suggested that Fridays should be excepted. A Motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the administration of the Crimes Act was to be made on Friday next.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 223; Noes 15: Majority 208.—(Div. List, No. 24.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

NATIONALIST MEETINGS (DERRY).

RESOLUTION.

Mr. SEXTON, in rising to call attention to the manner in which the Forces of the Crown have been recently employed in Derry in suppressing lawful Nationalist manifestations and encouraging Orange rioting; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the conduct of those responsible for the action of the Police and Military in Derry was one-sided, tyrannical, and unconstitutional,"

said, he supposed he should esteem himself extremely fortunate that this Motion had escaped the general slaughter which had just been carried out by the will of the Prime Minister. He was glad to see the Solicitor General for Ireland in his place, because that hon. and learned Gentleman was not only well acquainted with the law relating to these matters, but, being Member for the County of Derry, he had an intimate acquaintance with the local circumstances connected not only with the county, but with the city also. Before he called attention to the subject of his Motion he might say that Derry occupied a peculiar position from historical causes. Elsewhere in Ireland, as in other countries, men mainly were content to accept existing facts, and guided their conduct and governed their lives by the current condition of affairs; but in Derry, although the great majority of the people were Catholic and National, and although of the Protestant minority there were only a small portion, he was glad to say, who lent themselves to the tactics of disorder, still, the burden of his complaint rested upon the basis that there was in Derry a small faction of persons who refused to accept accomplished facts, who refused to admit the circumstances of life in the 19th century, and who, because a certain siege was maintained 200 years ago, and because a certain Party and a certain privilege triumphed at that siege, adhered to the absurd and grotesque idea that no other Party but the Party that then triumphed should raise a voice in the City of Derry, and that no other but the principle maintained 200 years ago by William of Orange should be allowed to be sustained in that locality. This small faction of disturbers were known as the Apprentice Boys of Derry; and his complaint was that the authorities who controlled the military and the police used the Forces of the Crown habitually in such a way as to encourage these 300 or 400 youths or fanatics, and to intimidate and overawe the vast body of people who were on the popular side in politics. On the 29th of February his hon. Friend the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) and his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) arrived in Derry on the way to attend a public meeting at Carndonagh, in the county of Donegal

—and, in passing, he might say that there were no two public men in Ireland more popular with the masses of the people than his two hon. Friends; and, in his opinion, there were no two public men in Ireland better entitled to the affection and the confidence of the people. On their arrival the people assembled in multitudes to welcome them, and escorted them to and from their hotel with bands and banners and other manifestations of rejoicing. In the evening the hon. Member for Mallow delivered a lecture, and the night was passed as the day had been in perfect and unbroken peace. It was noticeable that on this occasion there was no offensive parade of the forces at the disposal of the authorities, and the people consequently suffered no irritation. On the next day, however, a fatal mistake was made. The people of Derry desired to receive publicly the two Members on their return to the city from a town in Donegal, where they were to address a meeting. Three leaders of the popular Party accordingly waited on the District Inspector of Police, and asked him on what conditions the agents of the Government would allow the demonstration to take place. The reply was that the processionists would not be permitted to re-enter the walls of Derry—by which presumably were meant the old walls—with bands playing or with lighted torches. The representatives of the popular Party undertook to keep to the two conditions laid down, and in the evening the hon. Members were met by the processionists, who were exhorted by them to keep the peace. The hon. Member for Mallow having left the scene of the demonstration, the hon. Member for Wexford told the people that if they accompanied him to his hotel their bands must not play and that their torches must be extinguished. The processionists then proceeded to the walls of the city, near which they suddenly found themselves face to face, almost breast to breast, with a body of police and soldiers armed with deadly weapons. The night was dark, and the people were taken by surprise. It was easy to understand that the slightest outbreak of temper on their part, or on that of the police, might have provoked a massacre. If it were deemed necessary to mass an army in the dark in the outskirts of the city, why did not the police, between the time of the interview and the compact with the people and the Inspectors, convey to the Members of Parliament concerned, or to the directors of the popular movement, a warning that it was intended to break the stipulation and to oppose the progress of the procession? Again, why was not time given for a parley before there was contact and conflict between the two bodies of persons? Instead of that, the order to fix bayonets was given; but happily his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford proved that he was able to stop the advance of the people at that moment. He (Mr. Sexton) utterly failed to see anything like good faith or public necessity in any part of the official conduct, or anything but infamous bad faith, and a worse than infamous design against the public peace. The action of the authorities was the indulgence of recklessness to a degree that bore upon it the moral guilt of murder. It was owing to the fact that the people had the discretion, the temper, and the sudden perception of the gravity of the situation, to obey the command of the hon. Member for Wexford, that the streets of Derry were not stained with human blood that night. The West Somersetshire Regiment and the extra police were used to impede, to intimidate, and to threaten the people in the exercise of their unquestionable legal right to do public honour to those representative men whom they admired and respected. But what was going on that evening within the walls of Derry? The Apprentice Boys marched at their will from one place to another, hooting persons in the street who differed from them in opinion, and using, alternately, as weapons of argument, the weapons with which nature had provided them and stones from the street; and when the hon. Member for Wexford was addressing a public meeting from the rooms of the hotel, after the dispersal of the procession, the meeting was assailed with stones by the faction of the Apprentice Boys; and when the hon. Member was returning to his hotel a mob of Orangemen lying in wait for him were allowed to hold the street in front of it. It was a significant fact that the Apprentice Boys came out when the police were there. He (Mr. Sexton) believed that the reason why these extraordinary offences were committed against the interest of public order by the official custodians of the public peace in Derry arose from two causes—the first was that the Government had hitherto obstinately refused to reform local bodies. About a year ago he addressed the House upon the question of the Magisterial Bench in Ireland; and they were told by the Chief Secretary that if the names of proper persons were brought forward—persons in general sympathy with the Irish people and recommended to the Lord Chancellor—he would be glad to appoint them. He saw a right hon. Gentleman smile. Perhaps the smile was intended to cast a doubt upon the quotation; but he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that the words were too important to escape his memory. The Lord Chancellor had made Catholic appointments during the last year; but his action so far in reforming the Magisterial Bench was, to use a classic expression, "a delusion, a mockery, and a snare." The Lord Chancellor had in almost every instance refused to accept the advice of the public Boards who had nominated the persons, and had acted nearly always upon the advice of the Lord Lieutenants of the counties, who were the Constitutional sentinels of the ancient and evil system of class aggression and social ascendancy in Ireland. Where a Catholic had been selected it was because he belonged to the class expressively known as "shoneens," because, like Sir Pertinax M'Sycophant, he won his way by bowing, and knew not how to stand straight in the presence of a great man. The Magisterial Bench in Derry, as in every part of Ireland, was still a citadel of landlords, a place reserved for persons of the fashionable creed; and in the Province of Ulster especially it was an appanage not merely of the Protestant section of the landlord class, but of that ferocious and incorrigible faction known as the Orange Party. To show what was expected from a magistrate there, he might state that when a Catholic magistrate in Derry attempted to question the Inspector of Police in open Court about this grave and dangerous occurrence, he was silenced by the Chairman, and snubbed by the majority of the Bench. It appeared to him (Mr. Sexton) that the responsibility of those recent incidents was to be divided between the magistrate and the Mayor—an eccentric person named M'Vicker—and a Resident Magistrate, a robustious hero, Mr. Adolphus Harvey. Mr. M'Vicker had distinguished himself by turning a reporter of *The Freeman's Journal* out of a lunacy inquiry, because that paper had taken the unpardonable liberty of rather freely criticizing the actions of his worship. Mr. Harvey was a gentleman with not one of the instincts or principles in his mind which tend to make a judicious magistrate. He had been promoted from the Constabulary Force; and he (Mr. Sexton) thought English Members would agree with him that promotion from the Police Force to the Magisterial Bench was a dangerous principle. Mr. Harvey had distinguished himself by having the hon. Member for Roscommon bodily pushed out of the field on the occasion of the prohibition of a meeting in Fermanagh. It was true that on the 13th of February the police made a show of beating off the Apprentice Boys from a meeting in Derry which the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) was addressing; but afterwards they turned upon the meeting in military form. His hon. Friend paused in his speech, for something inspired him to ask upon the spot why his meeting had been disturbed in that way. He asked the reason why the police drew their swords, trailed their rifles, and forced those who were listening to his speech away from their positions. The police had no reply to make, and perhaps for this reason they allowed the meeting to proceed. What followed then? The Orange magistrates of Derry, led by this eccentric Mayor and swaggering Stipendiary Magistrate, held a Star Chamber meeting. At that meeting a proclamation was issued in which it was stated that they had reason to believe that it was intended to have a procession through the streets of Derry, which, in their opinion, would lead to a breach of the peace. They then stated that they had issued this proclamation declaring that such procession would not be allowed to be held, but would be dispersed by force. They now came to a curious part of the case. Nobody had proposed such a procession. No man, woman, or child in Derry had any intention of taking such a step upon last Sunday, and last Sunday was the day to which he wished to draw the attention of the House. He believed it was essential to the preservation of the peace of this much troubled city that the Crown should be served by persons without bias or passion. [Mr. LEWIS: Hear, hear!] He (Mr. Sexton) thought that the hon. Member who sat on the Bench near him (Mr. Lewis) was aware that the day was fast approaching when he would no longer be Member for the City of Derry. He supposed that the hon. Member recognized the fact that the Bill recently passed through that House was one which would bring about such a state of affairs as would prevent any gentleman from London of his politics or Party having the slightest chance of representing that city in Parliament. That was one of the reasons why he (Mr. Sexton) regarded the future of that city more than hitherto. The people of Derry were entitled to express their opinions, and they had been listening to a lecture by the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien). The Orange magistrates, however, had come to the conclusion that there was some reason for apprehension; and, acting upon information which was obviously the reverse of the fact, they telegraphed all over the North of Ireland for extra police. They swarmed the city with armed men, who occupied upon the day in question what were known as the "dangerous parts of Derry." In the course of the afternoon, however, it began to dawn upon them that they were in a very foolish position. After bringing in men from all points of Ulster to occupy the dangerous parts of Derry, and to prevent a procession, there was no procession to be prevented. They were there at a cost to the country of between £500 and £1,000, and if this sum was to be paid by the people of Derry it was a grievance to them. But if it was to be paid out of the Consolidated Fund it was a grievance in which every taxpayer in England, Ireland, and Scotland had a share. After having vainly waited for an enemy who would not come, as the afternoon advanced the police thought well to retire. Then, according to immemorial custom, the Apprentice Boys turned out—first, because they knew that the police had retired; and, secondly, because they knew from their experience of the past that the moment they got into trouble the police would come out of barracks and beat the peaceable people whom they were engaged in attacking. The Apprentice Boys went to a commanding position in the city, whence they began to shower down stones and bottles upon a quarter of the city occupied by the Catholic population. While thus engaged their operations were watched only by a solitary policeman. The people whom they assaulted had to not only close their doors, but put up their shutters and remain indoors. When they had endured these attacks long enough they sallied forth and took the position occupied by the Apprentice Boys by a flank movement, and returned showers of stones and bottles. Eight constables then came out of the barracks and made a show of attempting to disperse the Orange faction, and then the remainder came out in force, and proceeded in reality to attack the people who had been so long submitting to the assaults of the Apprentice Boys. They proceeded to beat man, woman, and child in a manner that could only be compared with the cowardly onslaught which had been made some time ago upon a quiet assembly in the Phœnix Park, which was memorable still. It was perfectly idle to talk about preserving law and order when the Government only interfered with people who, in the exercise of their legal rights, ventured to give expression to their opinion, and, at the same time, allowed functionaries to resort to all sorts of acts of violence and disorder. One of the worst features in the proceedings of the day was a cowardly attack which was made by a lot of roughs upon two ladies who belonged to one of the most admirable and noble Orders which the Church had ever given birth to. These ladies, when returning after a mission of mercy, found the steps in front of the convent which they desired to enter occupied by a crowd of roughs, who assailed them with the vilest language, and refused to allow them to enter. They found it also impossible to gain an entry from the rear, because another gang who had been specially detailed for this work barred their passage there. Were it not for the interference of some young men, who proved by their action that humanity and chivalry were not dead, these unoffending ladies would have sustained serious injury. He desired to know whether a secret inquiry had been held in Derry since Sunday last, and whether the heads of the Prentice Boys had been questioned?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, it might save time if he stated that some arrests had been made.

Mr. SEXTON wished, in that case, to know how many Prentice Boys had been arrested; and what was the proportion of arrests to the number taking part in the proceedings? A question of importance and significance far beyond that to which he had been referring would presently arise—namely, whether the people of Ireland, like every other people—like the people of this country—had or had not the right to control and manage their own affairs? When that great question came to be dealt with, as it very soon must be, it would be an evil thing for Ireland, and a gloomy and sinister fact for any English Government charged with the administration of the affairs of that country, if they did not allow it to be handled and decided by reason and by Constitutional action alone, and if they did not proclaim their determination that no designs of faction should be allowed to interfere with the free expression by Constitutional means of the will of the Irish people.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, the conduct of those responsible for the action of the Police and Military in Derry was one-sided, tyrannical, and unconstitutional,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, that everyone must have listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, because of the dramatic effect with which he described certain events which had recently occurred in the City of Derry. But he (Mr. Campbell - Bannerman) must ask the House to subtract a little from the somewhat highly-coloured picture which the hon. Gentleman had drawn. According to his in-formation the facts were not altogether as had been stated. In the first place, the hon. Member presented a picture of the City of Derry which the hon. Gentleman who represented it (Mr. Lewis) could hardly recognize, and which the general world, with only a slight knowledge of the place, would altogether fail to recognize. He represented the great body of the people as being all of one way of thinking if only a small and insignificant faction of Apprentice Boys and others inflamed with memories of certain past events would leave them alone. That representation hardly corresponded with what he described afterwards, because the hon. Gentleman spoke of Members of Parliament who took part in the proceedings being followed by a furious mob of Orangemen. If the Orange Party and Apprentice Boys were so few, where did the mob come from? The truth was they all knew, and, for his part, he deeply regretted it, how keen Party and political and religious feeling was in that part of the country. That fact made it peculiarly difficult, not only for those on the spot, but also for the Executive Government in Ireland, to deal with any question that might arise there. There were two Parties bitterly opposed to each other, and every opportunity was taken of presenting themselves as obtrusively and as obnoxiously as possible to each other. His belief was that the mischief was done by a comparatively small number of each Party. The hon. Gentleman said that on the 29th of last month the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) arrived in the City of Derry and proceeded through the streets accompanied by some of his friends, and that there was a demonstration on the part of his friends without any disturbance of public order. He had heard nothing to lead him to suppose that that statement was incorrect; but, at the same time, there were fierce political speeches delivered. It was one thing for the hon. Member for Mallow, or anyone else, to appear in a town and deliver a speech and move with his friends through the streets; but it was another thing for him to return to that town on another day with the purpose announced beforehand of passing through the town with a procession and accompanied by bands and men bearing torches. There was sworn information laid before the magistrates that the intended procession would probably lead to a riot and breach of the peace, and accordingly authority was given to increase the force of police. The House would understand that in all these matters nothing was directly under the control of the central Executive Government in Dublin—everything done was done on the authority of the local magistrates, except the drafting of a certain number of additional police.

MR. SEXTON: And the stipendiary.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: And the stipendiary.

MR. O'BRIEN: Might I ask whether the order was made by the whole of the magistrates, or only by the stipendiary?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he was not sure. It was evident to common sense that if two opposing parties, already excited, came together with bands and torches, there was a great probability of a breach of the peace occurring. It was, no doubt, a fact that the popular leaders interviewed the magistrates; and it was agreed that the procession should be allowed to go on to the five lamps in the centre of Waterloo Square. With this arrangement the processionists declared themselves satisfied; and the only complaint they subsequently made was that they were stopped about 50 yards from the spot agreed upon. In the first place, any agreement made with the police was necessarily subject to modification if the necessity arose; but the fact was that behind the police in Waterloo Square, and in the streets debouching upon it, there was a somewhat excited and angry mob, consisting mainly of the Orange Party. If the procession had been allowed to get into the square, it would have got beyond control. They were, therefore, stopped at the entrance to it. In these circumstances, he hoped the House would believe that the magistrates had exercised a judicious and a wise discretion in making a slight variation in the original agreement, which did not in the least interfere with the glory of the procession, or with anything connected with it, but merely deprived it of 50 yards of its progress, and, at the same time, guaranteed immunity from what might have been a dangerous and disorderly condition of things. No impediment was placed in the way of those who marched in the procession. The pavement was cleared for individuals and small parties if they chose. What was objected to was that the procession, as a procession, in its fully organized condition, should proceed beyond the point where it was stopped. It was quite true, as the hon. Member said, that a momentary fault of temper, or the failure on the part of someone in his duty, might have had very dangerous consequences. But the responsibility of that must rest with those who, in an inflammatory atmosphere like that of Derry, marched through the streets with bands and torches on such occasions, and thereby provoked the hostility of those who opposed them. The Government desired to treat either party with exactly the same vigour or leniency; but in a condition of things such as that which prevailed at Derry it was absolutely impossible for those who were responsible for the maintenance of peace and order to allow processions of this aggressive and exuberant kind to go through the streets as they pleased. The hon. Member for Mallow arrived in Derry on the 13th, and his complaint was that while he was addressing the crowd from the window of his hotel, he was interrupted, and the crowd was made to pass on by a body of armed police. A great point was made of the police being ordered to trail their arms, as if that was a bellicose attitude. But he believed that there was no way in which men could carry their arms less aggressively than by trailing them.

MR. SEXTON: Is the drawing of a sword the least aggressive way of carrying it?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he did not know what the rule was when an officer was commanding a body of men. He might possibly always carry his sword drawn in such circumstances. Hon. Gentlemen ought not to make so much of one officer having his sword drawn. But the reason why the mob were dispersed was that the city was in an excited state, and there was a number of the opposite faction anxious to show themselves and disturb the meeting. In such circumstances, it was a very reasonable thing to ask the hon. Member to forego part of his speech. All accounts agreed that the hon. Member for Mallow and the hon. Member for Wexford assisted in quieting the crowd, and did all they could to prevent a breach of the peace. He had no complaint to make of them. [MR. O'BRIEN: No; but we have to make it of them.] The authorities in Derry were informed that on the following Sunday there was to be an indignation meeting held in the suburbs, and they had no intention to interfere with any reasonable meeting. But there was to be a procession, and the magistrates thought it their duty to prevent the procession. Where there was danger of the public peace being disturbed, he thought that those concerned would have regarded it as a small sacrifice to refrain from some of their public demonstrations, when they had ample opportunity for an orderly expression of their opinions if they chose to adopt it. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) asked whether the Government was prepared to deprive some of their fellow-countrymen of their legal right to the orderly expression of their views? Her Majesty's Government had no such desire, and would not stop any expression of opinion unless there was thereby a danger to the public peace existing in such a form as to be evident to those who were responsible for the maintenance of the public peace. With regard to the alleged disturbances on Sunday, it appeared that there was some stone-throwing and some riotous proceedings; but, from the information he had gathered, it did not appear that they amounted to very much. The attack upon the two Sisters of Charity, although he did not think there was a personal attack, was a thing that could not be too warmly denounced. It deserved the severest punishment and reprobation; and there was, at least, this satisfaction—that the perpetrators would in all probability be brought to justice. In a telegram dated yesterday the Inspector of Police at Londonderry reported that eight young men were that day brought before the Petty Sessions charged with having been concerned in the outrage on the two Sisters of Charity. Their case had been remanded till Monday, no doubt for further evidence. He believed that 10 persons had also been convicted at the Petty Sessions of riotous behaviour on Sunday last, and sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment each. Of these, some were Nationalists and some were Orangemen. The result of the stone-throwing was that some damage was done to a convent, and some to a Presbyterian church. He thought, from what he had said, it was evident that care had been taken by the authorities to prevent any disturbance, which in a feverish and excitable atmosphere like that of Derry might be readily produced. The magistrates appeared to him to have done their duty; and though he was not there to defend the actions of any but the Resident Magistrate, he might say that he did not think the magistrates had done anything to deserve the censure of the House. To the observations of the hon. Member upon the magistrates in general he would not then reply; but would content himself with asking the House to say that in this individual case the Derry magistrates had done nothing worthy of censure.

Mr. O'BRIEN observed, that the speech to which they had just listened from the Chief Secretary for Ireland—who, he noticed, had already deserted his post—was a good illustration of the reasons why the Irish people had such an inveterate and unconquerable distrust of the Englishmen and Scotchmen sent over to govern them. The right hon. Gentleman approached the administration of Irish affairs a few months ago with a certain mild benevolence towards the people; but it was evident that he was already a perfectly helpless and submissive instrument in the hands of the ruling class, which was represented on the Tory Benches at present in the person of the hon. Member for Derry (Mr. Lewis). If there could be anything more annoying than the good humour and self-complacency with which the right hon. Gentleman had acquitted himself (Mr. O'Brien) and the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) of the offence of saving the City of Derry from a sanguinary riot it would be the ingenious avoidance of every point in the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). In that City of Derry, where they maintained that three-fourths of the population were Nationalists, they were not permitted to march through their own streets on an admittedly peaceable and legal business without being attacked by the police and put in danger of their lives. While the Nationalists, who were the majority, were insulted and held down by the police, that miserable gang of Apprentice Boys—a mere handful of the tag, rag, and bobtail of the Orange slums of Derry—were positively encouraged to riot as they pleased under police protection, and to attack defenceless ladies upon occasions when they found it more convenient to do so than to attack the other and the stronger sex. What were the admitted facts regarding this wretched little secret Society of the Apprentice Boys? The evidence of Mr. Thynne, R.M., before the Derry Commission last year, proved that they never mustered more than 300;

and they would never dream of going out into the streets to make a riot except when they were sure of police protection. The whole scandal complained of that night arose from the fact that the military and the police were habitually used in Derry by Orange partizans to prevent the people from exercising their legal rights, and to encourage the miserable gang of Orangemen who rioted under the protection of the Forces of the Crown. When he and the hon. Member for Wexford went to Derry they merely passed through it to attend meetings in other places; and the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself had admitted that when they went to Derry that night, and a large crowd went out to meet them with bands, and escorted them to their hotel, and listened to their speeches, there was not the smallest symptom of disturbance. And why was that? Simply because there was not a single policeman seen in the streets—that being a sovereign specific for preserving the peace in Derry. On the next day the people took it into their heads, without either his or his hon. Friend's knowledge, and not much to their liking, to welcome them back into Derry in the evening with a torchlight procession. Why was it necessary to treat the people that evening differently from what was done on the preceding night? Merely because the Mayor, a notorious Orangeman, and the Resident Magistrate, who was distinguished for his hostility to the people, had filled the town with extra policemen, and were determined to utilize them. They did not even publish their intention; and the Nationalist Leaders only heard in the most casual way that it was intended to employ the troops and the police to prevent the people from entering the city. The right hon. Gentleman told them that informations were sworn before certain magistrates of Derry; but did the Government mean to act on the principle that one magistrate was to be consulted because he was known to be an Orangeman, and another to be left in the dark because he was suspected of being a Nationalist? Was there to be an inner circle in the magistracy in the North of Ireland comprised of persons enjoying the confidence of the local Orange Lodges and the officials of Dublin Castle? He would not now discuss whether it was not a tyrannical and insulting thing to issue a ukase forbidding the people to enter their own city; but he pointed out that the Nationalists of Derry scrupulously obeyed that ukase, and were perfectly willing to abide by the conditions laid down for them; and, although they carried out their part of the compact, they were betrayed into an ambuscade that might have resulted in many deaths. The right hon. Gentleman had somewhat disingenuously represented that their only complaint was that the procession was stopped at a point some 50 yards further than that to which the police had agreed to let it come. But the complaint was not only that the original compact was broken, but also that the procession was stopped at a period when the people had not even time to quench their torches, and when there was the greatest danger of a collision. The original engagement was that if the torches were put out and the band ceased play, the procession would be allowed to accompany his hon. Friend and himself to their hotel as on the previous night. The right hon. Gentleman gave as an excuse for that double violation of the engagement that there was an excited Orange mob behind. Now, as to that, he could only say that he himself rode through that very district when that excited Orange mob was supposed to be in possession of the place without protection of any sort, and except a few shouts from half-a-dozen Corner Boys there was not the smallest sign of danger to the public peace. It was now admitted that without consultation with the magistrates the compact made with the people had been violated. The people carried out their part of the agreement. On the advice of himself and his friends the members of the procession put out their torches; they ceased playing music, and marched on in the full impression that they were free to accompany the Members of Parliament present to their hotel. They had not the least conception that they were to be interfered with in the manner which was ultimately adopted; and he maintained that but for the action of the hon. Member for Wexford the consequences of such a stoppage would have been something too fearful to contemplate. His hon. Friend had succeeded in drawing the people off. It seemed to him that the police on this occasion appeared to have acted on the rule to be as offensive as possible to the Nationalists, and to leave the Orange faction free to riot and to do just as they pleased. There seemed to be thorough vigilance as against the Nationalists, and perfect carelessness as to the Orangemen. Had the right hon. Gentleman in any way explained why, since it was impossible for the police to muster in such numbers against the Nationalists, it was not possible for them to protect the hon. Member for Wexford? The fact was that it was the invariable rule in Derry that when the police were in the streets about 200 Apprentice Boys would come out and be perfectly free to make what mischief they could; but, on the other hand, when the police were withdrawn from the streets, the Nationalists were very well able to keep the peace themselves. As to the occurrences on Sunday evening, the right hon. Gentleman had stated that a meeting was announced for Sunday evening in the newspapers. He (Mr. O'Brien) was a very close reader of the newspapers, and had seen no such announcement. He knew of the plans of the Nationalist Leaders of Derry, and could say with the most perfect confidence that no announcement whatever emanating from them had been made in any way intimating that there would be a procession in Derry upon Sunday. Still, because the Mayor took it into his head once more to encourage these Apprentice Boys to make a disturbance, he drafted 300 men into the city at a cost of something like £500 to the ratepayers. He was perfectly at a loss to know on what principle the right hon. Gentleman defended the action of the police authorities. If there were 300 men in Derry, surely there were enough to have prevented a riot in the Orange quarter as well as a procession in the Nationalist quarter. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that eight young "gentlemen" had been summoned for the brutal assault committed upon two ladies. Suppose that the attack had been made upon a landlord or a bailiff in the South of Ireland, he would like to know whether the prisoners who were even suspected of being the attacking party would have been invited by summons to go to the police court, and then remanded for eight days, and probably be let out on bail? He thought the circumstances under which these persons were summoned to the police court was one other proof of the partiality displayed in Derry, and the difference in the treatment of Nationalists and Orangemen. The right hon. Gentleman's speech had only given one more proof that whatever the people could do in Derry to defend themselves, they had to depend upon themselves alone. The only explanation he could think of why the action of the Derry magistrates had been approved of by the right hon. Gentleman was that the Government meant to allow this apprentice gang liberty to riot as a sort of compensation for the Franchise Act. The Apprentice Boys knew thoroughly well that their ascendancy was coming to an end; and it would seem as if the Government were anxious to soothe their declining days by enabling them to be insolent and troublesome to the public peace as often as possible. The Mayor and police were simply Apprentice Boys in uniform, and he would not be a bit surprised if after this night they added the right hon. Gentleman to the category. The hon. Member for Wexford and himself advised the people to trust to their power in the franchise. The Government, by their action of tonight in refusing all redress or inquiry into the conduct of these magistrates, would teach them that whatever they could hope for now or at any future time they would have to depend upon themselves for, and not upon the English Government.

Mr. LEWIS said, that he believed many of the statements which had been made regarding persons of character and standing in Derry to be utterly without foundation. It was, however, on such statements *ex parte* that the House was asked to believe this extraordinary story. There was a way in which the matter could be tested, and it was this. The hon. Member who brought forward the Motion had assured the House of a fact the truth of which he was in a position to contradict. One of the statements made by the hon. Member was that the proclamation issued against the holding of the meeting last Sunday had been issued by a Bench of Magistrates who were wholly Orange in their sympathies. As a matter of fact, he knew that not one of the magistrates was an Orangeman. So far from this proclamation having been issued by a body of Orange magistrates, it was issued by a

Bench whose political sympathies were various. Having represented the city for 13 years, he was able to identify them. The political leanings of the 13 gentlemen constituting the Bench were as follows :—Two were Conservatives, four were Protestant Liberals, four were Roman Catholics, and one was a Wesleyan, with whose political sympathies he had not been made acquainted. Of these 13 magistrates, three were Roman Catholics, who had been recently appointed to redress the disparity in numbers between the Protestants and Roman Catholics on the Magisterial Bench. In these circumstances, he asked whether the House would believe that the Proclamation had been issued by Orange magistrates? During the incumbency of the present Government there had been five appointments of magistrates of the Roman Catholic religion to the City Bench in Derry. If the House had the means of investigating the statements that had been made to-night, it would be found that the facts were not only in favour of the magistrates, but against the individuals who had prompted hon. Members. The truth was, that the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) did not know anything more about Derry than he did about any city in Japan, or he would never have made the statement upon which he ventured as to the proportion of "Nationalists" in Londonderry. As a matter of fact, the population of Derry, which numbered 30,000, was about equally divided between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics, and many of the latter were altogether opposed to the Nationalist Party. The hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), in a certain speech, had imputed the crime of murder to the Lord Lieutenant. The gist of the whole matter was that Mr. Adolphus Harvey, the Resident Magistrate, was obnoxious to those hon. Gentlemen who supported the Motion. One of them was some time ago thrown over a hedge, he believed, by Mr. Harvey or one of his minions, and ever since Mr. Harvey had been an object of intense hatred to that section of the House. Referring to the attack on the two ladies, he (Mr. Lewis) said the attack was one of words; and no magistrate would be justified in issuing a warrant against, and no policeman justified in arresting, a person charged with the offence of calling a person names. There was no doubt that the hon. Member and his Friends had been for some time past poking about in the district of Derry for the purpose of finding out anything they could against the Mayor. After all this the only charge which they could fix upon him was that of being the eccentric Mayor of Derry. He hoped that when some of the hon. Members were elected Mayors of towns in Ireland they would come out with the same credit when they were attacked in the same way. It seemed to him that this Motion was just fitted for the evening upon which it had come on—the House had nothing to do, and it had done nothing. They had been all the evening listening to a bit of rhodomontade and nonsense. He thought that if it were possible to dignify this matter by having it subjected to an inquiry these charges would be pulverized. He had abundant reason for believing that this was all "flab," and that there was not the slightest justification for these attacks upon servants of the Crown. Nobody who had not lived in Ireland, and had not been witness of the public events taking place, could form any idea of the difficulty which magistrates had in attempting to steer a middle course. In trying to do so, it was almost impossible to avoid being attacked by one side or the other, or perhaps by both. In this case, the magistrates of Derry had only taken the necessary precautions to prevent a breach of the peace; and he felt sure that the House of Commons would not condemn them upon *ex parte* statements which were, to a great extent, without foundation in fact. He was obliged for the extreme kindness and attention of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), who had prophesied that the Franchise Bill would put an end to him. If that were the result, he could assure him that it would not create any considerable amount of trouble in his breast, and he believed that he would be able to endure it. If the prophecy, however, was not based upon better materials than the case which he had attempted to make out, he believed that it would not be fulfilled. He believed that the hon. Member was just as much unacquainted with the political probabilities of the future of the City of Derry as he was with the facts of the case which he had just presented to the House.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that the hon. Member who had just sat down had complained of the shortness of the Notice in bringing forward this Motion. This was perfectly true; but he would at the same time remind him that, if they had not taken this opportunity of bringing it forward, it was exceedingly doubtful when another opportunity would have been afforded them. All next week would be absorbed in one subject, and perhaps the week after. He would like to draw the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that the Catholic magistrates had protested against the course pursued by the shameless partizans on the other side. He believed that the parties who were mainly responsible for what had occurred were the Mayor and Mr. Adolphus Harvey. He believed Mr. M'Vicker to be a reckless partizan. He did not know whether or not he was a member of the Orange Society; but he did not object to Orangemen as members of that Society, for he had known no men, whether Orangemen or not, to be more bitter partizans than Irish Liberals. He knew the City of Derry well, and believed that two-thirds of the population were belonging to the National Party. He believed that time would tell whether the hon. Member would again represent Derry. But he believed that he was too astute a man to fight a forlorn hope if he had a more certain chance of success elsewhere. Instead of summoning the scandalous law-breakers who assaulted the two nuns, it was the duty of the police to arrest them, in order that they might be arraigned in the criminal dock. That was the course that would have been adopted towards the Nationalists. By the speech which the Chief Secretary had delivered he had made himself, to a great extent, responsible for the misconduct of his officials.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said, he did not think the Government was to be congratulated on the championship of their cause by the hon. Member for the City of Derry, for he had never listened to a more thoroughly dishonest speech than that with which he had favoured the House. In three points the hon. Gentleman was clearly disingenuous. With reference to the Proclamation he read the names of 13 magistrates, whose sanction, he implied, had been unanimously given; whereas, if he were half as well acquainted with the facts as he professed to be, he must know that the four Catholic magistrates whom he included distinctly protested against the Proclamation. Then he denied that the nuns were "assaulted," although the Mayor distinctly used the word himself. Therefore, he charged the hon. Member with being dishonest. ["Oh!"] He used the phrase entirely in a Parliamentary sense. ["Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The charge against an hon. Member of being dishonest is one that ought not to be made in this House, and I hope the hon. Member will withdraw it.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Certainly, Sir; I will always bow with respect to your ruling. What I intended to convey was that the hon. Member, being well acquainted, as he said, with what took place in Derry ——

Mr. LEWIS: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. I distinctly said that it was impossible that anyone could be well acquainted with the facts, and I said I had certain information from the papers which I should make use of.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: The hon. Gentleman distinctly and positively stated that these ladies were not assaulted. He had within his reach the same means of information as other hon. Members. He had *The Freeman's Journal* and other papers.

Mr. LEWIS: No; I had not.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said, the hon. Member did not take the trouble to read the papers of the county he professed to represent; and if he did not avail himself of the ordinary means of informing himself he had no right to come and speak positively of facts, and accuse his (Mr. John Redmond's) hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) of inaccuracy. The account given by the Chief Secretary of the arrangement come to as to the matter of the procession was by no means accurate. He (Mr. John Redmond) deliberately accused the Government of having broken that arrangement; and if there was any justification for breaking it, he accused them of an almost criminal carelessness in not sending someone forward with the information that the arrangement was changed. He could not but think that the Chief Secretary was taking a foolish course with reference to these matters. For his part, he hated and detested the very thought of these encounters between Catholics and Orangemen in Ireland; but he was convinced that the Government, by their persistent protection of the minority, were preserving and perpetuating the bitterness which now existed. He believed that if a policy of even justice were administered to all parties in Derry and the rest of the North of Ireland, these unfortunate and frequently-recurring encounters would cease.

MR. MARUM said, it had been held by Mr. Justice Fry and Mr. Justice Field that it was the duty of all existing Governments to protect all lawful assemblies, and that a Government, in fact, ceased to be a Government unless it protected the people in the exercise of their just rights. He complained that they had had no exposition of the law upon the subject of this Proclamation from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. He denied the jurisdiction of the magistrates to issue the Proclamation. That power, even under the Crimes Act, was limited to the Lord Lieutenant.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that, in his opinion, the magistrates had acted entirely within their legal powers, and in accordance with the law.

MR. DEASY said, that the Irish Members were placed at a great disadvantage in the House in discussing these matters, as the Law Officer of the Government never gave them any satisfactory information as to the law under which these meetings were suppressed. Attacks on nuns appeared to be the favourite amusement of Orangemen; and it was no wonder that the Catholic population was incensed when they found the Government not taking any active measures to punish the persons who made these attacks. He should like to know why the Government did not allow this matter to be cleared up by an impartial investigation into the facts of that case? He hoped that this would be one of the last occasions on which such a complaint would have to be made, because he trusted that the new Chief Secretary would soon find out that the statements of the Irish Resident Magistrates were not to be relied upon.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he hoped the Government would see their way to adopting the suggestion of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Deasy) by granting an inquiry into Irish affairs. If, however, they did not see their way to doing so, he would suggest the removal of the Stipendiary Magistrate from Derry to a part of Ireland where his services would be better appreciated than was the case at present. It was quite clear that he had set himself against the Catholic population, and favoured the Orange faction, who had not yet learned that the times had outgrown them.

MR. KENNY said, that, irrespective of the paltry interference of Mayor M'Vicker and Mr. Adolphus Harvey, it was absolutely impossible for them in any way, beyond the mere immediate and contemptible annoyance, to effect the purpose they seemed to be bent upon effecting—namely, to stir up bad feelings between persons of rival political Parties. The Government had abrogated their function of replying to charges made against them and their administration in Ireland, and had thrown the responsibility of replying upon the shoulders of an English solicitor who happened to be Member for the City of Derry. The magistrates in Ireland were appointed on account of the creed to which they belonged and the religious opinions which they held, the majority of the justices in Kerry being Protestants, and the nominees of Members of a previous Administration.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY said, the Irish Party were not surprised either at the action of the Derry magistrates or the action of the Government, who had good reason for supporting the action of the fantastic Mayor of Derry, and the somewhat blundering and bumptious Police Inspector who assisted him. The Government saw in such men the last rally, as it were, of a gradually failing and breaking cause. The Irish Party, however, were so near to success that they could afford to regard with indifference the efforts of the Government to add to Irish history a second "City of the Violated Treaty."

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 59; Noes 15: Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 25.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1884-5).

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £5,000, Surveys, United Kingdom.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that that was an addition to the sum of £242,500 they had already voted in the course of the present financial year for expediting the Ordnance Survey. He hoped it was well understood that, when the people of this country were called upon to pay £250,000 sterling a-year for the expediting of this survey, they were called upon to perform a very valuable service to the landowners of the country. He also hoped that the people were not consenting to pay this large sum without an ulterior object. The landed gentry of the country were getting now maps of their estates made at the cost of the people. He should like it to be thoroughly understood that the object of the Representatives of the people in Parliament in voting this large sum of money every year was simply and solely that they might arrive, at the earliest possible moment, at a condition in which they could adopt the system of registration of title. That was the object with which he, for one, gladly supported this Vote; and he hoped it might be taken for granted that that was the object of the House generally in desiring to expedite the survey of the United Kingdom.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £120, Natural History Museum.

(3.) £3,570, Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of the several Public Buildings under the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, and for the Erection of Fishery Piers, and the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations."

MR. KENNY said, there was one item in this Vote with regard to which he should like some explanation from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert). It was proposed to take £2,500 for the drainage of the River Brosna, a river which flowed into the River Shannon. He should like to hear from the hon. Gentleman the reason of this sum being required. The Brosna overflowed its banks at certain times of the year; but the condition of the Brosna was rendered defective by the manner in which the Shannon was maintained. Now, the Shannon was maintained from a certain point at a navigation level; and, therefore, the rivers which flowed into the Shannon were also kept at a higher level than they would otherwise need to be kept. The consequence was that the country through which the Brosna and other tributaries of the Shannon flowed was at times flooded. He did not profess to be acquainted with the exact condition of the people who lived in the districts affected by the overflowing of the Brosna; but he desired to point out to the hon. Gentleman who was Secretary to the Treasury that he would come a great deal in contact with the doings of the Board of Works in Ireland, and would hear something of the manner in which the drainage and navigation of the Shannon had been managed in the past, and the absolute futility of maintaining the Shannon in its present condition—that was, at a navigation level—up to a certain point. The dues which accrued from the river in its present condition were not sufficient to pay the wages of the men employed. At present, he merely asked for an explanation of the item of £2,500 in respect to the Brosna drainage.

MR. HIBBERT said, that the sum referred to was intended to be given as compensation to the owner of one particular property. The person in question was the proprietor of some mills on the River Brosna, which had been damaged owing to the drainage system which had been carried out; and it was considered that the damage done to his property entitled him to some compensation. There was no doubt that the general question to which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Kenny) referred was a very important one, and one in regard to which he (Mr. Hibbert) hoped to be able to do something, when they got to the Shannon Vote, to carry out the views the hon. Gentleman had expressed.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the point raised by the hon. Member (Mr. Kenny) was one well deserving the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert). The Shannon required very careful supervision; and the hon. Gentleman would do well to see whether the recommendations of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into and report upon the condition of the river had been carried out.

MR. SEXTON said, there was another item in the Vote in respect of which some explanation should be afforded. Under Sub-head C, for maintenance, £1,700 was set down for repair of St. Patrick's Hall. He believed St. Patrick's Hall was a Department of Dublin Castle; but he was not aware of any occasion recently when there had been any necessity to use it, except that on which a few noblemen were installed in the Order of St. Patrick, an Order not in any respect deserving of its name. The community took no interest in it; indeed, it had no significance to any part of the community, except the few noblemen who adorned themselves with its stars and ribbons. The people were tired of the proceedings connected with the installations; and they felt that if it was necessary or desirable occasionally to hold high ceremony, at which half-a-score of gentlemen put on blue mantles and stars and ribbons, those gentlemen ought to bear the expense of painting the ceiling and waxing the floor of the Hall in which they met.

MR. HIBBERT said, he did not think the money had been spent in beautifying the Hall in the way suggested. As a matter of fact, the floor required relaying, and other parts of the Hall were in a very bad state of repair indeed. The greater part of the money asked for, therefore, had been spent in renovating, rather than in beautifying, the Hall. Though St. Patrick's Hall was a part of Dublin Castle which was used by the Lord Lieutenant, he thought that even the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) would agree with him that all the different public buildings in Ireland should be kept up at the expense of the State.

MR. WARTON said, he wished to call attention to one of these Supplementary items, which, in proportion to the amount of the original Estimate, was very large. There seemed to be, under Sub-head F, for travelling, a most unwarrantable addition. The original Estimate for travelling was £452, and now a further sum of £248 was asked for. He could not understand how there could have been such a grievous miscalculation. An increase of 54 per cent upon the original Estimate seemed to him perfectly unwarrantable.

MR. HIBBERT said, he quite agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Warton) that the Supplementary Vote was unusually large. At the same time, he believed the original Estimate was cut down in order to induce economy in travelling. The expenses, unfortunately, had been cut down too much; and the consequence was that a large additional sum had now to be granted.

MR. BIGGAR said, he desired to supplement what had been said by his hon. Friend the Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny), with regard to the Brosna drainage business. If the Government, or the Board of Works as servants of the Government, would turn their attention to drainage, and give up the fallacy of inland navigation, they would do a great service to the country. A Royal Commission went all over Ireland to examine the canals, with the result that they reported against the maintenance of nearly all those waterways. He held firmly the opinion that all the inland rivers should be used for draining the water off the land, and for no other purpose whatever. It was nonsensical to speak of navigation. The railways of the country were quite capable of carrying all that was required to be carried. It was quite true that this idea of inland navigation enabled some persons to get a little plunder; but it did great mischief to the parties who wanted their land drained. Under Sub-head A he noticed that £577 was asked for the purchase of premises at Mullingar Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks; and he wished to move the reduction of the Vote by that amount. It was notorious that there were far more police in Ireland than were required; and, therefore, it was a scandal to ask the British ratepayers to give money for further Constabulary accommodation in that country. In point of fact, the greater part of the Constabulary barracks ought to be closed, and the fellows who inhabited them turned about their business. The Constabulary were a parcel of hulking fellows, who took the public money, and gave no real work in return. He, therefore, moved the reduction of the Vote by £577, being the sum required for the purchase of a site for additional police accommodation at Mullingar.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £6,923, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of the several Public Buildings under the Department of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland, and for the Erection of Fishery Piers, and the Maintenance of certain Parks, Harbours, and Navigations."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was glad his hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had raised the question of the Mullingar Barracks. If he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was rightly informed, there was already a police barracks in Mullingar before the erection of this new police barracks. There were, therefore, two police barracks for a very small town—a town which, in England, would be called a village. The poverty-stricken people were surprised, if they happened to sit up late at night, to see the extraordinary festivities which had now become a regular portion of the routine at the Mullingar Police Barracks. He was credibly informed that the police inhabiting these quarters had a ball once a-week, and that all the servant girls in the neighbourhood were invited to join in the festivities. Such was the work which the Constabulary in Ireland were engaged in doing; and it was to provide additional facilities for this kind of thing that the Committee were now asked to vote £577. He would like to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), whether it was the occupants of these barracks, who recently allowed an Emergency man, or some other person under their control, to escape from them, and to run on to a railway tract and to be there killed, or was it the occupants of these premises at Mullingar who, recently, bringing another Emergency man home, got so drunk that an accident befell them, with the result that the Emergency man broke his leg? And whether it was true that the Emergency man was borne by his body guard to a quack doctor, whose mode of curing the limb consisted in pouring hot water upon it? Such were the men for whom additional premises at Mullingar had been erected at a cost of £577. He really thought that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, who had been in his time an economist, ought to be ashamed to stand sponsor of this item.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he did not stand sponsor to the policemen, or to the Emergency man the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had referred to. He did not think, moreover, that what the hon. Member had said was at all connected with the finance of the question; neither did he think that if he were to inquire into the character of the policemen in England he would find every one perfect. As he understood the matter, this station was one that was to supply the place of that which had hitherto existed at Mullingar. The site had already been bought, and it had been approved by the Government. The site of the new station was necessary. All the Government could do in regard to public works in Ireland was to take the best advice they could. That they had done in this instance.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £50,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, including Rents and Furniture, and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries abroad."

Mr. MONK said, there was one curious feature of this Supplementary Vote which required some explanation from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert). The original sum which was required for the Embassy at Berlin was £19,000; and now the Committee was asked for an additional sum of £50,000. He presumed it was intended to buy the Embassy House. If that were the case, he should like to know what became of the £19,000; whether that was an Estimate with regard to the old Embassy House, or with reference to the purchase of the new one?

MR. WARTON said, he hoped that the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) would allow him to supplement what he (Mr. Monk) had said. It was a very curious proceeding to have a Supplementary Estimate larger than the original one. £50,000 was a monstrous addition, and it only showed the necessity and importance of calling the attention of the Government to the mode of making Estimates.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, it seemed to him that his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) had not stated the matter quite correctly. Last Session the Government asked for a Vote of £16,000, not £19,000, on account of the Embassy House at Berlin; and they then submitted a Vote which included a total sum of £50,000. The proposal of the Government last year was to purchase a site in Berlin, at a cost of £13,000, and to erect an Embassy House at a cost of £37,000. That would have put the country to an expense of £50,000 for an Embassy House at Berlin. As the country were paying a rental of £3,000 a-year for the Embassy House, it was supposed to be an advantage to pay £50,000 in erecting a new house—indeed, it was expected that a saving would be effected. Upon that ground, the Committee voted last year a sum of £16,000, on account of a total expenditure of £50,000. Now, without any explanation whatever, in this Supplementary Estimate, the Government came forward with an entirely changed plan. Without offering any explanation to the Committee, they appeared to have entirely thrown overboard their proposal to build a new Embassy House at Berlin. Without the slightest explanation, the Committee were now informed that the Government proposed to purchase the existing Embassy House at a cost of £61,375. If, therefore, this Vote were agreed to, the House of Commons would be voting a sum considerably larger than the one which was asked for in the present year. He felt his hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) would at once admit that this was a Vote which demanded very considerable explanation.

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had correctly stated the facts. The Committee would recollect that last year the right hon. Gentleman the then First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) asked hon. Members to consent to a Vote of £16,000 towards the purchase of a site upon which to build a new Embassy House. The rent of the old Embassy House was £3,000, and that made up a total for that year of £19,000, to which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) had alluded. Since the matter was before the Committee last year, an opportunity was offered to the Government of purchasing outright the existing Embassy House at Berlin at a cost of £61,375. The total sum payable in respect of the whole transaction amounted to £72,428; but the £19,000 which was voted last year reduced it to £53,428. Savings to the extent of £3,428 were expected to be made on other sub-heads, so that the total sum required was £50,000, the amount of the present Vote. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), who was at the Office of Works at the time, could explain all the details of the transaction. He (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) might point out that there was not so much difference as at first appeared between the original plan of the Government and that now adopted. The new Embassy House would have taken three years to build, during which time the annual rent would have had to be paid, in addition to the charge for interest. There was, therefore, very little difference between the cost of the two plans. The old Embassy House had been purchased, the money had been paid in accordance with the contract made with the vendors; and, therefore, he hoped the Committee would agree to the Vote.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that his hon. Friend (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) had not shown any justification of the change of plan on the part of Her Majesty's Government. All that the Committee had been informed was that the change had cost the country between £10,000 and £15,000 more than the sum stated last year. He (Mr. Arthur Arnold) thought the Committee were entitled to hear the reason why the Government plans had been altered, and why they had purchased the Embassy House, which but a few months ago they appeared to have rejected.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that the sum proposed to Parliament last year and voted was £13,000 for the site for the new Embassy. [Mr. Arthur Arnold: Exactly; for the site.] But the cost of the building and the site was estimated at £50,000. It was considered by Lord Ampthill an unwise thing to carry out the plan of erecting a new Embassy on another site; and he, accordingly, at the time strongly recommended the purchase of the existing building. The matter came under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, who had to decide as to whether it was advisable to build a new house for the Embassy or to purchase the existing one. They had before them the facts that the purchase of the latter would cost £61,000, and that the new building and its site was estimated to cost only £50,000; but it had also to be taken into account that for the period of three years, during which the new Embassy was being built, the rent of £3,000 a-year would, of course, have to be paid, and the addition of this rent to the estimated cost of £50,000 would practically make the two operations, in point of cost, very much the same thing in the end. Considering that fact, and having regard to the very strong opinion expressed by Lord Ampthill in favour of the existing Embassy, the Government decided to give way in favour of the present plan.

Dr. CAMERON said, it had always appeared to him that the expenditure in connection with these Embassies was far too great. Our expenditure in this respect was double that of the United States; and he contended that the present proposal to augment the charge for the Embassy House in Berlin was quite uncalled for. At the same time, he believed that this, like all the proposals for economy which emanated from the Government, would result in anything but economy. He was not quite sure that he had correctly followed the explanations of the Junior Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Herbert Gladstone), and the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre); but he understood the matter thus. The original proposal was that the new building and site would cost £50,000. The Junior Lord of the Treasury told the Committee that the existing building would cost £72,000; whereas the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Commissioner had just told them that it would cost £61,000.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Gentleman had correctly stated the figures. The difference between the two sums referred to was caused by the cost of the furniture, which, on the death of Lord Ampthill, it became necessary to buy, as well as to supplement that portion of it which was taken away by Lady Ampthill. It was also necessary to re-paint the building.

Dr. CAMERON said, it amounted to this—that in addition to the rent of £3,000 a-year the Government had spent £11,000 on furniture for the Embassy. If that was economy, it was of that kind against which he thought it his duty to protest; and if he received the support of any hon. Gentleman he would have much pleasure in moving the reduction of the Vote.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON asked, whether the Government had decided upon buying the furniture, and getting the money from Parliament for the purchase of the house without consulting the Ambassador? It was said that Lord Ampthill had been strongly opposed to the building of a new house on another site.

Colonel NOLAN said, it seemed to him extraordinary that, when there was so much distress in Ireland and in the country generally, they should be asked for so much money to be spent abroad. At a time like the present, he regarded it as most unfortunate that this and other increased charges on account of Foreign Embassies should come forward. If the money were to be spent in this country, where it would, indeed, be useful during the present distress, the matter would wear a different aspect; but he thought the money would be anything but usefully spent abroad just now.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Sir Arthur Otway, I should like to say a word or two on this Vote, because when the question first came forward it was within my duty to consider whether it was possible to economize in the matter. The facts were these—that the Embassy House at Berlin could no longer be held on lease; that we were paying for it a rent of £3,000 a-year; and that the house was in a remarkably good position, and very suitable for our requirements. Everyone acquainted with Berlin will know that it is extremely difficult to get a good house there—the houses which are ever let being, as a rule, small; and we had therefore to consider whether, being unable to hold the house on lease, we should buy it, or build a new one. There was no other course open; we must either buy or build a house. No one knows better than my hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) that if you propose to build a house at a cost of £40,000, you will probably have to spend £60,000 upon it. My right hon. Friend the late Chief Commissioner of Works, the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), and myself looked carefully into this question; and we came to the conclusion that, taking the facts I have alluded to into account, the most advantageous plan would be to buy the existing Embassy House for £61,000, as the owner was no longer willing to take £3,000 a-year for it. The position, therefore, is that we buy a house for £61,000, instead of hiring one at the rent of £3,000 a-year.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, that no answer had been given on the point to which the attention of the Committee had been drawn by the hon. and gallant Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon)—namely, as to whether the Ambassador had been consulted before this very important step was taken? He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Commissioner of Works another question. Had the owner of the house been consulted before coming to Parliament and asking for money for the purchase of the house; and, further, he would ask, if the sum named was the whole of the expenditure that would be required for this transaction? He considered that there was some force in the complaint urged by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) that, at a time when rigid economy was necessary on account of the distress existing at home, we should be preparing to squander large sums of money abroad. From the extravagant manner in which these Embassies were paid for by us, he imagined that the Representatives of other countries would have some difficulty in getting their Governments to bear such a burden as this house would cast upon us. If the present practice were continued it would soon be as costly to provide for an Ambassador as it was to house a Bishop, less than £100,000 being thought in this country wholly insufficient.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that at the time at which the Vote of last year was proposed to the House the proprietor of the house at Berlin had declined to sell it; and as he would not consent to continue the lease, it became necessary to take steps for providing a house for the Embassy elsewhere. But at a later period, when the Government proposed to build a house for the Ambassador, the owner changed his mind, and informed Lord Ampthill that he was prepared to sell. It was under those circumstances that Her Majesty's Government came to the conclusion that the wisest course would be to buy the existing house. He might mention that the German Embassy at Vienna cost upwards of £70,000, and that the Saxon Minister at Berlin was nearly as well lodged as the British Ambassador.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he had been in Saxony for some time, and he did not think there was a single Saxon who lived in a house of £3,000 a-year. They had not the money; the Prime Minister lived in a house of £300 a-year. The primary mistake was in allowing £3,000 a-year for the house of the Ambassador at Berlin. Not many years ago, the extreme allowance for such a purpose was £1,000 a-year, since which time the amount had gone up enormously. But the sum named for this house did not represent the whole of what it would cost the country; it would be found that the great mistake in buying the house lay in the fact that a further large sum would have to be spent every year for alterations of various kinds, such as drainage and repairs. Without estimating the expenditure under these heads, he believed they would find that the annual charge for a house of £3,000 a-year would amount to £1,000. He thought that the time would shortly come when we should cease to pay our Ambassadors the excessive salaries which they now received; and when that time arrived, under the present arrangement, there would be this anomaly—that the Ambassador at Berlin would probably be receiving £1,000 a-year as salary, and yet living in a house worth £3,000 a-year. It would, he thought, have been better to wait for the good times which they hoped for, when our Ambassador at Berlin would get a salary of £1,000, and live in a house of £300 or £400 a-year. He did not think it necessary to object to the Vote as a whole; but wished hon. Members on those Benches to do something to show that they protested against the Government coming to the House at one time for £50,000, and the next year asking for this additional sum. He hoped his hon. Friend would divide the Committee.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): We are asked why we do not go on paying rent for the Embassy House? We cannot do so, because the owner of the house will not allow it. Moreover, nothing, in my opinion, would be more extravagant than to move from one rented house and to rent another in a city like Berlin, where the number of houses available is extremely small.

MR. WARTON said, he should not enter into the discussion as to the most economical plan of settling this matter. His complaint was that the whole truth was not told to the Committee. It was not until the hon. Gentleman the Junior Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) rose that they had any idea that an expenditure of £72,000 had been incurred; and he (Mr. Warton) doubted whether, at that moment, any hon. Member in the House knew what the expenditure really was. If it were true that the sums named had been spent on furniture, why were not the figures honestly stated in the Estimates? He did not think it right that the matter should be placed in this way before the Committee; he complained that a truthful statement was not made in the Papers before them, and that the facts had to be dragged piecemeal from Ministers one after the other. The statements of the Members of the Government differed largely from that in the Estimates; savings had been mentioned, and furniture was said to have been purchased; but neither of these items were put down; and, in consequence of the way in which the transaction had been placed before them, it was impossible for any Member of the Committee to get an idea of what the total cost of it would be.

DR. CAMERON said, he considered it his duty to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £10,000. The Government had taken a course which he could not regard as an economical one. With reference to the Embassy at Berlin, he would remark that it did not appear to him to merit any extra recognition at the present time. He thought that all the diplomatic salaries paid were far too great; and he protested, in the name of economy, against the present large and unusual increase.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £40,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, including Rents and Furniture, and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries abroad."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he was anxious to present to the Committee the actual words of the late Lord Ampthill, because, as had been stated by his right hon. Friend the late Chief Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), the purchase of the Embassy at Berlin was largely owing to the opinion expressed by Lord Ampthill. The following was an extract from his Correspondence:—

> "I can safely assert that it is impossible to find another house in Berlin for an Embassy as good in every respect as the present one. In the interest of economy, of the Public Service, and of my successors, I would recommend the acceptance of the Duke of Ujest's offer."

The house was in every way well suited for its purpose, and, like other houses that had been purchased for Ambassadors elsewhere, was a very good investment.

MR. GILES said, he believed that the German Ambassador to this country was lodged quite as well as our Ambassador in Berlin. He (Mr. Giles) was well acquainted with Berlin, and knew that the rents had been raised, and that it was very difficult to get good houses there. With reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), he (Mr. Giles) would simply express the hope that the time would never come when this great country would be represented by a person who, with a salary of £1,000, lived in a house of £300 a-year.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:— Ayes 22; Noes 51: Majority 29.—(Div. List, No. 26.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(6.) £536, House of Commons Offices.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he did not know whether this Vote had reference to the shorthand writers in the Reporters' Gallery; but, if it did, he wished to express his satisfaction at the decision Mr. Speaker had arrived at to allow the gentlemen of the Press to continue the use of Committee Room "No. 18." He had served on the Committee appointed to inquire into the accommodation given to the reporters, and, with other hon. Members, had been shocked at the small amount of room given to them, and the great inconvenience which they suffered. He, with others, had carefully inquired into the matter; and had recommended that, if possible, a Committee Room should be set aside for the accommodation of the reporters. That recommendation had, unless he was misinformed, been, at all events for the present, set aside by some orders which had been circulated; but it was with great satisfaction that he had heard that, since the issue of those orders, Mr. Speaker had found himself able to allow the reporters to continue the use of the Committee Room.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR wished, if it were competent for him to do so, to draw the attention of the Representative of the Office of Works to this Vote. First, however, he wished to say that the Government ought either never to have begun giving a subsidy for reports of the proceedings of the House, or ought now to go a great deal further. He held that the reports of the debates in the Houses of Parliament formed part of the history of the country—the most important part of that history. Those who had been compelled to read the thick volumes of *Hansard* would know that the gentlemen who prepared the reports had much better material to draw upon 20 or 30 years ago than they had now; for, in the days of which he was speaking, Parliamentary debates were reported in the newspapers with great fulness and completeness; whereas hon. Members knew that in the smaller space of the cheap penny papers of to-day, those reports had to be made very short. He would not go so far as to say that the newspapers afforded no materials for supplying a report of Parliamentary proceedings; but he would ask why, seeing that the Government had gone so far, they had not a sufficient staff for reporting all the proceedings? This was the only important Legislature in the world which had not a complete official report of its debates. He did not know whether he should be in Order in the observations he was now about to make. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) no longer had control of the internal arrangements of the House, partly because the change had given the right hon. Gentleman promotion—for he (Mr. O'Connor) supposed the right hon. Gentleman now held a better Office—and partly because he had appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to make certain improvements in the House, and the right hon. Gentleman had never done so. It was to be hoped that the right hon. Gentleman's Successor would prove a little more amenable to reason. Some hon. Members were compelled to spend in the building the greater part of the 24 hours every day for six months in the year; and they, therefore, had a right to ask that their comfort should be well attended to. He would appeal to the late Chief Commissioner of Works to make one or two reforms. In the first place, he might make the means of communication between the different parts of the House——

THE CHAIRMAN: This Vote deals simply with the shorthand writers—therefore the hon. Member is not in Order in discussing the question of the means of communication in the House.

MR. HIBBERT: I may explain that this Vote is caused by the Autumn Session. It is the additional money paid to the shorthand writers for the additional work they did during the Autumn Session.

Vote *agreed to.*

(7.) £796, Privy Council Office.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: How does it happen that there is no original Estimate at all under this head? It must have been known when that Estimate was prepared that this work would have to be done.

MR. HIBBERT: The proposal to spend this money in this way was made after the Estimates were laid on the

Table last year. Previously, statistics were obtained by sending round circulars and forms to be filled up; but it was considered that more trustworthy information as to the produce of the country might be obtained by means of collectors. The system we have adopted has been in operation in Ireland for many years past.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked how the statistics were collected? How did the collectors obtain them—from whom and how?

MR. HIBBERT said, there could be no doubt that the new system was much better than the old. The Returns this year were much more satisfactory than those hitherto obtained. Great praise had been given to them, greater care having been bestowed upon their collection than formerly. The collectors were sent round to the different farmers to procure all the information they required.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked whether the Government would consider the propriety, under the new system, of assimilating the form of Returns in England and Scotland to that of Ireland? It would be a great advantage to have one uniform system in the Three Kingdoms.

MR. HIBBERT said, the subject would be considered with a view of taking what steps were possible to carry out the suggestion for uniformity.

Vote *agreed to.*

(8.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £2,825, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Charity Commission for England and Wales."

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he wished to know whether there was not an item in this Vote for alterations to Gwydyr House in Whitehall; and, whether the cost of those alterations was to be defrayed by the State?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, that the money was now being paid by the country; but it would be refunded by the City of London Parochial Charities. The alterations had been rendered necessary by the appointment of an increased staff in connection with the Parochial Charities.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD: There has been no transfer of the administration of the Parochial Charities to the State?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: No.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Will these changes last for ever, or only for a certain time?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Only for a certain time. Either the total sum will be paid out of the funds of the Charities, or a rate will be levied for 10 years, which will cover the whole amount.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, this Vote for the Charity Commissioners seemed an ever-increasing one. It was now £37,000 per annum, and he ventured to say there was no Department giving greater dissatisfaction in the country. This dissatisfaction was not often expressed, it was true; but that was because it was felt amongst poor people, who had no means of expressing it. They had only to suffer, and suffer often very grievously, through the policy adopted by the Charity Commissioners. He considered it was time that this centralization, in regard to the administration of Charities, should be put an end to, and that the localities—or, rather, the poor in them—should be protected by having their concerns managed by their Representatives. The people whom the Charities affected should not be at the mercy of some half-dozen men sitting at Whitehall. To illustrate what he meant, and bring the subject home, he would mention the case of Sutton Coldfield, near Birmingham. The poor people, from time immemorial, or for a very large number of years, had enjoyed certain privileges and rights. Those privileges and rights consisted of gifts of various kinds, such as boots and shoes, and medical attendance when sick, which was a very important privilege. What were the Charity Commissioners doing at Sutton Coldfield?—and, in mentioning that case, and that scheme, he was only giving an instance of what the Commissioners were doing, and had been doing, throughout the country. They were taking away the ancient privileges of the poor to a large extent, and were about to establish a high school for girls which could only be taken advantage of by the wealthier classes. He had not the least objection to a high school for girls. On the contrary, he believed in schools of the kind. He did not think, however, that they should be established by the confiscation of the rights and privileges of the poor. But to show the contempt with which the Charity Commissioners treated all the wishes and the representations of the Local Authorities and the people in the localities, he might say that the members of the old Governing Body of Sutton Coldfield—which place was about to be incorporated—had been joined by representatives of the people appointed in public meeting, and had met to confer together on the new scheme for the Sutton Coldfield Charities. This representative Body had agreed — as he thought, too freely—to surrender up certain rights belonging to the poor; but though they had agreed to go a long way in that direction, the Charity Commissioners were not satisfied without having a far larger share taken away from the poor. It came to this—that a gentleman had the matter in hand who knew nothing about the locality, and was seeking to over-ride by his will the combined opinion of all concerned in the locality. The people of the country were having their eyes opened to the action of the Commissioners in these matters; and the time, he thought, would soon come when they would be determined that this system of centralization should no longer exist. The matter was one which the Government should take up, for, so far as he could find out, the Charity Commissioners were responsible to no one. They could do any amount of evil in small places where public opinion did not exist, or where it was powerless. They had their own way, and the poorer classes had only to suffer. Then the Charity Commissioners had the administration of the Allotments Extension Act. He believed that in every other Department of the Government, without exception, when a new Act of Parliament was passed, to come under its administration, the rule was for the Department to communicate with those concerned, informing them of the passage of the Act, and giving directions concerning it. Not only had the Charity Commissioners neglected to do that, but, when asked to do it, they had sheltered themselves under the declaration that the Act of Parliament did not require them to do it. That, with other things, indicated, if not hostility, at any rate indifference, to an Act which was intended to, and did, confer great benefits upon the poorer classes in those districts which needed help. He could assure the Committee that the times were not so good in these rural districts and poor places to admit of any of the small charities they had being taken away from them; and he could further assure the Committee that if Parliament did not protect these places the Charity Commissioners would not. The present policy of Parliament was being rebelled against; and he knew of no action anywhere which was creating such grave dissatisfaction as the action of the Charity Commissioners. Take the case of the Allotments Act. Only this week he had written to, or directed a letter to be sent to, the Charity Commissioners, informing them of certain action which was about to be taken by some trustees of charity lands. He had not been aware that this Vote was coming on tonight, otherwise he would have provided himself with the particulars of this case. The place, he believed, was somewhere in Norfolk—at any rate, it was a place where the trustees of charity lands were about to let those lands by auction in defiance of the 4th clause of Allotments Act, which directly required them to offer their lands to the labouring poor of the district. They had written to the Commissioners—it was not the first, nor the second, nor the third time they had done the same in other places—asking them not to allow this action of the trustees. He did not know whether any reply had been received during the last two days. Certainly, up to Thursday none had come. The auction was to take place on Monday next; and, if it was not stopped, these lands would be placed beyond the reach of those poor people for the length of time—whether short or long—for which the lands were held under the terms of the letting. If the House of Commons passed a law, was it going to have it carried out, or was the Government going to sit still and see the Department which had the administration of that law defy and defeat the Act? If it did, hon. Members who felt as he did on this question could only appeal to the constituencies to know if that sort of thing was to go on. He could occupy the time of the Committee for a much longer period in simply giving a list of the grievances which these poor people had suffered at the hands of the Charity Commissioners; but he would not do so. There were other charges to be brought against the Commissioners, which would come under the head of positive breaches of faith. He would again allude to a case which was coming up and would continue to come up until it was satisfactorily settled —namely, the case of the Tonbridge School. That school, according to the original scheme, was to have been in or near the town of Tonbridge. A short time after that scheme was settled on, the Charity Commissioners sprung a mine on the Tonbridge people, and it was found that in the scheme had been placed the words "in or near the parish of Tonbridge," and the consequence was that the school would be placed in the town of Tonbridge Wells. The Skinners' Company had given £10,000 of their own money, and another £10,000, making in all £20,000, on the faith of the school being placed in Tonbridge. He contended, therefore, that what the Charity Commissioners had done—or what they proposed to do in this matter, for the transaction was not yet completed—amounted to nothing less than a breach of faith. The action of the Commissioners was affecting the public good, and particularly the interests of the poor. He was, of course, not bringing personal charges against the Commissioners, but only condemning their policy. Doubtless, they themselves considered their policy to be right, but he conceived it to be wrong; and he and those who acted with him, who knew that the poor classes were suffering extremely from the operation of that policy, had a right again and again to impeach that policy until the House and the country saw that it was time to put an end to the system, as foreign to our ideas of right, and as unnecessarily expensive. As a business man, he ventured to assert that all the work for which they paid this £37,000 they could easily get satisfactorily performed if they reduced the sum by £20,000. He would move that the Vote be reduced by £2,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £825, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Charity Commission for England and Wales."—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he entirely sympathized with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) in thinking that the Endowed Schools Commission was one of the most unjust and injurious Commissions in the country. It was continually shifting up the recipients of the benefits of endowments—that was to say, endowments which had been intended for the poor were shifted up to the higher classes. As, however, he understood the Vote was not to be increased, he hoped the hon. Member would rest satisfied with the protest he had made, and would refrain from going to a division.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, he thought that what had been pointed out by his hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings) was really deserving of the attention of the Committee. When, originally, the Endowed Schools Commission was appointed, its operations were confined within a comparatively small compass. Year by year its operations had been extending, and the interests at stake and affected were now very great. The work of the Endowed Schools Department had passed into the hands of the Commissioners. They had an assurance from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department a short time ago that the work in connection with the London Charities would only continue for a short period. So they were assured when the operations of the Endowed Schools Commission were started. He (Mr. Illingworth) remembered his right hon. Colleague (Mr. W. E. Forster) stating that the work of the Commission would be completed in three or four years, and yet the work of the Commission was going on still. He would venture to point out that the work of this Department was very anomalous. In connection with almost all other Departments of the State there was someone in the House who would accept responsibility for the work done. There was the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella), who was now in his place. He (Mr. Illingworth) would be the last man in the world to suggest that, in addition to the work in his hands, the right hon. Gentleman should be asked to attend to the details of this Department; but, at the same time, it was absolutely necessary that the House of Commons should fix the responsibility somewhere. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman smiled at the excuse he (Mr. Illingworth) was furnishing for him; but he had heard from the right hon. Gentleman's own lips in that House, in regard to the Commission, declarations of this sort—"Of course it was impossible for him to know everything that was going on in regard to the administration of this Department." The work the Department was doing was very important nationally, and the policy of the Commissioners was a matter of the greatest interest to the people of the country. He did not say he went, in details, with his hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings). He thought a Commission of this character would be useful; but it ought to be kept within strict limits in order to carry out the principles laid down by legislation. In all questions of finance—questions affecting the administration of the funds—Parliament should break up the work of the Commission and delegate the main part of it to the local bodies in the country. He wished to ask this. If Parliament had deliberately sanctioned and given over to the municipalities of the country power to deal with rates amounting to hundreds or thousands a-year, in particular municipalities, how was it to be made out that these same municipalities were incapable of dealing with these paltry little trusts? It was true that Parliament had laid down the lines on which public money should be spent; and, in the same way, it seemed to him that Parliament had done everything that was necessary when it had indicated the way in which the funds of these trusts should be expended. Now, there were two Commissions in this anomalous position, and in regard to which the House of Commons had no direct power. They all knew it was very hard work for Parliament even to control the Departments over which it had substantial and immediate control; but it was impossible for it to exercise control with regard to this Commission, and that even older one which it had on its hands—namely, the Ecclesiastical Commission. Take the *personnel* of the Commission. There had been complaints—well-grounded and wide-spread complaints—on this head, since almost the creation of the Commission. There used to be, practically, a religious test applied, marking down that no Dissenter was to be regarded as a fit man to be on the Commission. Administration after Administration, year after year, had been applied to to break down this test, applied in such a paltry spirit. A large and influential class of Her Majesty's subjects—a class largely interested in the trusts, and very materially affected by the operations of the Commissioners—were without representation on the Commission. Ultimately a temporary Commissioner was appointed from that body—appointed to a position than which there were one or more larger positions open to him. Now, he, for one, thought a very important change in the character and working of this Commission and also of the Ecclesiastical Commission was necessary; and he hoped the Government would take the advice given to-night as being indicative of the very strong feeling prevalent in the country in regard to the matter. If the hour were not so late, and other Business were not before them, he should venture to support what he had already said by a statement of grievances which had been brought under his notice in different parts of the country. It was a disgrace to the British people, or, at any rate, to the British Parliament, that they tolerated the one-sided and arbitrary dealings of the present Charity Commission. The paltry details into which they entered, the arbitrary decisions at which they arrived, and the trouble which they gave trustees, went to show it was high time there should be something like a radical reform in the Charity Commission.

MR. W. H. JAMES said, he did not intend to waste the time of the Committee by entering at length into the doings of the Charity Commission. He desired, however, to express his opinion that much good would result from the appointment of a Minister responsible for the Charity Commission. He had always been struck by the great difficulty of transferring the powers of the Commission to local bodies. The functions of the Charity Commission were really those of a Court of Law and Equity, and he failed to see it would be possible to transfer such functions to municipal bodies. He hoped the views which had been expressed by his hon.

Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) with regard to the eleemosynary duties discharged by the Commission were not likely to find general acceptance. The duties of the Charity Commission were the results of the labours of some of the ablest and most learned and most distinguished men of the last 30 or 40 years; and any hon. Gentleman who took the trouble to examine Lord Brougham's Report and the proceedings of the subsequent Commissions would find it was utterly impossible to revert to the old and iniquitous state of things, a state of things which the country unanimously condemned.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) would not persist in the Motion he had made, but would be satisfied with the protest he had made respecting the dealings of the Charity Commission. He (Mr. Hibbert) knew the hon. Gentleman held very strong opinions on the question; but a Committee had sat upon the subject, and he should have thought his hon. Friend would have been satisfied with the long inquiry which the Committee held. He believed that the Committee approved of the working of the Charity Commission. He could not avoid saying that, to a certain extent, he sympathized with that part of his hon. Friend's speech in which he said it was most desirable that there should be some Department of the State responsible for the work of the Commission. He quite agreed that if some responsible Department of State could represent the Charity Commission, great good would accrue. At present, he failed to see that any bodies in the country were fitted to undertake the work of the Commission. Probably, when they got a proper system of local government they might be able to transfer to the County Boards some part of the work that was now done by the Commission. Reference had also been made to the working of the Allotments Act. As a matter of fact, he gave his hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings) every assistance in the carrying of that Act, and he had always wished to see it carried out in the best way possible. At the same time, he could not avoid drawing his hon. Friend's attention to the fact that the present Estimate was for the salaries of the Endowed Schools Commissioners—for three months' salaries—which could not be included in the Vote which was brought forward during last Session; and, therefore, as this was merely a carrying out of the Vote of last Session, he hoped his hon. Friend would not persist in his Motion.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said, he thanked his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) for the very satisfactory manner in which he had alluded to the possibility of placing the duties of the Charity Commission in the hands of the rural municipalities, which it was hoped would shortly be created. He ventured to say that nothing short of that would satisfy the electors of those rural municipalities, for this was becoming—very fast becoming—little short of a national question. He felt sure that nothing short of putting the interests of localities in the hands of the representatives of localities would satisfy the people. He desired to say a word or two with regard to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James). He (Mr. Jesse Collings) was somewhat ridiculed because he upheld so-called charities, and he wanted to make himself thoroughly understood. He did not wish to maintain any particular form of charity. If it was thought demoralizing to give boots and clothes to the children of the poor, let the system be altered; but do not take away the charity altogether; do not take away from the poor the proceeds of charities which belonged to the poor, and had been enjoyed by the poor for generations—do not take them away and give them to the higher classes. His hon. Friend the Member for Gateshead and his hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Woodall) were afraid the poor would be demoralized by having these gifts made to them, yet they did not seem afraid that the rich would be demoralized by their children getting an education worth £20 a-year for £10. In the case of the wealthy classes, the demoralization ought to be much greater, because many of them could afford to pay the £20. He was not objecting to free education; he should like to see all education free; but he objected to take free education away from the poor on the plea of its demoralizing character, and giving it to the wealthier classes. In the case of a great endowment at Birmingham, of which he was a Governor, he had seen boys coming on horseback and in carriages from mansions—coming to have free teaching and a splendid educational banquet, while the poor were not allowed to pick up the crumbs which fell from the table. For generations this had gone on, and not a single word had been said about demoralization; but the moment the Education Act of 1870 was passed, and thereby opened the door by which the poor could come in to enjoy this better education, the Charity Commissioners stepped in and put up the barrier of payment; and they did it because, in their opinion, it would be demoralizing to the poor if they should have a free education. It was high time that they should get rid of the cant as to the demoralizing effect of these gifts upon the poor. That these gifts should be confiscated, or taken from the poor, and granted to people who were well able to pay for them, was an increasing grievance throughout the country. This was a matter which he hoped both sides of the House would unite in rectifying, and he agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) that there were no means of protecting the privileges and, he would say, the property of these poor people, but by taking them out of the hands of a centralized body, and placing them in the hands of the representatives of localities. It was a farce to suppose that half-a-dozen men sitting in Whitehall could know all about the position and circumstances of 20,000 parishes in the country, and could regulate everything for the best. The Commissioners were partial in their election of trustees. They did not want trustees who represented the people, but trustees who represented their—the Commissioners' own—policy; and if they could not find men in the locality to represent their policy, they went miles away to find them. He again thanked his hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) for alluding to the possibility, in the promised reform of county government, of placing the management of these things in the hands of rural municipalities. Having received from the hon. Gentleman such an important suggestion, a suggestion which he hoped would mature and ultimately be adopted, he asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(9.) £3,720, Local Government Board.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he noticed that there was a charge of £2,600 for Poor Law Medical Officers. Was that a permanent charge, or was it an increase during last year?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, it was a self-acting increase. It was one of those unfortunate contributions from the public Treasury towards several salaries, without any will or act on the part of the Government. These were contributions which many of them desired to put an end to; for as long as they went on it was not certain what the amount of the charge would be.

Vote *agreed to.*

(10.) £6,730, Patent Office, &c.

MR. MOLLOY asked, what the receipts, in the shape of fees in the Patent Office during the period which this Vote covered, amounted to?

MR. HIBBERT, in reply, said, he was sorry he was not able to give the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Molloy) the information he desired; he would, however, obtain it, and very gladly supply it to the hon. Member. The increased payment was entirely owing to the increased number of applications for patents.

MR. MOLLOY asked, if patents were sent over to Dublin? A few books were sent over occasionally; but there was no public library. A considerable part of this large sum went towards the maintenance of the Patent Library in this country. The library was open to the public without payment. Similar facilities, however, were not given to the public in Dublin. Sanitary works, or works useful to those engaged in building, were not supplied in Dublin. Of course, he did not object to the facilities given to the public in England; but all he desired was that the same facilities should be afforded to the Dublin public. Could the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) say whether patent works were supplied to some library in Dublin where they were open without payment to mechanics and others interested in them?

MR. SEXTON said, that he lately put some questions in the House to the hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Hibbert's) Predecessor (Mr. Courtney) with reference to the incompleteness of the indices in the

Record Office in Dublin. He had found that the indices were very incomplete indeed. The point was really this—that if, in Dublin, or in any other part of Ireland, an inventor, or a person who imagined himself to be an inventor, desired to compare his work, to ascertain whether he had been anticipated by an earlier inventor, he found very great difficulty indeed. He believed that in most cases such persons had to engage professional help; and in some cases they had even to send to London. The Irish Members objected to this state of things; and they would resist the regular Estimate unless they were assured that the facilities for searching patents in Dublin should be put on the same level as those in London.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he should be glad to do what he could to give the same facilities for search in Dublin as in England. He was rather surprised to hear there was no Library of Patents in Dublin.

Mr. SEXTON said, the library was there; but it was not perfectly indexed.

Mr. HIBBERT promised to inquire into the matter; and he reminded hon. Gentlemen that when the Patents Bill was passing through the House, the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) said his intention was to give great facilities for search to every person.

Mr. MOLLOY said, the library in Dublin was not of the same benefit to the public as the one in London was. It would be extremely useful to persons engaged in scientific work, or in chemistry, if there was in Dublin a library such as was attached to the Patent Office in Chancery Lane. At the latter place a person could find the records not only of the English patents, but of those of other countries—America, Germany, France, Italy, and so on—and, besides, there was a large general library for reference. Those who were engaged in making improvements in machinery, or in regard to the manufacturing industries of the country, had not the means, as a rule, of purchasing books which would enable them to judge of the value of certain inventions. Practically speaking, the libraries in Dublin were not open to the working public. He and his hon. Friends wanted that something of the same value as that in London should be open to the mechanic class in Dublin, and the assurance they asked from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) was that he would see that steps were taken to improve the facilities, in this respect, afforded to the public in Dublin. He (Mr. Molloy) would bring the matter up again on the detailed Estimates. Of course, he did not say that the library in Dublin should be equal in every respect to that in Chancery Lane.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he would see what could be done to provide in Dublin the facilities suggested by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Molloy). The library in Chancery Lane was, of course, much superior to anything there was in any other part of England, and he could not promise that the Dublin library should be made as complete as that.

Mr. TOMLINSON asked for an explanation of the item of £229 as a contribution to the International Bureau. This appeared to be a fresh Vote altogether, as there was no original Estimate. He noticed that there was to be an annual subscription to the Bureau of £150; but there was nothing to show what amount the country would be liable for under an arrangement which seemed to have been arrived at. What expenses would fall on the country with reference to this Bureau?

Mr. HIBBERT: £150 per annum.

Mr. GORST said, in these matters it was usual to give an estimate of the expenditure which would be involved. It appeared there was to be an annual subscription of £150. There were also some preliminary expenses in connection with the Central Patents Bureau at Berne. The question was what would be the final charge which would be imposed on the public by reason of the "adhesion of Her Majesty's Government to the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property?"

Mr. HIBBERT said, it was shown in the Vote that the annual subscription would be £150. The remaining part of the £229 was spent in expenses before the Bureau was established.

Mr. TOMLINSON: What is the object of this Bureau?

Mr. HIBBERT: It explains itself. It is an International Bureau of Patents.

Colonel NOLAN said, he was afraid the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) had lost sight of the point raised by the hon.

Gentleman the Member for King's County (Mr. Molloy) in regard to the patent library in Dublin. It was much easier for Manchester men, for instance, to come up to London to search the records than Dublin men, and therefore he thought there should be in Dublin some special means for search, something like what there were in Chancery Lane. He did not think there ought to be a better library in Dublin than there was in Chancery Lane; but in Dublin there was nothing of the kind at all.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he wished to make himself thoroughly understood. He could not give a pledge that in Dublin there should be a library equal to that in Chancery Lane; but he would do what he could to give the facilities asked for.

Mr. MOLLOY thanked the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) for what he had said. It was clear it was too much to ask for an exact copy of the Chancery Lane Library; but what he suggested was that the indices in Dublin should be as perfect as they were here, that there should also be copies of the records of the Patent Offices of other countries, and that there should be such books of reference as were necessary for ordinary needs.

Vote *agreed to.*

(11.) £15,383, Stationery and Printing.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, he wished to ask his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) for an explanation of the item for printing for Public Departments. He noticed that the additional sum required was £14,000. The original Estimate was £159,000; the total now was £173,000. Perhaps his hon. Friend would say why so large an additional sum was required?

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, it would assist the Committee very much in the discussion of this Vote if they had before them the Report of his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). He wished to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) whether the Report of the hon. Member was complete; and, if so, whether, and when, it would be laid before Parliament? Then there was only one other question he wished to ask his hon. Friend, but it was of a very curious character. There was in this Vote, under the head of "Incidental Expenses," a charge of £820 for "Arrears of preparation of 800 tons of waste paper for sale in the open market." That was about 1*s.* a-cwt. If that was the charge for the arrears of preparation, what had been the total sum for the preparation of the 800 tons; and when the transaction was complete, what would be the advantage to Her Majesty's Treasury?

Mr. HIBBERT said, that, in reply to his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Henry Fletcher), he was obliged to admit that the increase of £14,000 for the printing for Public Departments arose from the fact that the original Estimate was cut down too much. With respect to the question just asked by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), he might say that the Report which had been prepared by his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was complete, and would be laid on the Table of the House in a few days. He was certain that it would have the very good effect of inducing economy in various Departments of the State. With respect to the large quantity of waste paper, to which attention had been called, he had himself been very much surprised at this item, and had inquired into the circumstances, with the result that he found it was necessary, before the paper could be sold for anything like a satisfactory sum, that it should be torn into small pieces, which operation, it appeared, had been originally done by prisoners. Owing, however, to the fact of the prisoners being occupied with other work, their labour was not now available for the purpose, and it had to be carried out by others.

Vote *agreed to.*

(12.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £1,271, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Fishery Board in Scotland and for Grants in Aid of Piers or Quays."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Mr. HIBBERT: I hope the hon. Member will allow us to finish Class II., of which there are only two Votes remaining.

Colonel NOLAN asked, if the sum of £1,271 asked for was on account of the Trawling Commission?

Mr. R. W. DUFF: No, Sir; it has nothing to do with that Commission. The Votes are entirely separate.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(13.) £75, Registrar General's Office, Scotland.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Hibbert,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next.

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

—o—

OATHS BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law as to Oaths."—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he hoped he was not anticipating his proper opportunity by asking on what day the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) intended to propose the second reading of this Bill? He desired this information in order that the House might have some idea of the time at their disposal for its consideration.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, that when leave had been obtained for the introduction of the Bill, a reasonable time would certainly be given for the purpose mentioned by the hon. Gentleman opposite.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law as to Oaths.

Resolution *reported:*—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Percy Wyndham, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Noel, Mr. Pennington, and Mr. Arthur Elliot.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 62.]

REGISTRATION (OCCUPATION VOTERS) BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to assimilate the Law affecting the Registration of Occupation Voters in counties and boroughs, and for other purposes."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Mr. SEXTON: I presume this Bill is brought forward for the purpose of making the registration suit the extended franchise. Does it extend to Ireland?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): The Act will not extend to Ireland. The Bill is merely for the purpose of assimilating the registration of borough occupation voters in this country to that existing in counties.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, and Mr. Henry H. Fowler.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 63.]

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND).

APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the operation of the existing Law regulating Salmon and Trout Fishing in Ireland, and to Report whether any Amendments in the Law are desirable."—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

Mr. SEXTON: I should like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman how many Members will be placed on this Committee, and when it will be appointed?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Ample Notice will be given on the subject.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

CORN SALES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Rankin, Bill to provide for greater uniformity in the Sale of Corn throughout Great Britain, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Rankin, Sir Joseph Bailey, Mr. Biddell, Mr. Duckham, Mr. Davenport, and Mr. Williamson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 57.]

SITES FOR PLACES OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to facilitate the acquisition of Sites for Places of Religious Worship, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Burt, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, and Mr. Webster.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 58.]

EXPLOSIVE SUBSTANCES ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bill to amend "The Explosive Substances Act, 1883," *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Herbert Maxwell and Lord Algernon Percy.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 59.]

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. William Corbet, Bill to alter and amend the Law relating to Private Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, and to make other and more suitable provision for Paying Patients, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Dillwyn, Mr. Dawson, and Mr. Richard Power.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 60.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to amend "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Dick Peddie, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. Passmore Edwards, and Mr. Stewart Macliver.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 61.]

MUNICIPAL VOTERS (RELIEF) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill to relieve Municipal Voters from being disqualified in consequence of letting their dwelling houses for short periods, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, and Mr. Henry H. Fowler.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 64.]

LAW OF EVIDENCE (CRIMINAL CASES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill to amend the Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. Solicitor General.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 65.]

CORPORATE PROPERTY SECURITY BILL.

On Motion of Sir Charles Dilke, Bill for the better securing their Property to Corporate and quasi-Corporate Associations, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Attorney General.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 66.]

House adjourned at One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 23rd February, 1885.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Roman Catholic Disabilities (Advowsons, &c.)* (18); Marriages Legalization * (19).

Select Committee—Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) * (6), The Earl of Milltown *added.*

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—THE VOTE OF CENSURE.

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION, &c.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: I beg to give Notice that I propose on Thursday to move the following Resolution:—

"That this House, having taken into consideration the statements that have been made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, is of opinion that—(1.) The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided councils of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations; (2.) That the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations will be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire."

Lord WENTWORTH: I beg to give Notice that on Thursday I shall move an Amendment to the Motion of the noble Marquess, to leave out all the words after "That" to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words—

"An humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs in Egypt and the Soudan has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should not employ the British forces to occupy the Soudan or to prevent the exercise by the Egyptian people of their right to select their own government."

IRELAND—STATE-AIDED EMIGRATION.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

Lord ORANMORE and BROWNE asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether the £50,000 granted by Parliament in the Session of 1883 for the purpose of migration of tenants in Ireland has been advanced for that purpose; and, if so, to what person or company it has been advanced? He would also move for a Return from the Land Commission in

Ireland showing what part of the purchase money of the Kilclooney estate—bought by the Company of which Mr. Parnell was Chairman—was advanced on loan from the Treasury.

Moved, That there be laid before the House—

"Return from the Land Commission in Ireland, showing what part of the purchase money of the Kilclooney Estate (bought by the Company of which Mr. Parnell is chairman) was advanced on loan from the Treasury."—(*The Lord Oranmore and Browne.*)

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL), in reply, said, that no part of the £50,000 allotted for the purpose of what was called migration had been applied for, and therefore no portion had been advanced. He would agree to the Motion of the noble Lord for a Return respecting the purchase money of the Kilclooney estate.

Motion *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT — RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE — (ADMISSION OF STRANGERS)—ADMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is his intention to propose any such new Rules relative to admission to the House of Lords as have been made by the Speaker of the House of Commons relative to that House? He remarked that the fact that the House of Lords was a Court of Justice during the daytime rendered it inexpedient to apply to it precisely the same regulations as were made for the other House. The matter was one of importance, although public attention had been diverted from the doings of the dynamitards by the disastrous events which had recently taken place in Egypt. In that country they had to grieve over the loss of a most capable and disinterested Englishman. The Government was bound to protect him, whereas by gross negligence and delay they sent out relief to him at a time when it was impossible it could be of any use to him.

EARL GRANVILLE rose to Order. A Notice of Motion had been given as to the conduct of the Government, and he objected to a discussion of the affairs of Egypt upon the question of the protection of the House of Lords.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, he was drawing a contrast. Their Lordships were not accustomed to be so particular. The noble Lord was proceeding with further observations, when——

THE EARL OF LONGFORD rose to Order.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, he would only add that, in view of recent occurrences and of the conspiracy known to be existing, it was absolutely necessary that proper steps should be taken for the protection of the House.

EARL GRANVILLE said, he could quite understand the anxiety of the noble Lord which had led him to put the Question. The course which he had himself proposed, to refer the matter to the Committee of Black Rod, had received the full sanction of the noble Marquess opposite and of the House. He only wished to relieve the noble Lord from one apprehension by saying that neither he himself nor any of the noble Lords beside him were favourable to the blowing up of that House, or even indifferent to it, especially when they were in it themselves.

AFRICA (RED SEA COAST) — OCCUPATION OF MASSOWAH BY ITALY.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

EARL DE LA WARR, in rising to move—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for papers and correspondence between Her Majesty's Government, Turkey, Italy, and other European Powers relative to the occupation of Massowah by Italian troops,"

said, that at the present moment they were so much occupied with the critical state of affairs in Egypt and the Soudan that there was a danger of passing over almost in silence what, perhaps, would at other times attract a larger share of attention. But if it were so in the case of that which he had wished to bring under their Lordships' notice in the Motion now before the House, there were not inwanting timations in various quarters of what was taking place on the shores of the Red Sea, and of which he was not aware that any information had been given to their Lordships by Her Majesty's Government. They had recently been informed from other sources that Italian troops had taken possession of and occupied Massowah, a position of some importance on the Western Coast of the Red Sea; and they were further told that additional Italian troops were to be sent there, with artillery and guns for forts which were about to be constructed. It was true that they were not in possession of any official information as to what the object of the occupation of that Egyptian territory might be, or whether it had received any kind of sanction from other European Powers; but it appeared that a protest against it had been made by the Porte, it being a part of the Ottoman Empire. It had also been alleged that the landing of Egyptian troops had been opposed by the Italians, who had forcibly occupied Beilul, near Assab, some distance south of Massowah. The districts of Suakin and Massowah were, he believed, made over by Turkey to Egypt, subject to a tribute, some time ago; but they no less remained a part of the Ottoman Empire, the integrity of which, as their Lordships were aware, was guaranteed by Treaties. If they for a moment looked to the critical state of affairs in the Soudan, and consequently on the littoral of the Red Sea, the noble Earl opposite would not, he hoped, consider it unreasonable or inopportune to ask for some information on the subject to which he had referred. Words had recently been uttered by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Italian Chambers expressing a greater community of interests as now existing between this country and Italy; and it was hardly possible to separate these words entirely from late events, but rather as implying an understanding, or, it might be, tacit consent, on the part of Her Majesty's Government to what had taken place, and which was virtually a violation of Turkish territory and a disregard of Treaties. This was surely not a time for widening the breach between this country and Turkey, which unhappily, by the action of Her Majesty's Government, had been assuming very serious proportions. We had been rending an alliance which tended greatly to strengthen British influence and British interests in the East, and thereby making more and more difficult the present action of England in Egypt, which was resulting in a war that could lead to nothing but bloodshed and massacre. He trusted the noble Earl opposite would be able to inform their Lordships to what extent encouragement or consent had been given by Her Majesty's Government to the occupation of Massowah by Italy, and whether it had been done with the sanction of the Sultan. In conclusion, he begged to move for the Papers in question.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for papers and correspondence between Her Majesty's Government Turkey, Italy, and other European Powers relative to the occupation of Massowah by Italian troops."—(*The Earl De La Warr.*)

EARL GRANVILLE: If the noble Earl will not press his Motion to-night, I will undertake to present Papers at the earliest possible moment. In the meanwhile, however, I may state shortly what these Papers will contain. On the 3rd of November the Italian Ambassador inquired whether Her Majesty's Government were in any way opposed to an extension of Italian jurisdiction to the north of their settlement at Assab, so as to include Beilul, in the same way as Raheita had already been included in the south. I assured him that Her Majesty's Government felt no jealousy of the extension of Italian influence over that part of the Red Sea Coast, but would, on the contrary, welcome it. Her Majesty's Government could not, however, undertake to give away that which did not belong to them, and I suggested the desirability of the Italian Government coming to an arrangement with the Porte on the matter. On the 22nd of December Count Nigra inquired in what manner Her Majesty's Government would view a provisional occupation of Zulla by Italian troops. I informed him that the Egyptian Government being unable to continue their hold on all the African littoral of the Red Sea, the ports naturally reverted to the Sultan, whom Her Majesty's Government had advised to retake possession of some of them. If the Italian Government desired to occupy some of these ports, it was a matter between Italy and Turkey. Her Majesty's Government, for their own part, had no objection to raise against the Italian occupation of Zulla, Beilul, or Massowah. On the 10th of January Musurus Pasha referred to the reports current as to the intentions of the Italian Government on the Red Sea, and I stated that it was to be regretted that Turkey had not acted on the suggestions of Her Majesty's Government that she should herself occupy these ports. When the

Porte protested subsequently against the Italian occupations, I expressed a strong hope that Turkey and Italy should amicably arrange the matter, but informed the Turkish Ambassador that Her Majesty's Government must disclaim any responsibility, as their advice to the Sultan to occupy the ports had not been acted upon. I also stated to His Excellency that though there was no engagement or special alliance with Italy, we were on terms of warm friendship with that country. Papers will be laid on the Table in due time.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

FRANCE AND CHINA—THE HOSTILITIES.—OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, that their Lordships might naturally have seen in the public newspapers accounts of the conduct of affairs by France in Chinese waters, and also of the action taken by the British Government. In *The Times* of the 21st instant a Correspondent at Hong Kong writes thus—

> "The so-called 'blockade' is only effective against European merchants. In Tamsui we are now without 10 mails from Europe, and we cannot get away. Several French war vessels run along the coast, and sink every boat which they meet, taking the crews to Kelung, where they are treated barbarously. The proceedings of the French are unparalleled in the history of modern civilized warfare. . . . The latest French action on the Formosan coast has excited the greatest indignation. The French vessels are to receive 10 days' provisions and five days' coal; Saigon is considered their nearest port; but the *Triomphante* received more—why, no one knows. Letters from every quarter in China and Japan tell me that England is condemned for allowing the French to use Hong Kong as a base."

Now, it was not necessary for him to say that he did not for a moment suppose that France had been carrying on her operations there in the manner described by the Correspondent of *The Times.* He had no doubt her Commanders were operating in a manner consistent with civilized warfare and the action of civilized nations; but he did not feel quite so clear that what the Correspondent said about the action, or want of action, on the part of Her Majesty's Government was not accurate, because he must say that no reasonable man, after the experience of last year, could be suspected to believe, or, at all events, to feel sure, that Her Majesty's Government had any distinct comprehension of its duties, or distinct determination to carry them out. As far as he understood the matter, there was no distinct declaration of war between France and China; but, at the same time, France claimed the right which was conceded only to a belligerent, that of searching neutral vessels, and she was also conducting the blockade of ports. The inconvenience and uncertainty in this matter was exceedingly great. He did not know whether we considered France was at war or not. The practice of conducting military operations and bombarding operations, and not going to war, was spreading all over the world, and was causing very great inconvenience. It would be obvious to their Lordships that vessels carrying goods which were contraband of war to Japan would be liable to be seized on the way and detained, and, possibly, the goods confiscated. He was aware that in one case in which a vessel was going out to China the insurance was raised from 1 per cent to 4 per cent. He was aware that several British ships going to Shanghai had to discharge their cargo at the intermediate port of Singapore, on account of the exercise of the right of search. That was causing great disturbance and great derangement of the whole trade with China, and it was right that such a matter should be inquired into. If France and China were at war, we must submit to the inconveniences of the right of search; but, at the same time, if war was declared, we, as neutrals, had certain duties which we were bound to perform, and he was not at all clear that we were performing them. If we were not performing them, it was abundantly clear that we might cause ourselves infinite trouble in the future. If, for example, an American or Italian vessel was stopped and seized, and her cargo confiscated by a French cruiser that had obtained coals or provisions in our ports more than she was entitled to if the French were treated as belligerents, serious difficulty might arise. At present there appeared to be a great deal of uncertainty in the matter, and that uncertainty ought to be cleared up. He therefore begged to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether there has been a declaration of war between France and

China; whether the "right of search" is exercised or claimed by either of those Powers; and whether the rules regulating the conduct of neutrals towards belligerents are applied to French and Chinese vessels in British Ports?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, no formal declaration of war has been issued by France and China. Up to a recent period the French Government maintained that they were not at war with China, but that their hostilities there were only in the nature of reprisals. They consequently repudiated the intention of exercising the belligerent right of search over neutral vessels, and insisted that the blockade which they had notified of the ports of Formosa was a "pacific blockade" and not a "belligerent blockade;" but that any neutral vessel attempting to break it would be captured. Her Majesty's Government were unable to accept those views, and at the same time they were averse to taking any step which would aggravate the situation unnecessarily as regards our own rights as neutrals and beyond the wishes of the belligerents. They therefore announced to the French Government that, in their opinion, a state of war did exist in China which compelled them to enforce the provisions of the Foreign Enlistment Act; that the blockade of Formosa was recognized by them, but only as a belligerent blockade; and that so long as the hostilities were confined to certain localities, and neutral vessels were not interfered with on the high seas, Her Majesty's Government would not deem it necessary to take any further measure for the observance of their neutrality than the enforcement of the Foreign Enlistment Act. This took place in the month of November last, and the decision of Her Majesty's Government was communicated to the Governors of the British Possessions in the East. In consequence of recent complaints from the Chinese Minister in this country that the Foreign Enlistment Act was not being strictly enforced in Hong Kong as regards the repairing and equipping of French vessels of war, it was deemed necessary to issue special instructions to the Governors of the Eastern Colonies for their guidance in carrying out the decision of Her Majesty's Government. Those instructions did not in any way modify the attitude of Her Majesty's Government, or their decision arrived at in October last, and announced at the time to the French Government. The French Government, however, have now found it necessary to exercise the right of search on the high seas in order to intercept contraband of war destined for Chinese ports, and as the prohibition of the export of munitions of war from neutral ports is not an obligation imposed by the Law of Nations, it is not unnatural that the French Government should resort to the remedy which that law affords to the belligerent. They have at the same time assured Her Majesty's Government that the right of search will be exercised by them with all the consideration and forbearance towards neutrals which the circumstances permit. Her Majesty's Government do not think it necessary at present, therefore, to modify their decision of November last, which insures a just and equal measure of neutrality towards both belligerents and the scrupulous observance of British law.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: After the very moderate speech of my noble Friend, the noble Earl opposite has, I think, shown considerable reluctance to make a plain statement of the policy of Her Majesty's Government on this point. It is a point of extreme importance in the view of International Law, and also in regard to our countrymen trading in the Eastern Seas. I understand the noble Earl to say that France has claimed the right of search at sea in order to stop the import of munitions of war, and that this has not been objected to by Her Majesty's Government. Does that mean that France, which is only blockading one or two ports in Formosa, claims the right of search with respect to all vessels going to any of the ports of China in order to find out whether they have munitions of war? I apprehend that if any claim is made on the part of the French Government it is practically setting up that which the Declaration of Paris destroyed —namely, the system of paper blockades. France assented to the provision of the Declaration of Paris of 1856, that blockades, if they are to be carried out, must be genuine blockades; and the claim to search vessels on the high seas, no matter what port they are going to, merely because one or two ports are blockaded, appears to me to be one which has placed that doctrine in great peril, and which Her Majesty's Government should not have admitted so easily as they have done. Another point alluded to by my noble Friend was not touched by the noble Earl, and that is the question of permitting French vessels to make English ports a base for operations against China. I remember that during the Confederate War — a war which raised these questions of belligerency and blockade in a very acute form, and caused them to be examined and discussed with great minuteness — the rule was adopted that England would allow neither of the contending parties to send its ships into English ports for a longer space than 24 hours. They were not allowed to ship more either of coal or provisions than would be necessary to take them to the nearest port belonging to their own nation. This can hardly arise in the present case; but if there were two ships belonging to opposite belligerents in port at the same time, and if one of them left, the other was not allowed to leave without a delay of 24 hours. Now, I have heard—I do not know whether it is true—that France is carrying out her blockade against those ports by watching ships within British ports; that a French gunboat or man-of-war lies alongside the particular trader whom she has reason to suspect, and watches her and follows her out. If anything of that kind has taken place it is a gross breach of the international practice in this respect. I hope the noble Earl will be able to tell me that the public reports to that effect are erroneous; but, at all events, it appears to me that, both as to the extent to which the right of search is permitted and the extent to which hostility is given to belligerent vessels, the answer of the noble Earl is very imperfect, and I hope he will supplement it by laying Papers on the Table, and give us, at the same time, the text of the instructions which have been issued to the Colonial authorities.

EARL GRANVILLE: I have no objection to lay Papers on the Table; but do I understand that the noble Marquess thinks it wrong to allow France to search any vessels on the high seas?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: General right of search with reference to whether the vessels are going to blockaded or unblockaded ports.

EARL GRANVILLE: France said they were not at war, while we said they were; and, having done so, they, of course, claimed the right of belligerents.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The right of search applies not only to blockades, but also to contraband of war for the use of belligerents.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: Has France the right of searching vessels going to all parts?

EARL GRANVILLE: I must refer the noble Earl to the Foreign Enlistment Act.

THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES—CONFEDERATION.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF BELMORE asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he will introduce into this House the Bill to enable the Australian Colonies to form a Federation for certain purposes; and, if so, whether he proposes to take the second reading before Easter? He further asked whether he had been correctly informed that the noble Earl was still in correspondence with the Colonies about this measure; and would delay its introduction till replies had been received? He observed that, as far as he knew, he was the first person who had publicly raised this question some 14 or 15 years ago. He did not wish on this occasion, or on a mere Question, to enter at length into the matter. He had advocated a different *modus operandi* from that now proposed; and he wished to make arrangements to be present when the second reading of the Bill was taken.

THE EARL OF DERBY: In answer to the Question of the noble Earl, I have to state that I shall be prepared to bring in the Bill to which he has referred, and I think it will be better to introduce it in this House. With regard to the Correspondence on the subject, I may remind your Lordships that on the 11th of December last I sent out a despatch to the various Governments concerned, suggesting that certain alterations should be made in the draft Bill which they had sent home. That despatch has been laid on the Table. I have received only one answer as yet. and that came from Western Australia. The remainder of the replies are daily expected. Obviously the noble Earl will see that it would not be courteous to the other Colonies who have been expressly consulted to proceed without waiting until the answers which they may have to give have been received. I cannot, therefore, pledge myself to bring in the Bill before Easter. It is, however, the desire and the intention of the Government that there should be no unnecessary delay.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked whether New Zealand was included in the scheme?

THE EARL OF DERBY said, that the Bill was one empowering Colonies to join, but not compelling any Government to join, for federation purposes; and it would, therefore, depend upon New Zealand itself whether it came within the scheme or not.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, that the answer of the noble Earl to the first part of the Question was quite satisfactory; but, in regard to the second part, he should be sorry if his noble Friend allowed any undue delay to arise in this matter. That was just one of those questions which, when once they were brought forward and when circumstances were sufficiently ripe, ought to be dealt with at once, as the opportunity should not be lost. He said this from having clearly before his mind what occurred in similar circumstances in the confederation of Canada. This was a question which had excited a great deal of attention, and one which was preceded by negotiations and conferences; and when at last the matter came before the Government, of which he was a Member, some said that it was time, others demurred to that opinion, while others said that it was a question as to whether delays at the last moment were not politic and seasonable. Those, however, most directly connected with that measure thought otherwise, and that it was an occasion which, if lost, might not have readily presented itself again. He was, therefore, anxious that there should be no undue delay in this matter. The Australian federation scheme was not merely preliminary to the federation of the Australian and New Zealand Colonies, but it was a high step to that Imperial federation which many of them so much desired. There was, however, one other step towards Imperial federation which had been taken, and which had proceeded unexpectedly from the Colonies themselves. He referred to those splendid and munificent offers of military assistance which had been made to this country by the Australian Colonies. When he referred to the munificent offers of the Australian Colonies he did not mean the Governments of those Colonies alone; it was not merely the Governments, but the individuals in those Colonies, who were combining with one another in princely liberality. He could hardly remember such a splendid outburst of patriotic feeling. Whether these offers proceeded from the Australasian Governments or from individuals, he implored the noble Earl not to allow official technicalities or rules to stand in the way of the acceptance by the Government of those great offers in the fullest and amplest manner. There was one aspect of these offers which he viewed with especial satisfaction, and that was the proposal that all the Australian Colonies should constitute their forces into one general body. That was a great step indeed in the direction of federation; and he should sincerely regret if anything should be said or done to throw cold water on that proposal. There was a school of politicians who depreciated our Colonial connections; but their eyes must recently have been opened upon seeing so splendid an outburst of national feeling on the part of the Australian Colonies and Canada. Our Colonists, he always believed, were in spirit as much Englishmen as ourselves; and he must honestly confess that of late years he had often thought that many of our English virtues had crossed the seas, and existed there in much greater force and reality than with us. Certainly the offers of the Australian Colonies, whether made on behalf of the Government or of individuals, were a complete answer to all those objections that had been urged—to the effect that their Colonies would be unwilling to bear their share in the common liabilities of Imperial responsibility, and also a complete answer to some of the doubts of foreign critics as to our present condition. So long as the English Colonies could produce such a spectacle as had been seen during the last few weeks England might count on their support. Amid all the unfortunate circumstances of the past year, and amid all the present gloom in so many directions, the conduct of the Australian Colonies was the one bright spot upon which he looked with satisfaction.

LORD BRABOURNE said, he thought that while they spoke of the Australian Colonies they should not forget that the Dominion of Canada had not been behindhand in her desire to rally to the support of the Empire. When connected with the Colonial Office he had always regarded the Colonists as Englishmen, to all intents and purposes, only separated from England by the expanse of ocean beyond which they they lived, but under the same Sovereign and with the same rights as those at home. Nothing was more gratifying than the manner in which they had recently shown their attachment to the Empire. It had been rumoured that the offers made by certain of the Colonies had not been received by the Government with that warmth and gratitude which was desirable. He hoped that the noble Earl would be able to state that such reports were unfounded, and that he fully appreciated the offers made, not only from one, but from all the Colonies.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, the remarks of the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) with respect to the liberal offers of the Australian Colonies did not arise out of the Question on the Paper; and he had, therefore, not alluded to the subject. But if any Member of the House wished, as the noble Lord on the Cross Benches (Lord Brabourne) seemed to wish, for further explanations as to what the Government proposed to do with regard to these different offers, it would be more convenient for him to give Notice and bring the matter regularly forward. For the present it would be sufficient to refer to the declarations made by him in that House, and by the Prime Minister in the other House, which showed that there was on the part of the Government no such ingratitude and coldness as the noble Lord had referred to. With regard to the precise manner and time and extent to which the Government could avail themselves of these offers, these were not matters to be decided simply from a wish to do what was most agreeable to all parties concerned. They involved many considerations which must be decided in conjunction with the Military Authorities. For instance, the arrangements for the Suakin Expedition had been already made, and to largely increase its numbers now would probably be to raise questions of transport and supply, which might considerably add to the difficulties of the undertaking. He must beg noble Lords not to suppose that because they had delayed acceptance of the offers at the present moment it was to be held to imply indifference to the feeling which dictated these offers, or any intention ultimately to refuse them.

GENERAL GORDON—TELEGRAMS AND DESPATCHES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will lay upon the Table at once copies of the whole of the telegrams and despatches received from General Gordon during the siege of Khartoum? The noble Earl said he was anxious to know whether the telegrams and despatches that would be presented would be intact? It had been stated in the other House that parts of the telegrams relating to personal matters would be omitted. He thought it exceedingly desirable that the whole of them should be published. The country would not be satisfied without seeing every word that was sent to the Government by the late lamented General during the siege. It would be desirable to have all the telegrams from General Gordon in one book, instead of being scattered over several books. He should also like to know whether the Government could give the House any further information as to General Gordon's diaries?

EARL GRANVILLE: All the despatches and telegrams that we have received have been laid before Parliament. With regard to the objection of the noble Earl to any omission whatever of a personal character, I entirely dissent from that objection. If the personal matters were merely reflections on the Government, that would be a public thing; but they are not, and it would be most unfair to General Gordon and to the individuals mentioned if we were to publish to the world observations about those individuals which he certainly did not intend to have published.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Do I understand that all the Papers have been laid before the House?

EARL GRANVILLE: All that we have received.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Earl has not answered the Question as to the diaries.

EARL GRANVILLE: We have not yet received them, so we must wait until we have received them before we can give you the opportunity of seeing them.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, the noble Earl had not answered the Question whether he would consent to bring forward in one single Paper all the telegrams?

EARL GRANVILLE said, it would be highly inconvenient to do so, as it would destroy the chronological sequence.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: I may take it that the only omissions made in the telegrams are those of a personal character reflecting on individuals, which, therefore, cannot be published?

EARL GRANVILLE: Yes; and there are some which might have an injurious effect upon the military operations.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE remarked that there was no index to the Blue Book presented that day, which was an unusual omission.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—THE SUAKIN-BERBER BASE.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT BURY asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the case that in the summer of 1884 Lord Wolseley demanded that a force should be sent forthwith to Suakin? The noble Lord pointed out that the Suakin-Berber base now being established had been pressed upon the Government from almost the beginning of their military operations in the Soudan, and especially by General Stephenson, the reason of whose supersession on the 28th of August last year was that he advocated that route. He would make the Government a present of this proof of their inconsistency, and would only say that those who had any conversance with military matters, and who looked at Lord Wolseley's present position, drawing, as he must do, his whole supplies from the Nile Valley, and the imminent danger of his being cut off by any advance on Dongola, could not help feeling that the gravest responsibility rested upon Her Majesty's Government for their sins of omission and commission. It would be remembered that the Suakin-Berber route was urged upon Her Majesty's Government with all the insistence, persistence, and knowledge of all military officers; and the Government must expect to find the matter brought up against them in the House again and again so long as they remained at the head of affairs.

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in reply, said, he would not discuss the alternative route at the present moment, but would only say one word as to the Question put by the noble Viscount. He could not help thinking that the Question was based on a somewhat remarkable idea of the functions of the Adjutant General of the Forces. The responsibility for any military operations rested upon the Ministers of the Crown, and not upon their Military Advisers; and the Ministers of the Crown were perfectly prepared to undertake all their responsibilities. No doubt advice would be asked of the Military Authorities as to the military measures necessary to give effect to a particular line of policy; but he did not feel quite certain whether it was judicious to inform the House what was the confidential advice given to his noble Friend the Secretary of State for War by his Military Advisers. He might, however, say that at the time and before the time when it was determined to send out an Expedition there was, of course, a very considerable amount of discussion as to the various routes. No doubt, military opinions differed as to the best route for such an Expedition to take. Those opinions had been most carefully weighed; and after a most careful consideration, and with the full concurrence of the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Wolseley), it was decided that the route by the Nile was the only route possible, at the time when the Expedition was finally decided upon by the Government. In answer to his noble Friend's Question, he would say that he was not aware that Lord Wolseley ever did insist upon a force being sent to Suakin at the time mentioned. He would also like to mention that the noble Viscount was mistaken as to the supersession of General Stephenson. That gallant officer still remained in the position he held at that time. He, having given an adverse opinion to the Nile route, could not fairly have been called upon to conduct the Expedition which it had been decided to send by that route.

VISCOUNT BURY read a telegram from the War Office to General Stephenson to the effect that after anxious consideration Her Majesty's Government had come to the conclusion that it would be unjust to that officer to ask him to be responsible for directing the operations, and that they had, therefore, decided to send Lord Wolseley to take generally the command in Egypt. When an officer was told that he, being in chief command, was to be replaced by another officer, it was impossible to say he was not superseded. It was only playing with words, and not dealing fairly with the House, to say that General Stephenson had not been superseded.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that, with regard to the supersession of General Stephenson, of course the noble Viscount was technically right; but the simple fact was that General Stephenson gave it as his opinion that an Expedition by means of boats up the Nile was not likely to succeed, and no one could call upon a General to undertake the command of an Expedition which he could not recommend. That being so, what could be more natural than that Lord Wolseley, having given his opinion that the Expedition up the Nile was feasible, should be called upon to take the command? There could be no possible slur upon General Stephenson in that.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE SECRETARY TO THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, DUBLIN.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN asked Her Majesty's Government, Why the office of Secretary to the General Post Office, Dublin, which has been vacant for many months, has not been filled up; whether it is intended to fill it up; and, if so, when?

LORD THURLOW, in reply, said, that the office referred to by the noble Earl was not at present actually vacant; but he believed there had been some temporary interruption in the performance of its duties owing to certain legal proceedings which had taken place, to which he need not more particularly refer. Pending an appeal, which was shortly expected to be heard, the Postmaster General was unable to make any final arrangements.

GENERAL GORDON'S PAPERS AND DIARIES.

EARL GRANVILLE: I wish to state to the House that a telegram has been received from Lord Wolseley announcing that all General Gordon's Papers are safe and on their way to Korti.

ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES (ADVOWSONS, &C.) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to remove the disabilities of Roman Catholics being owners of advowsons and rights of presentation—Was *presented* by The Viscount BARRINGTON; read 1ª. (No. 18.)

MARRIAGES LEGALIZATION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to remove doubts as to the effect of certain irregularities on the validity of marriages—Was *presented* by The LORD CHANCELLOR; read 1ª. (No. 19.)

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 23rd *February*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—John O'Connor, esquire, for Tipperary County.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [February 20] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILL — *Ordered — First Reading* — Theatres, &c. Regulation (Metropolis) * [67].

NOTICES.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.

MR. LABOUCHERE: As an Amendment to Mr. John Morley's Amendment, to move to leave out the words—

> "While refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan."

MR. MAC IVER: As an Amendment to Sir Stafford Northcote's Motion, to move to leave out all the words from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words—

> "This House deplores the desertion and betrayal of General Gordon, the useless waste of life in Egypt and the Soudan, and the slaughter of the garrisons which we were too late to relieve; and disapproves of the continuance of Military Operations unless they are to be con-

ducted in pursuance of some definite policy, and for objects other than those which were stated by the First Lord of the Treasury."

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government intend to give any facilities for the resumption of the Debate on the Motion for the Second Reading of the Irish National School Teachers' Bill, which Debate was adjourned on the Motion of the Chief Secretary himself?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is the intention of the Government shortly to introduce a measure dealing with several questions connected with education in Ireland; and I would, therefore, express a hope that the hon. Member will defer proceeding further with the Bill he alludes to until the proposals of the Government are before the House.

INDIA—THE UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether any information has been received at the India Office, since the meeting of Parliament last autumn, respecting the Memorial of the uncovenanted Civil Servants to the Government in India, praying for the redress of certain grievances, or whether the India Office has been otherwise informed of the discontent prevailing among the uncovenanted Civil Servants in consequence of the disadvantageous position in which they are placed, in respect of leave and pension rules, as compared with the other members of the Indian Civil Service; and, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, here or in India, to amend the rules in question so as to place all the Civil Servants of the Crown in India upon the same footing?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I can only repeat the answer which I gave to my hon. and learned Friend, in reply to a similar Question, on the 3rd of November last, and say that no information has been received at the India Office respecting a Memorial from the uncovenanted Civil Servants on the subject of their leave and pension rules. It is not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to place all the Civil Servants of the Crown in India upon the same footing in this respect.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE RIVER CONGO—THE INTERNATIONAL RIVER COMMISSION.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What progress has been made in the negotiations for the establishment of the Congo River Commission; how far the claims made by the Government of the King of Portugal have been abandoned or recognised; what concessions have been made by Portugal in favour of the International Association; and, whether the International Association has received formal recognition from Her Majesty's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The establishment of an International River Commission has been provided for by the Conference; but, pending the issue of the final Act, no steps have been taken for constituting it. The Portuguese Government has abandoned its claims to the north bank of the Congo, while retaining those to the south bank, and to the districts of Kabenda and Molembo. The definition of these claims and concessions is contained in a Convention signed on the 14th instant between Portugal and the Association, which now awaits ratification. The International Association was formally recognized by Her Majesty's Government in a Convention dated the 16th of December last. Papers will be laid.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: Will the Agreement referred to be laid before Parliament, in accordance with the pledge given by the noble Lord last summer?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The pledge given was by the Prime Minister, and referred to the Congo Treaty, which is now abandoned.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: May I remind the noble Lord that last summer he told me that there was no intention of recognizing the Association?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: At that time there was no such intention. But, owing to the Conference, the whole matter entered into a new phase.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL repeated his Question.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: If the hon. Baronet refers to the state of things which then existed, which will be seen in the Papers which will be laid upon the Table, he will see what has happened since then.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: I will repeat the Question whether it was the Government's intention or not?

CRIMINAL LAW—PROCEEDINGS FOR LIBEL.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he intends to propose any amendment in "The Newspaper Libel and Registration Act, 1881," with a view to render it necessary that the fiat of the Director of Public Prosecutions shall be obtained before any private person can commence criminal proceedings against newspaper proprietors, publishers, or editors, and also with a view to make reports of the proceedings of bodies having the administration of public funds privileged, when reporters of the press are present with the sanction of such bodies?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, he was afraid some wrong inferences might be drawn from the phraseology of the Question of his hon. Friend. It is now the law that no criminal proceeding can be taken by a private person against a newspaper writer for libel without the sanction of the Director of Public Prosecutions, except when the Divisional Court of Queen's Bench, after full investigation, gave permission in the public interests for such prosecution. Under such circumstances, he should be sorry to see the law altered. As to the publication of reports of the meetings mentioned in the Question, it had been determined that there was no privilege in cases where libellous statements had been made *ex parte* against an absent person. He admitted that if opportunity offered it was worthy of consideration whether the privilege should not be extended; but he was not prepared to introduce a Bill upon the subject.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—ARRESTS UNDER SECTION 11—CASE OF MESSRS. COEN AND WELBY.

Colonel NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, on the 28th November, Mr. P. Coen, Mr. J. Coen, and Mr. Welby were arrested under the Crimes Act for collecting subscriptions in Anbally, county of Galway; if these three men, after being identified, were detained for a week in prison, instead of being released and summoned; if, at the end of the week, the resident magistrate, Major Neild, declared that the Bench was of opinion that the Crimes Act was not intended for cases of this sort; if he will give orders that men awaiting trial for trifling offences should not be detained in prison for the future when there is no reason to suppose that they mean to fly the Country; and, if he would award a small compensation to these men for the loss of their time, and the annoyance caused by this week's imprisonment?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: At 9 o'clock on the night in question the police arrested a party of four men—of whom the persons named in the Question were three, and the fourth was a man named Cullinam—under Section 11 of the Prevention of Crime Act. The circumstances were suspicious, and the suspicions were confirmed by a man named Hession, who shortly afterwards met the police and informed them that persons had been at his house demanding money with threats, and he named Cullinam as one of the party. The four men were next day brought before Mr. Gardiner, R.M., who remanded them, under the provisions of the section, for seven days to Galway Prison, at the end of which time Hession having sworn an information incriminating Cullinam, but not naming the other three, the men were discharged, and Cullinam was brought up on summons before Major Neild, R.M.; but as Hession's evidence before the Court contradicted his previous information the magistrate held that no offence under the Act was proved. He did not, however, say that the Prevention of Crime Act was not intended for such cases; and as the proceedings appear to have been conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Act, I see no reason to take any further steps in the matter.

Colonel NOLAN: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question as to whether he will give orders that men should not be detained on trivial charges when they can be brought up on summons?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I hope men will not be detained on trivial accusations; but it is a very critical thing to give general orders as to the time men should be detained, as that should depend on the circumstances of each case.

NAVY—THE DOCKYARDS—THE HAND DRILLERS IN PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD.

MR. BROADHURST asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he has received a Memorial from the Drillers of Portsmouth Dockyard as to their rate of wages, and whether any reply has been made to that Memorial; if not, whether he can state to the House what the Admiralty intends to do with regard to it?

MR. CAINE, in reply, said, that the Admiralty had received and would consider the Memorial referred to by the hon. Gentleman.

SPAIN—THE COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in the recent commercial negotiations with Spain, any endeavour was made to obtain equal treatment for British ships as for Spanish ships, and with what result?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The efforts of Her Majesty's Government have been confined to securing most-favoured-nation treatment for everything concerning British trade in Spain, including, therefore, British ships. Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that it would have prejudiced the negotiations to have asked for British ships any privileges not accorded to ships of other nations.

MR. MAC IVER: Will the noble Lord confess that, under this declaration, nothing of the slightest value has been obtained—only the removal of a few particular injuries to trade?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Under the Declaration, which is now in the hands of hon. Members, this country obtains the abolition of all differential treatment between it and foreign nations—a most important matter to many branches of British trade.

MR. TOMLINSON: Will any attempt be made to include the Spanish Antilles, which are now excluded?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It would be open to this country to attempt, in the subsidiary negotiations contemplated in Article IV., to do so; but that is a matter of policy.

IRELAND—MR. GEORGE BOLTON.

MR. SEXTON asked, Whether Mr. George Bolton has ceased to hold the office of Solicitor to the Irish Valuation Department, and has been awarded a pension; and, if so, under what circumstances this proceeding has taken place; and, whether Mr. Bolton continues to hold office as a Crown Solicitor?

MR. HIBBERT: It has long been in contemplation to reconsider the necessity of having a separate Solicitor for the Valuation Office at the old rate of salary. Recently an arrangement has been made by which such work as formerly fell to this Office is to be done by the Treasury Solicitor in Ireland as part of his regular duties, and without extra pay. This justified the Treasury in retiring the late Valuation Solicitor on the usual abolition terms. I believe Mr. Bolton is still Crown Solicitor for Tipperary; but that post does not lie within my Department.

MR. SEXTON: Is it usual that public servants should be retired on pension for one Office, and, at the same time, continue to hold another Office and draw a salary for it?

MR. HIBBERT said, that such a proceeding was usual where an Office was abolished, as in this instance the Office of Solicitor to the Valuation Department was abolished.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1884—REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND).

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to recent action on the part of the Local Government Board (England), What measures have been adopted by the corresponding Irish Department, or by any Department of the Irish Executive, to provide for the due and prompt discharge by Irish officials of their duties under the new Franchise Act as to the registering of persons entitled to exercise the Parliamentary franchise?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the hon. Member's Question has reference to a Circular issued on the 7th instant by the English Local Government Board, dealing with the question of how rates are in future to be made to meet the requirements of Section 9 of the Representation of the People Act, I may inform him that instructions on the same subject were issued to the Local Authorities by the Irish Local Government Board a week previously—namely, on the 31st ultimo.

IRELAND — THE DISTURBANCES AT LONDONDERRY—OUTRAGE ON SISTERS OF MERCY.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps have been taken to bring to justice the persons who recently insulted and assaulted the two Sisters of Mercy in the streets of Derry?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Eight youths who are charged with this offence were to be brought up before the magistrates to-day.

MR. SEXTON: What was the charge against the youths in the summons?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I have no information on the subject. I have received a telegram since I came into the House about the matter; but as it is not very intelligible I would prefer not giving the information it contains.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)— MR. TREVELYAN AND MR. O'BRIEN.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether, in view of certain recent trials and certain statements of the Judges in Dublin, he will withdraw the expression "trumping up charges," applied by him to the honourable Member for Mallow?

MR. TREVELYAN: I did not use the expression "trumping up charges" in connection with the hon. Member for Mallow. It was in reference to the ex-detective, Meiklejohn. I did not mention the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien). I had not mentioned the hon. Member at the time that I used the expression in my speech. I used it in consequence of statements made about myself which were unfounded.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY: Is this quotation from the right hon. Member's speech accurate—

> "The House may imagine the terrible danger which Irish officials run when a man of this sort (Meiklejohn) is in Dublin, trumping up charges against them."—(3 *Hansard*, [289] 695.)

Whether he was aware that Mr. Meiklejohn was in the employment of the hon. Member for Mallow; whether the charges referred to have not since proved disastrous to certain Dublin Castle officials; and, whether the right hon. Gentleman will apologise to Mr. Meiklejohn?

MR. TREVELYAN: In some respects this is a subject I wish had not been brought before the House; but now that it has I must say one word. In bringing charges against an agent employed by a person, you do not bring charges against that person himself. It is the duty of a person to select good agents—the best he can get—but it is impossible to say that if one of these agents makes a false story that the person who employs him is guilty of that false story. The reason why I used this expression was because I knew very well what Meiklejohn's character was. I said of him in my speech—

> "There has been in Dublin for some time past a man of the name of Meiklejohn, who was formerly in the English Detective Force, but who was dismissed from that Force, put upon his trial—a criminal trial—for levying black mail, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, the circumstances of the offence being such that it was generally believed it was extremely fortunate for Meiklejohn that two years was the outside punishment that could be given. The House may imagine the terrible danger which Irish officials run when a man of this sort is in Dublin trumping up cases against them."—(3 *Hansard*, [289] 695.)

Now, why did I say that? I said it because I knew Earl Spencer and myself were in danger, and I will describe how in one sentence. I knew that attempts were being made to blacken our characters. I knew that before I said those words; and how well-founded my apprehensions were was proved by the fact that an agent of a secret inquiry office went to a loose woman, who had got three letters signed "Frederick Trevelyan." This name I believe to be fictitious, because, as far as I know, there is no person of that name. He got these letters by very improper means, and sent them over to Dublin. That is all I know about the matter, except that this agent was carrying about in his pocket a photograph of me, which he showed to the woman, and asked her whether she recognized it. She said she did not. Then he said that it would be worth money to her if she did. I am sorry to trouble the House with a personal matter; but it will show that Earl Spencer and others ran very serious dangers.

MR. O'BRIEN: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the partly grotesque and partly shameful statement made by the right hon. Gentleman——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member must withdraw the expression "shameful."

[MR. O'BRIEN made no reply.]

MR. SPEAKER: I call upon the hon. Member to withdraw the expression.

MR. O'BRIEN: If you call upon me, Mr. Speaker, to withdraw the expression I will do so. I was about to say with reference to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that, so far as I know, it is utterly and totally without foundation — as thoroughly without foundation as many other charges made in the same quarter against me. I do not know whether the House, which has been so liberal in its cheers to the right hon. Gentleman, will be magnanimous enough to howl me down when I make this statement. But I will only say that I am quite content to let the results decide between the right hon. Gentleman and myself. I believe, to a great extent, the results have already decided against the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. TREVELYAN: The hon. Member has made a very severe attack upon me when I made none upon him. I carefully selected my words so as not only to exclude him, because I believe him to be incapable of any such action, but I even picked my words so as not to include Meiklejohn. I should not have made a statement of this sort in the House unless I had felt myself able to confirm it. Fortunately, I am perfectly able to give the most absolute proof of this matter; although I felt it difficult to induce the prime agent to speak in the presence of anyone. I contrived, by such boldness as I could muster, to make him speak it out in the presence of a witness of the very greatest credibility, who took notes.

MR. O'BRIEN: I only desire to add one word to what I have said, and that is that if only the right hon. Gentleman will co-operate with us in getting a full inquiry into this matter, which we have again and again demanded, we shall be very happy to see the full facts of the matter disclosed.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES AT WHITEHALL.

MR. BROADHURST asked the Junior Lord of the Treasury, the honourable Member for Leeds, Whether he will urge upon the First Commissioner of Works the desirability of commencing the new Government buildings in Whitehall at the earliest possible date?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE, in reply, said, no time would be lost, after the plans had been approved and the necessary expenditure sanctioned by Parliament, in taking the works in hand.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND HERAT.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the date of the latest assurance given by the Russian Government that Herat is outside the sphere of their influence?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am not aware that there has been any question of Herat being beyond the frontiers of Afghanistan. Her Majesty's Government received on the 14th instant, from the Russian Ambassador, positive assurances that the report of a Russian advance to Herat is without foundation, and that it would be dishonourable to take such a step while negotiations were pending, and also a folly, as Afghanistan would thereby be set against Russia.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the noble Lord inform the House whether it was correctly stated that the Russians had taken Penjdeh; and also whether it is true, as stated in *The Times*, that Sir Peter Lumsden had in consequence retreated south of Herat?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir; the Russians have not taken Penjdeh. The statement quoted as to Sir Peter Lumsden is incorrect. He was till recently at Bala Murghab; but he proposed leaving for Gulran in the Khomban Pass, and has now probably arrived there. This spot may, I think, be identified with that marked Gurlin on the best maps on the road from Ghurian to Merv, about 50 miles north of Herat.

MR. ONSLOW: Can the Government say what Sir Peter Lumsden is doing at the present time?

[No reply.]

IRELAND—NATIONAL MEETING AT LONDONDERRY—SPEECH OF MR. BIGGAR, M.P.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the speech made on the 12th January by the honourable Member for Cavan, at a meeting of Nationalists in the city of Derry, reported, as follows, in *The Londonderry Journal* of the 14th January last:—

> "Mr. Biggar, in returning thanks, briefly alluded to the Labourers Act and the Municipal Franchise. Continuing, he remarked that the present Government was guilty of the most heinous crimes. They all knew that Earl Spencer was guilty of murder. (Groans.) That was perfectly well known, and the Irish party could prove it if the Government would supply them with evidence in their possession:
>
> "A voice—Myles Joyce for one.
>
> "Mr. Biggar—Yes, Myles Joyce is the case in point. Earl Spencer, and every one who supported his policy and that of the Government which he represented, is a murderer as far as it is in his power to be a murderer. Earl Spencer did not draw the rope, that was done by a man called Marwood, but he was as guilty as the man who pulled the rope, because he gave the power to the man who pulled the rope to execute the murder. Therefore, every lay and clerical supporter of the Government was guilty of that murder, and it was their duty to try and put down their English enemies who had been guilty of this crime;"

whether such speech was not delivered at a meeting at which Mr. W. Monaghan, recently added to the Commission of the Peace by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, was present; and, whether it is intended to take any notice of the conduct of Mr. Monaghan, in impliedly making himself a party to the charge of murder against the Lord Lieutenant?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that the remarks cited in the Question were used by the hon. Member for Cavan at the close of a meeting held at Derry on the day referred to for the purpose of considering the question of the representation of the city, and that Mr. Monaghan, who is a Justice of the Peace for the city, was present at the meeting. The attention of the Lord Chancellor having been called to the matter, he addressed a communication on the subject to Mr. Monaghan, and a correspondence ensued, in the course of which Mr. Monaghan explained that the language in question was used after the business of the meeting was over, and that the incident passed so quickly that he had not time to consider whether he should leave the meeting or formally protest against the language; and he added these words—

> "I then certainly disapproved of the language, as, I believe, did the good sense of the meeting; and I beg most emphatically to repeat my entire disapproval of it now."

Having regard to this unequivocal repudiation of the language used, and to the possible surprise and embarrassment that might overtake Mr. Monaghan in the circumstances I have mentioned, the Lord Chancellor, after much consideration, felt himself enabled to accept his explanation.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked whether it was not open to an Irish magistrate to hold the opinion held by many hon. Members of that House, that in the Maamtrasna case the conduct of Earl Spencer was a grave public scandal which ought to be exposed?

[No reply.]

ARMY—STRENGTH OF REGIMENTS—THE RIFLE BRIGADE.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State for War, What is the nominal establishment of the 3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade, now on its way to Gibraltar; what is its effective strength; and how many of its rank and file have not yet been through a course of musketry?

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked, Whether it was in consequence of the weak state of the Cavalry Regiments at home, that it was found impossible to send a complete Regiment of four squadrons of adequate strength with the Expedition to Egypt; and, if he will state the effective strength in men and horses of the remaining squadrons of the 5th Lancers and 20th Hussars which have been left behind, distinguishing band, staff, and dismounted men?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: With reference to the Question of the noble Lord, and also to that which stands in the name of the hon. Member for Leitrim, I must adhere, in the public interest, to the rule I explained in my answer to the latter hon. Member on the 17th of March last year, and therefore must decline to enter into details of the constitution of particular regiments. In general terms I have no objection to say that the 3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade embarked about 20 men short of the foreign establishment. I am not in possession of definite information as to the number who have completed the course of musketry. As regards the Cavalry, the establishment of horses is always much below that of men; and to meet a sudden demand it is more convenient to do as has been done in this case than to increase the number of horses by the transfer to the outgoing regiment of horses from another regiment, which is the usual course.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON said, that he would, on Thursday next, ask whether it was not the fact that 254 men of the battalion in question had not been through a course of musketry; and he would ask the noble Marquess to specify how many men were above one year's service, and how many above two years'?

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked what was meant by the regiment being 20 short of the complement for foreign service? Was it foreign service strength of 1,000, or Colonial service strength of 800?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he referred to a Colonial establishment of 800.

ARMY—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—WIVES AND FAMILIES OF SOLDIERS.

MR. TOMLINSON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is any truth in the following paragraph, in *The Daily News* of 20th February:—

> "Our Windsor Correspondent writes that the wives of the gallant soldiers who are about to defend the honour of the Country in the Soudan have been ordered to quit the Windsor barracks by this morning. The women and children who have no friends with whom they can seek shelter scarcely know where to find a home, although the Commandant of the Battalion has, it is said, done his best to assist them;"

and, whether he intends to take any steps to mitigate the hardships which this order must have occasioned, or is it intended to leave the care of these poor women and children merely to private charity? The hon. Member added that he was sure, from the notice that had been taken of the matter by Her Majesty's Government, the answer of the noble Marquess would be satisfactory. He should also like to direct attention to the case of Wellington Barracks, in connection with which there were certain rumours in circulation.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON said, he should like to ask who were the authorities directly responsible for the expulsion of the women and children of the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards from Victoria Barracks, Windsor, immediately on the departure of the battalion for Egypt? Was it necessary, in the interests of the Public Service, that those women should be thus treated; and what notice had been given to them of the intention of the authorities?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It was indispensable that the families of the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards should vacate the married soldiers' quarters at Windsor to the extent required by the families of the incoming battalion. Authority was given as soon as it was asked for these women to occupy any vacant quarters at Windsor and in London; and, so far as is at present known, only four are not provided for. I have heard since that there are only three. The Regulations provide special issues from Government for wives separated, with their families, from their husbands under such circumstances; and provision is also made for the compulsory allotment to them of a portion of the soldiers' pay. The total sum they receive from these sources amounts to 1*s*. a-day for the wife of each private, and 3*d*. a-day for each child. In the case of sergeants' families the allowance is larger. These allowances were fixed in 1881 after very full consideration; and having regard to the fact that in the great majority of cases these persons are able to earn something towards their own living, I am not prepared to say at present that they are inadequate. The arrangements for the accommodation of these women and children are made by, and on the responsibility of, the General Officer commanding the district subject to the Regulations. I have no information on the subject of the wives of soldiers who have left Wellington Barracks.

COLONEL MILNE-HOME: By the courtesy of the House, I may be allowed to make a statement on this subject, which is causing very much interest throughout the Army and the country. I hold in my hand a communication from the Secretary of the Egyptian War Fund, which was started during the last Egyptian War, in the year 1882, and which is still open to assist soldiers in cases of like emergency. He informs me that this afternoon it has been arranged that whatever the Government may do, or not do, for those unfortunate families, the Egyptian War Fund propose to provide £1 for the soldiers' wives at Windsor or elsewhere.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, that the officers at Windsor said that every woman and child was provided for, and had a home to go to. In the cases of the three mentioned, temporary lodgings were found until other arrangements could be made. An arrangement had been made by the non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the 3rd Grenadier Guards under which a considerable portion of their pay would be devoted to the maintenance of their wives and families.

Mr. CARINGTON asked whether these women and children were sent to their homes at the expense of the Government?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON believed they were in cases where they desired it.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—SUBALTERNS OF MILITIA.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Subalterns of the Militia Battalions now about to be embodied, who are candidates for Commissions in the Line, and whose preparation for the necessary examinations will thus be indefinitely interrupted, will receive any, and what, extension of the time within which those examinations must, under the existing regulations, be passed; and, whether he can state what are the Battalions now selected for embodiment?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There will not be an extension of time; but it has been arranged that a month's embodied service shall reckon as a training for the purpose in question, and that any Subaltern officer desirous of continuing his studies, with a view to competing for the Army, may after the month's duty have leave of absence, without pay. His absence would create a vacancy for the time in which another officer could be employed. The names of the regiments for embodiment were given in the last *Gazette*.

Mr. M'COAN asked whether there was any intention to employ the embodied Militia out of the United Kingdom?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: No.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE SUAKIN-BERBER ROUTE.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, If any steps have been taken to convey to Lieut. General Sir Frederick Stephenson the acknowledgment of the Government of the soundness of the advice given by him in favour of the Suakin-Berber route; and, if he will state the reasons which have influenced the Government now to adopt the views of that officer, which were rejected in August, and which led to his supersession?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: No, Sir. At the time the Government determined to send an Expedition to the relief of General Gordon, the adoption of the Suakin-Berber route was, in our opinion, impracticable. No advance on Khartoum can now probably be undertaken until next autumn, by which time I hope a railway the greater part of the way to Berber will have been completed, which will make the adoption of that route not only practicable, but desirable. The reasons for the selection of Lord Wolseley to command the Expedition were given in Parliamentary Papers issued in 1884.

Mr. TOTTENHAM: Will the Government make any communication to Sir Frederick Stephenson?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Not on the subject referred to by the hon. Member.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—THE RIOT AT ASTON HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to certain proceedings reported in *The Times* of the 20th of February, as having taken place in a police court of Birmingham, in relation to the Aston riots; whether he has considered the confession made then by one Charles Smith, alias Cultry, alias Caughtry; and, whether he is now prepared to retract and apologize for the allegations put forward by him, which were founded on depositions and other similar documents forwarded to him by his friends and supporters at Birmingham, and which now appear to have been perjuries?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Speaker, I have read this Question of the hon. Baronet, and I do not doubt that the House will appreciate the animus with which it appears to have been framed. I am, however, glad to have the opportunity of stating to the House what has actually occurred. It appears that Charles Smith was one of a number of persons who tendered evidence to the Liberal agents in Birmingham as to the origin of the Aston disturbances. His statement was made in the first instance on oath, and was subsequently reduced to a statutory declaration. I am informed that he was rigorously cross-examined at the time of making the statement; that it was compared with the statements of other persons; and that, in fact, every effort was made to verify it. The man was subsequently proceeded against by the Tory Party; and a few days ago, when the case came on, before it was gone into, he expressed a desire to make a statement to the Tory solicitor, and I believe in the presence of that gentleman and other gentlemen, including some agents of the Liberal Party, he made a second statement, in which he said his first statement was entirely false, and that it had been concocted with certain other persons he named in a room in a public-house in Birmingham. The moment this statement was published it was contradicted; in the first place by the landlord of the public-house, who stated it was absolutely impossible for any such interview as Mr. Smith declared had taken place could possibly have been held at the time or under the circumstances named. It was also contradicted by several men who were implicated in this so-called confession. Under these circumstances, there was only one thing certain—namely, that anything which might be said by Mr. Charles Smith is totally unworthy of credence. I am informed that after this confession was made communications took place between the Leaders of the two political Parties, and that it was agreed between them that there should be a mutual interchange of notes. Accordingly, Mr. Dixon, the Chairman of the Liberal Association, wrote to Mr. Hopkins, Chairman of the Conservative Association, that having found the evidence on which the Liberal Party had rested their charges to be in many respects untrustworthy, he desired to withdraw all reflections which had their origin in those statements; but that he hoped Mr. Hopkins would recognize that they had been made in good faith, after every effort had been made to verify them. Mr. Hopkins accepted this withdrawal, and, on his own part, withdrew all imputations against the Leaders of the Liberal Party. I believe the whole matter is now considered to be at an end, and that both Parties have agreed to bury the hatchet; and I do not know in whose behalf, or with whose authority, the hon. Baronet wishes to disinter it. I am prepared to accept, without comment, the arrangement come to between the two Parties in Birmingham; and I do not feel inclined to do or say anything which will re-open a controversy which appears to have been amicably closed, so far as the parties chiefly interested are concerned.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER: As the right hon. Gentleman has referred to the "animus" of the Question, I will ask the permission of the House to make a personal explanation. My sole object in putting this Question was in order to give the President of the Board of Trade an opportunity to apologize for some unfounded statements which he made which imputed dishonourable motives to certain respected members of our Party in Birmingham. I was in hopes that the right hon. Gentleman would have thought fit to make as ample an apology as was made by the members of the Liberal Party in Birmingham. I am only sorry the right hon. Gentleman has not taken advantage of the opportunity I offered him.

MR. STAVELEY HILL: The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of the tendering of evidence of Charles Smith. Will he be kind enough to state what steps took place to lead to that tender of evidence?

MR. ONSLOW: I rise to a point of Order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether a Minister of the Crown, having, in the face of this House, deliberately stated certain facts to prove his case, or in aid of some other case, when those facts have been found in a Court of Law to be utterly inconsistent with what really took place, it is not his duty, as a Minister of the Crown, to apologize to the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have only to say, in answer to the appeal of the hon. Member, that there is no point of Order before me, nor any point upon which a direction from the Chair is necessary.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE GARDNER GUNS.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether favourable reports of the working of the Gardner guns on service in Egypt have been received; and, whether it is proposed to increase the number of these or other machine guns at present with the advanced forces, and to supply an adequate number for service with the expedition being despatched to Suakin?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: No reports have been received as to the working of the Gardner guns in the recent actions; but the reports of their working at the actions of El Teb and Tamai were, on the whole, favourable. Lord Wolseley has not applied for more machine guns for the force on the Nile; but a battery of six will accompany the Expedition to Suakin.

POST OFFICE—DESPATCH OF SUNDAY LETTERS.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Postmaster General, If it is true that there is a despatch of letters from London to every part of the country on Sunday evenings; and, whether, at each great Railway terminus, there is a "too late" box, which is cleared on that night a few minutes before the departure of the train; and, if so, whether some steps cannot be taken to put an end to the difficulties of despatching letters from London to the country on Sunday by receiving letters, at any rate at each district office, on payment of an extra fee, which will prevent any but important letters being sent, and allow these to be despatched with certainty from a few centres, instead of obliging hundreds of messengers to be sent to the various Railway stations?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Two or three years ago a concession was made by which the public were allowed to post letters on Sunday evening at all the principal railway termini in London for despatch by the mail trains conveying the through mails from other parts of the country; but it was never intended to institute a regular collection; and I do not think it would be possible to adopt the hon. Member's suggestion without leading to a general collection of letters in London on Sundays.

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX ON OFFICERS' PAY.

Viscount LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is by direction of the War Office that Income Tax is charged on Officers' pay of all ranks, and that Officers entitled to a rebate can only obtain it by declaration; and, if so, whether some alteration is not desirable, especially as regards those Officers whose pay does not amount to the sum chargeable?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Such matters are regulated by the Commissioners of Income Duty. Although an officer may receive actual pay below the minimum rate which is chargeable, he may have private means which will bring him within the limit and make all his pay chargeable. The declaration is the only machinery provided by law to prove that this is not the case.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—DEATH OF COLONEL BURNABY.

Mr. MONTAGU SCOTT asked the Secretary of State for War, If Her Majesty's Government have received any details as to the death of Colonel Burnaby in the battle of Abu Klea on the 17th of January, beyond that he was pierced with a spear in the neck?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: No, Sir; I have had nothing more than the list of casualties telegraphed by Lord Wolseley on the 21st of January.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—MR. JENKINSON, CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Jenkinson still retains a position in connection with the Criminal Investigation Department in Dublin; and, if so, what duties does he perform, how often does he go to Ireland, and what is the salary attached to his Irish office?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Jenkinson retains his position under the Irish Government. He is at present temporarily in England for the purpose of discharging duties connected with the detection of treasonable conspiracy and outrages affecting both Great Britain and Ireland. He goes to Ireland as his duties may require. The salary attached to his appointment is £1,500, with a house allowance of £200.

MR. O'BRIEN: Whenever this gentleman's salary comes up to be voted, we shall try whether we cannot retain his valuable services in England alone.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—DUTY ON CURED HERRINGS.

MR. MARJORIBANKS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the fact that the Duty on cured herrings exported from Scotland is to be raised in Russia from 4*s.* 8*d.* to 7*s.* per barrel, and in Germany from 3*s.* to 11*s.* 6*d.* per barrel; and, if so, whether any steps have been taken by the Government to remonstrate against and to obtain a re-consideration of such increase of Duty?

MR. BIRKBECK also asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the proposed increase of 50 per cent. Duty on English and Scotch herrings exported into Russia and Germany; and whether, taking into consideration the importance of the trade, and the very serious effect likely to arise to our fisheries therefrom, he would at once take the necessary steps to bring the matter before the Governments of Russia and Germany, with the view of obtaining an alleviation of such increase?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The duty on salted herrings in Russia has been raised, as stated by my hon. Friend, and announced in *The London Gazette* of the 13th instant. A representation to the Russian Government will be made on the subject; but I must remind my hon. Friend that this country has no special tariff arrangement with Russia, and can only claim the treatment of the most-favoured nation. With regard to Germany, Sir Edward Malet reports that there is no alteration in the rate of duty on herrings.

HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION COMMITTEE—THE REPORT.

MR. MARJORIBANKS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he can now state what are the intentions of the Government with regard to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Harbour Accommodation Committee of last Session?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: This Report has had the very careful attention of the Board of Trade during the Recess, and we have now prepared recommendations and conclusions on the subject. These have now been submitted to the Government. The matter is of very great importance; and I can assure the hon. Member that no time will be lost in coming to a final decision.

ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT—VIEWERS.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the fact that, previously to the 1st March 1881, when the Order in Council of the 4th June 1870 came into force, seven viewers of the Ordnance Store Department were allowed to receive certificates rendering them eligible for superannuation; and, if so, whether the fourteen viewers of the Inspection Branch, who were appointed previously to the 1st March 1881, will likewise be allowed the certificates above referred to?

MR. BRAND (who replied) said, no viewers had been certificated since the Order in Council of the 4th of June, 1870; and as the viewers referred to in the hon. Member's Question entered the service of the Ordnance Store Department after the privilege of superannuation had been withdrawn from this class of *employés* they would not be certificated.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND HERAT.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the fact that since the Afghan Boundary Commission was appointed, the Russians have advanced in the direction of Herat; how much nearer they now are to Herat than they were prior to the Commission having been appointed; and, what distance they now are from Herat?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The Russians have advanced in the direction of Herat, from Sarakhs to Pulikhatun, on the Heri Rud, which is about 50 miles nearer to Herat than Old Sarakhs, where they were before the Afghan Boundary Commission was appointed. They are also reported to have advanced to Sariyazi, on the Murghab. Pulikhatun is about 140 miles from Herat, and Sariyazi somewhat further.

INDIA (FINANCE, &c.) — NON-EFFECTIVE SERVICES—RECEIPTS FROM INDIA.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Why the Treasury Minute, promised early last Session, to regulate the disposal of the moneys received from the Government of India for the pensions of men belonging to the Army and serving on the Indian Establishment, has not been laid upon the Table?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I hope to explain in the Financial Statement the manner in which I propose to make good the difference between the receipts from India on account of non-effective payments and the charge on the Exchequer for the same payments, which will arise hereafter in consequence of the practice formerly pursued of using capital payments made to us by India as ordinary revenue of the year in which they were made; and I shall lay a Treasury Minute on the Table before that time explaining the transactions and describing the method by which I propose to meet the deficiency. I am sorry that the Correspondence was not concluded in time to lay this Minute on the Table before Christmas.

ARMY—ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—THE 63-TON GUN.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether the steel forgings of the 63-ton gun, contracted to be delivered at Woolwich in 1883, have yet been received at the Gun Factory; and also, whether any orders have been given or contracts entered into for the steel required for the manufacture of the additional breech-loading guns which the Government is under engagement with Parliament to produce in the course of the ensuing financial year and the following years?

MR. BRAND: The two steel forgings for the 63-ton gun ordered in 1883 have been delivered and paid for. I may add that the two similar forgings ordered in January, 1884, have been promised by the contractor within the present financial year. As to the second Question, I have to say that some contracts have already been made, and others will follow immediately.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked whether the contracts had been made with firms in this country or abroad?

MR. BRAND said, he could not state the names of all the firms.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, the hon. Gentleman was doubtless aware that there were only two firms in the world by which such work was done—Messrs. Armstrong and Messrs. Krupp.

MR. BRAND said, that was rather too strong an assumption. It was true that it was the case some time ago; but he had reason to believe that there were now other firms by which it could be done.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—BECHUANALAND.

MR. FRANCIS BUXTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can give the House any information as to the movements and present position of General Sir Charles Warren and the Troops under his command in Bechuanaland; and, whether the endeavours of the Cape Government "to settle the difficulties which have arisen without recourse to force" were likely to be successful, or whether Military operations have been commenced with the object of clearing Montsioa's country of freebooters?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The settlement proposed by the Cape Ministers was not deemed adequate by Her Majesty's Government, and the former have retired from further intervention in the question, which has been confided to Sir Charles Warren. Sir Charles Warren's Force is being pushed forward up the country; and by the latest advices we have received the troops were concentrated at Barkly West. Sir Charles Warren himself was on the border and in communication with President Krüger as to the beaconing of the frontier line laid down by the London Convention of 1884, and as to the squatters beyond the line in the so-called Land of Goshen. From the latest information, which bears date the 27th of January, the prospects of a peaceful settlement seemed hopeful. The telegraph cable has been broken since the beginning of February; but arrangements have been made for obtaining a full Report on the political and military situation directly the communication shall be re-opened.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE SUAKIN AND BERBER RAILWAY.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any, and, if so, how much, Railway material was, in 1884, sent from this Country to Suakin for the construction of a Railway from that port to Berber; at what date it arrived; is any of it available for the construction of the Railway which has now been ordered to be proceeded with; and, if not, what became of it?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Materials for four and a-half miles of 18-inch gauge railway and for 1,100 yards of metre-gauge railway were sent from this country to Suakin, which they reached on the 25th of July and within a few days afterwards. They included some rolling-stock for the smaller line, and two locomotives for the metre-gauge line. The rails have all been used in the construction of an 18-inch railway leading inland, with branches to the wharves and depôts. The light railway was laid for the purpose of facilitating the construction of a main line to Berber, if subsequently determined on. The two metre-gauge engines belonged to the Bengal and North-Western Railway, and were hired for six months, with the option of purchase, having been intercepted on their way to India. They have now proceeded to their original destination at the expiration of the term of hiring.

In reply to Mr. CARBUTT,

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that it was not intended to carry on the 18-inch gauge line in the direction of Berber.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—THE LISCANNOR PIER.

MR. KENNY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he will explain the delay in proceeding with the Liscannor Pier, the sum necessary for which was voted by the Commissioners under "The Fishery Piers and Harbours (Ireland) Act, 1883;" if the grant has also been approved by the Treasury; if it is a fact that the Irish Board of Works is responsible for the delay; and, if he will cause steps to be taken to compel the Irish Board of Works to expedite their action in this respect?

MR. HIBBERT: The Fishery Commissioners approved of a pier at Liscannor in October last, and Treasury approval was at once given. The formalities required by the Acts were then got through as quickly as possible; the contract plans have been prepared, and tenders called for which are to be received on the 25th instant, after which the work will be put in hand at once. As far as I can ascertain, there has been no avoidable delay.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—DEPARTURE OF COLONEL STEWART AND COMPANIONS FROM KHARTOUM.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any Despatch was received from General Gordon stating the reasons why Colonel Stewart and his companions left Khartoum; and, if so, whether he would have any objection to make that Despatch public, or to state the contents of it?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The hon. Member will find in the Papers presented to Parliament some statements of General Gordon respecting the sending away of Colonel Stewart.

SIR HENRY TYLER: May I ask if these are the only statements of General Gordon on the subject?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: So far as I know, these are the only Papers.

MR. BRODRICK: Has the despatch been given in full?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I think there is a reference to Colonel Stewart in more than one Paper.

FINANCE—ISSUE OF MISCELLANEOUS DEPOSITS.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the fact that the Paymaster General, by direction of the Treasury, has advanced out of the balances of miscellaneous deposits for which he is accountable, not being Ways and Means provided by Parliament, sums exceeding two millions for Army and Navy Services, and for the Treasury Chest; whether there is any statutable authority for so dealing with these balances; and when and by what means it is proposed to repay the amounts advanced; whether the amounts so advanced are included in the weekly published accounts of the payments out of the Exchequer for Supply Services, which, on the 14th February, were shown to be £45,188,179, or whether those payments should be increased by the sums advanced out of balances, other than Ways and Means, by the Paymaster General; and, whether there are any other funds under the control of the Treasury, as, e.g., the Savings Banks Funds or the Post Office Balances, which could be applied in the same manner?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): My right hon. Friend asks me a Question arising, I think, out of the inquiry into the organization of the Pay Office, upon which he has been so good as to lend us his valuable assistance. The subject is a very proper one for a Question such as my right hon. Friend asks; but it would be difficult for me to give an explanation, which must be of a very technical character, within the limits of an answer to a Question in the House. I should propose, accordingly, to lay a Paper on the Table explaining the transaction in question, which we consider to be perfectly regular and authorized by Statute; and I shall be glad to communicate with my right hon. Friend on the form of such a Paper. Perhaps as to his last Question I may say that Savings Banks Funds, whether Trustee or Post Office, do not come into the Pay Office.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT (1882)—RENEWAL.

MR. LEWIS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is proposed to renew the Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act (1882); and, if so, whether the Bill will be brought on before Easter?

MR. GLADSTONE: I may remind the hon. Member that I have already explained that Her Majesty's Government do not intend to make any statement on questions of legislation with regard to more or less important subjects until they have seen their way with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. In regard to this particular Bill, I can only say that the Government will take care to give full Notice to the House so as to avoid inconvenience as to the subject.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the postponement of the announcement of the policy of the Government with regard to a subject which interests the whole of the people of Ireland is in consequence of some negotiations which were proceeding similar to those which led to the compact in Kilmainham in order to enable the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and his Friends to co-operate with the Liberal Party?

MR. SPEAKER: As far as I am able to gather the purport of the Question put by the hon. Member, I do not think that it comes within the fair limits of Questions ordinarily put in this House.

MR. GLADSTONE: Although out of Order the hon. Member managed to get a certain amount of his Question heard before the interruption. I therefore think it right to state that the supposition which he has so gratuitously put forward has no foundation whatever other than in his own imagination.

MR. LEWIS: I beg to give Notice that I shall repeat this Question on this day four weeks.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have to say that I shall then repeat the same answer.

MR. MAC IVER: Are we to take what the Prime Minister has just said as a positive assurance that the Government will make no compact whatever?

[No reply.]

CENTRAL ASIA—AFGHANISTAN.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government intend to maintain the absolute integrity of the Afghan territory from Russian occupation and influence; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will lay upon the Table the various pledges given by the Russian Government with regard to Afghanistan?

MR. GLADSTONE: The declarations of Her Majesty's Government and of other Governments on former occasions all remain in full force with respect to the Afghan territory. With regard to the second part of the Question, I have to say that this is a moment when negotiations are proceeding with the Russian Government on the subject of the boundaries of Afghanistan; and while it is true that there has recently been an indication in some journal or journals of an intention on the side of the Russians to attack Herat, that has been in the most positive manner repudiated; and I do not think this moment will be convenient for me to enter into any detailed explanation beyond what I have said as to the declarations which have been made at various times by the Russian Government, that Afghanistan Proper was beyond the sphere of Russian influence, and the Government will rely upon that. These are all of them in the various Papers in the possession of Parliament.

MR. BOURKE asked whether Sariyazi, on the Murghab River, was within the limits of Afghanistan; whether it was not placed in all the maps in the India Office within the limits of Afghanistan; and, whether it was not the same place that the Under Secretary of State for India had pronounced that the Russians were not to take possession of?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I understand the right hon. Gentleman to ask whether Sariyazi is in Afghanistan. I am not able to answer that Question, and it is impossible to answer it until we have received information from the Commissioner in Afghanistan.

MR. BOURKE: But as to the maps in the India Office?

MR. J. K. CROSS: I am sorry to say that they do not seem to be in accordance with other maps.

An hon. MEMBER: Russian maps.

MR. BOURKE: Has the hon. Gentleman seen any maps in the India Office where it is not in Afghan territory?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The maps vary very much. The boundaries are exceedingly uncertain, and I cannot say I have seen any map in the India Office in which Sariyazi is outside the boundaries of Afghanistan.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I wish to ask a Question arising out of the answer just given by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman stated that recent assurances had been received from the Russian Government to the effect that they had no intention of occupying or advancing on Herat. Do those assurances also refer to the positions which command Herat upon Afghan territory, and which are, perhaps, of more importance than Herat itself?

MR. GLADSTONE asked for Notice of the Question.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE BABBICOMBE MURDERER.

COLONEL MAKINS: I wish to put a Question to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, of which I have not given him Notice; and therefore, if he wishes, I will give Notice of it for to-morrow. It is this—What steps are to be taken with respect to the very painful circumstances that are said to have attended the attempt to execute the prisoner John Lee?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have no objection to answer that Question now. The Under Sheriff of Exeter came up to London this afternoon to see me, and told me the facts of this painful case; and after considering them I thought that it would shock the feelings of everyone if a man had twice to incur the pangs of imminent death. I, therefore, this afternoon signed a respite in his case, to continue during Her Majesty's pleasure.

COLONEL MAKINS asked, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman would not take severe notice of the conduct of the gaol authorities, or of those, whoever they might be, who were responsible for the proper working of the gallows machinery?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes; most certainly.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.).

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether there is any truth in the report which has reached me that an International Agreement with regard to the finances of Egypt has been signed?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; it is not true that it has been signed.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE MILITIA—THE QUEEN'S PROCLAMATION.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, looking to the state of urgency which was called attention to in the Royal Proclamation on Friday last, and to the favourable opportunity of obtaining recruits for the Militia in consequence of the depressed state of trade, immediate steps were being taken by the Government to bring up that force (now 30,000 men below the numbers voted by Parliament) to its proper strength?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Every exertion is being made to obtain recruits for the Militia, and no eligible man is refused. The number of recruits and re-enlisted men who joined during 1884 was 41,980, a larger number than have joined for some years. Since the 1st of January the average weekly number has been 900 men, or at the rate of more than 46,000 a-year. The enrolled strength of the Militia on the 1st of January, 1884, was 99,400, and on the 1st of February, 1885, it was 106,500, showing an increase of 7,100 men. The noble Lord is, no doubt, aware that the Militia has never been up to its Parliamentary strength.

NAVY—THE "LYDIAN MONARCH" TRANSPORT SHIP.

DR. CAMERON asked, Whether the Government could relieve the public anxiety as to the safety of the *Lydian Monarch*, which was reported to have foundered with troops on board?

MR. CAINE: So far as we are aware, there is absolutely no foundation for the report.

GENERAL GORDON—NATIONAL TRIBUTE OF HONOUR.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER: I beg to ask, Whether it is the intention of the Prime Minister, or any responsible Minister of the Crown in the House of Commons, to pay any verbal tribute of honour to the memory of the greatest and noblest hero that ever wore the British uniform?

[No reply.]

EGYPT—LUPTON BEY.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has lately received any information respecting Lupton Bey, an Englishman, who is believed to be holding out with one of the garrisons in the Soudan?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think I am right in saying that all the information the Government has in regard to Lupton Bey is contained in the Papers presented this morning.

LORD WOLSELEY AND GENERAL GORDON.

MR. ONSLOW said, that before the adjournment the Prime Minister undertook to lay before the House the despatch which the Government had sent to Lord Wolseley defining the positions which that General and General Gordon would occupy relatively to each other should they meet. He wished to know how it was that the despatch in question was not contained in the Blue Book?

MR. GLADSTONE replied, that the hon. Member's recollection of the matter did not tally with his own. He must ask the hon. Member for Notice of the Question.

NAVY—THE "BRITANNIA" CADET TRAINING SHIP.

In reply to Mr. HALSEY,

MR. CAINE said, he had received a telegram from the Fleet Surgeon, which stated that the Captain of the *Britannia* training ship for cadets reported, with respect to the outbreak of scarlet fever on that vessel, that the number of cadets in the hospital at Dartmouth was 24. All of them were doing well. Extra beds and bedding had been sent to cover emergencies. Six attendants and a nurse had been sent on Saturday. The outbreak was of a very mild character. They hoped to stamp it out; and every investigation was being made as to the cause.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to Egypt and the Soudan.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MOTION.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.—RESOLUTION.

[FIRST NIGHT.]

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Mr. Speaker; Sir, I rise to move the Resolution which stands in my name upon the Paper, and I am anxious to be permitted, in the first place, to say a few words in order clearly to explain what is the object with which that Resolution has been placed thereon. It is—

> "That an humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered"—

that is, the course pursued by the Government has rendered—

> "it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them to assure a good and stable Government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."

Sir, I need not point out, I am sure, that a Motion which calls for such comment upon Her Majesty's Government is one which involves serious responsibility on the part of him who makes it. For it is, of course, a conclusion to be drawn from this Motion, that I hold, and am prepared to assert, that Her Majesty's Government have failed to conduct the affairs which they have lately been conducting in a manner satisfactory to the public or beneficial to England; and, further, that it calls upon the House to express a distinct opinion both with regard to the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government, and with regard to the steps they ought to take for the establishment of a good and stable Government in Egypt. By asking the House to affirm that such steps are necessary, I imply that, in my opinion, the Government have not heretofore taken such steps, and are not now taking them. But it is not my intention to lay any considerable stress upon the details of these proceedings which have been carried out during these recent years. We have more than once brought the subject before the House. More than once in the last Session of Parliament did we, from these Benches, challenge the conduct of Her Majesty's Government, and state fully the grounds on which we were dissatisfied with it. On two occasions—once when I myself, early in the Session, made a Motion, and again later in the Session, when my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) called attention to the subject—full discussions took place. The question was fully argued out upon the Papers and the other information that was then before the House; and the House on both those occasions arrived at decisions acquitting, to a certain extent, the Government, and refused to accept the Resolutions which we submitted. Now, there were many, I know, on those occasions who, though they felt themselves bound to support the Government, felt also that they were not satisfied in their own minds with the course the Government had taken. There were many who held that the course of the Government was unsatisfactory, but that it was inexpedient to interfere with its responsibility, and they were willing to declare themselves satisfied by the promises and expectations which were held out on the part of Her Majesty's Advisers. Well, Sir, the grounds which satisfied them then, and which led the House to conclude that the further operations about to be undertaken would be of a satisfactory character and would put an end to the difficulties which prevailed, and of which they complained — the expectations which were then entertained to that effect have been, I grieve to say, entirely or largely disappointed. The Government have entirely changed the position which they held last year with regard to the measures of a military character which were necessary; and it will be my desire and my object not to occupy the time of the House by going over in detail the questions that we raised and to which I have referred, but I shall endeavour particularly to draw the attention of the House to that which seems to me to be the kernel of the whole matter, and I wish to draw the House to this conclusion—that if we have failed so far to attain the object that we were anxious and that we expected to attain, it has been due, not so much to particular faults here or there, but to the general spirit in which Her Majesty's Government have conducted these proceedings. I hold that unless a complete and entire change takes place in that spirit, it will still be our lot to fail in what we have undertaken. I am quite aware that Her Majesty's Government are now making great exertions, that they are sending out troops, that they are preparing to lay down a railway, and are beginning to take steps which last year they considered were altogether unnecessary and uncalled for. I have no doubt that the military instructions that have been given, or will be given, to the Commander who is going out will be of a character that will enable him to discharge the military part of his duties. But at the same time that those steps are being taken, at the same time that those brave men are being sent out, at that same time there is a voice that proceeds from the Councils of Her Majesty's Government which deprives the Expedition of half its strength. We have a voice of uncertainty as to what is to be the position that Her Majesty's Government are endeavouring to obtain in Egypt. You cannot expect that these operations, or any operations, can be conducted to a satisfactory conclusion unless you distinctly lay down what you are fighting for, and clearly express your determination to get it. Now, Sir, in almost all the steps that have been taken, and in the debates which have taken, place on this question, there has proceeded some expression or another from the lips of Ministers which implies that their great hope and expectation is to make their remaining in Egypt as short as the period can possibly be made. And that is so perpetually brought forward that it impresses, and must necessarily impress, upon the minds of all that there is on the part of Her Majesty's Government a determination that, so soon as the military measures that are to be undertaken have been completed, Her Majesty's Government will withdraw the troops from that country. Now, nothing can, I venture to say, be more dangerous to our interests than such a declaration. At the present moment our brave and gallant troops are in a position which causes us anxiety. We have full hope and confidence that the same gallantry which has distinguished them hitherto will carry them through; but it is impossible for us not to see that there is a prospect of a somewhat lengthened detention of the troops in that country, that there is a prospect of their being under circumstances of considerable difficulty, and that much depends upon the spirit which we are showing here for the success which they may achieve. If you are talking more about retiring and withdrawing your troops from Egypt as soon as you can, than of pressing forward and securing the objects—and definite objects they must be—which are before you, not only do you dishearten and discourage your troops, but you do something which may be very serious indeed in its consequences to yourselves and to them. You will impress upon the Native inhabitants of that country a false belief—I trust it may be a false belief—that after all these operations have been accomplished, after you have made your march to Khartoum, or whatever may be your objective point, after you have defeated your enemies, you will then retire and leave them to the consequences of what would follow after that retirement. Now, I can conceive nothing more dangerous, nothing that would more seriously aggravate the difficulties of our brave soldiers than that such an impression should go abroad. I will illustrate what I mean by taking the case of a particular individual, one of the acknowledged Native Rulers of that country—the Mudir of Dongola. The Mudir is a man who has thrown in his lot with us, and who has behaved with great loyalty and ability, and, as it seems to me, in a very effective manner. If it is necessary for our troops to remain for any length of time near the position which they at present occupy, it will be undoubtedly from the country of the Mudir of Dongola that much of their supplies will be drawn. Now, I ask you to consider what will be the position in which you will leave the Mudir of Dongola if, after having executed any strategical measures that you require, you then retire out of the country, and leave him with the stigma which it would be upon him of having taken the part of the invaders. You have very properly issued a commission to your Commander there to pay especial honour to the Mudir of Dongola; I believe an Order of Merit has been conferred upon him; and, in various ways, he has been marked out as a special object of our acknowledgment and gratitude. But all that must tell fearfully against him if you leave that part of the country when you have obtained your military success without making proper arrangements for its settlement. Now, I hope that nothing I have said, or shall say, will be construed as in the least degree reflecting upon the military conduct of our officers and soldiers. Nothing, I will venture to say, has ever been more creditable to the British Army than the manner in which they have conducted the operations, and in which they have fought the engagements that have taken place. We are proud of them. We are proud of them all, from the Generals, whose loss we deplore, down to the humblest and lowest of those who are still fighting and enduring all the sufferings and privations of the campaign. They have, indeed, raised the name of England. They have done their duty in a manner which deserves at our hands the amplest gratitude, and, at the same time, the most serious consideration. It is precisely because I admire and recognize their great valour and great services to the country that I am particularly anxious they should be supported in a manner which is true and loyal, and which will encourage them and give them heart. Now, I cannot speak on this subject without referring especially to the one distinguished individual who has filled so much the mind of the public, the mind of this House, the mind of England, and the mind of all the civilized world for so long a period—I mean, of course, the gallant General Gordon. Of course, there can be no doubt that the melancholy event which has taken place at Khartoum, in the death of that gallant man, has largely quickened the public feeling upon the whole position there. The public mind was full of hope and confidence and joy when we heard the encouraging words with which General Gordon began his mission to that country. We have, from time to time, had reason to doubt whether he was properly and thoroughly supported by the Government. We have had reason to doubt whether they were not trading upon the admirable qualities of his nature. He was a remarkable man—a man of whom it has been truly said that he was of heroic character; a man who was above all things loyal, unselfish, earnest, and fearless, devoted to the duties which he undertook, and ready to spend, and be spent in the service of God and his country. He undertook the service upon which he was sent under circumstances of a very peculiar character. He undertook those services under a wholly different commission from that which was given to him within a very short time, and which altered altogether the position in which he stood. I should say that the conduct of General Gordon and his relation to the Government have been such that while, on the one hand, we feel that when we mention that name a flush of pride rises on our countenances, on the other we cannot avoid a feeling of shame. I remember, on the last occasion when my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) brought forward the Motion then before the House, he read a telegram which had been recently received from General Gordon; and I do not think that I can do better than to open what I have to say with regard to General Gordon by reading that telegram once more. I am sure that it is one that the House will allow me to read. It was a telegram which he sent, I think, on the 16th of April, and which was published in the Blue Book of the 5th of May. It was about the last utterance which we had from him before the termination of the recent campaign. This is what General Gordon said—

> "As far as I can understand, the situation is this: you state your intention of not sending any relief up here or to Berber, and you refuse me Zebehr. I consider myself free to act according to circumstances. I shall hold on here as long as I can, and if I can suppress the rebellion I shall do so. If I cannot, I shall retire to the Equator, and leave you indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Sennaar, Kassala, Berber, and Dongola, with the certainty that you will eventually be compelled to smash up the Mahdi under great difficulties if you would retain peace in Egypt."
> —[Egypt, No. 15 (1884), p. 1.]

That telegram, at the time it was received, caused a very great sensation in this country, and not unnaturally. It came as the warning of an experienced man, who was risking his own life in a great and difficult service, and who gave you his view of what was likely to be the outcome of the events then in progress. Look at the present moment, and see how those words of his—which were lightly held at that time, and which the supporters of the Government passed by as the words rather of an enthusiast than of a statesman—are being fulfilled, and how those very prophecies are coming to pass. See how the state of things which General Gordon, by anticipation, describes is now the present condition of affairs, with one melancholy exception—namely, that he has not retired to the Equator, but has fallen in the discharge of his duty. He has fallen in the manner which, I doubt not, he was prepared for at any moment of his life, but in one which reflects upon us anything except credit. Permit me now to turn from the last utterance of General Gordon before he was closed up from all outer communications, and to refer to some of those letters which ultimately came from him, showing what he was doing in Khartoum during the later months of the year, and how he was carrying out his work. This is the telegram which was sent by Gordon Pasha to the officer commanding the Royal Navy at Massowah; and I think there is so much spirit about it, it so much illustrates the man, and it contains so much that shows what the true position of affairs was, that I shall not apologize for reading it even at some length. It is dated, Khartoum, August 24, and it is as follows:—

> "Received cipher despatch from you and Egerton, dated 27th April, 1884. We have had a series of petty fights with Arabs from the 12th March to July the 30th, when we were able, thank God, to drive them back and open road to Sennaar, and we are now relieved from the immediate pressure of Arabs. We are going to attack them to-morrow, and meditate a raid on Berber, in order to let pass to Dongola a convoy which accompanies Colonel Stewart and French and English Consuls. We shall (D.V.) destroy Berber, and return to our pirate nest here. Our steamers are blinded and bullet-proof and do splendid work, for you see when you have steam on the men cannot run away and must go into action. I hope the *Euryalus* are all well, and hope you like Massowah in September. We are going to hold out here for ever, and are pretty evenly matched with Mahdi. He has cavalry and we have steamers. We are very cross with you all, for since the 29th March we have not had one word from outer world. I have paid as much as £140 for a spy, and you gave that poor devil, so he says, 20 dollars to go from Massowah to Khartoum. However, I have given him £20. One of our steamers has 970 bullet-marks on her, another 850 ditto. Our losses have been slight. We have provisions for five months, and hope to get in more. Stewart got wounded in the arm, but is all right. The *rôle* of our country has not been very noble in Egypt or the Soudan. I wish I had three or four of your gunners, for our practice is dismal. Kindest regards to all your officers."—[Egypt, No. 1 (1885), p. 106.]

It is, I think, worth while to see the freshness of spirit which animates that despatch, and the hard work that it shows was being done by General Gordon in the difficult position in which he was placed, and I think it is also not a little worth while to take notice of his last words, painful as they are, with which the telegram closes. Let me read another telegram from him, dated somewhat later, I think on September 9, in which he says—

> "How many times have we written asking for reinforcements, calling your serious attention to the Soudan. No answer at all has come to us as to what has been decided in the matter, and the hearts of men have become weary of this delay. While you are eating, drinking, and resting on good beds, we, and those with us, both soldiers and servants, are watching by night and day, endeavouring to quell the movement of this false Mahdi. Of course, you take no interest for suppressing this rebellion, the serious consequences of which are reverse of victorious for you, and the neglect thereof will not do."—[*Ibid.* p. 122].

No, "we take no interest in the suppression of this rebellion," this rebellion being one of people who were rightly struggling to be free. Sir, I shall be told that Her Majesty's Government are not to blame in this matter; that if General Gordon complained that he did not receive information of the outer world, it was clearly no fault of theirs that he did not get such information. We shall be told that, unfortunately, the Mahdi's forces had closed in, and that the way had been blocked, so that it was impossible for General Gordon to get communication with the outer world, and that General Gordon must have been aware that that was so. I do not know how far General Gordon may have been satisfied with that explanation, which no doubt suggested itself to him, and which no doubt will be pleaded by the Government as the reason for leaving him without information. But remember what the effect of all this must have been, not only upon the mind of General Gordon himself, who knew what all the circumstances were, but on the minds of the people among whom he was, and upon the minds of the inhabitants of Khartoum, whom he was asking to make these sacrifices, and whom he was calling upon day after day to go with him upon expeditions in steamers from which they could not run away, with whom he was going into engagements in every direction, and whose spirits he was endeavouring to keep up by the exercise of his own great personal influence, and by the constant assurance that they had not been forgotten by the British Government, and were not to look in vain for help and reinforcements. No one can doubt that, from time to time, language of that kind must have frequently been used by General Gordon; but as time went on, and as these expectations were not fulfilled, and as the help still tarried, the hearts of the people grew sad, cold, and alarmed. And when we hear that, after all, Khartoum fell by treachery, are we quite sure that that treachery was not in any way brought on or caused by this action of the Government? I have heard it said that, as the taking of the city was caused by treachery, the delay which necessarily occurred in the advance of our troops was really of no consequence, because the treachery would have come about whenever those troops came within measureable distance of Khartoum. That is certainly one of the most extraordinary theories ever put forward. I can suggest other reasons why it was very possible that there might have been or was treachery at the last. It might have been that the people were getting hopeless and were getting starved, that they had exhausted their provisions at the time, were living on hard fare every day, and that their condition was becoming most intolerable to them, and that they thought it better, in these circumstances, to open the gates to the Mahdi, thus giving themselves up to the Power that was close to them rather than to wait for the coming of the Power that was at a long distance from them, and that it was better to open the gates to the Mahdi, instead of holding them at the risk of an utter failure and awaiting an assault upon their town, with its attendant massacre and destruction. Or it may have been that those who were guilty of this treachery were inclined to believe that the policy of the English Government was that which had been put forward by a certain number of the present supporters of the Ministry, and that when we had succeeded in getting to Khartoum and in rescuing our own countrymen, we should retire without caring for the interests of anybody else. I do not, for a moment, mean to impute such an idea as that to Her Majesty's Government, or that they intended it. ["Why not?"] I put it indefinitely; but I do mean to say that the language they used was such as to convey that impression. What did we hear about "Rescue and retire"—phrases which were such salves to the consciences of those supporters of the Government who did not like the war, but were prepared to accept the kind of statement that they had to go to rescue General Gordon, and then, as soon as possible, to retire? Sir, we have been too much in these matters the slave of phrases. We have a Minister who is a great master of phrases. He makes them sometimes for himself, and sometimes for other people. But the master of phrases is very apt to become a servant and a slave of phrases, and that is the case in regard to "Rescue and retire." Now, Sir, let me say a few words with regard to the story of General Gordon's employment. General Gordon was, in the first instance, employed by the Government, on very short notice, at a very critical period, for what purpose? To go and report as to the best way of withdrawing the garrisons from the Soudan. That phrase of "going to report" is a very convenient phrase for the Government when there is anything to be done, and it is a question whether they should or should not undertake it. It is like referring a matter with which the Government do not like to deal to a Select Committee. What happens when you adopt this plea, which you can always offer to your supporters if they question it? You can go a step further, by adding to this business of reporting other functions for the reporter. And this was what was done in the case of General Gordon. When he was, in the first instance, sent out to report, he stipulated that he should be considered to be the servant of Her Majesty's Government, and that he should not be considered to be a servant of the Egyptian Government; and that if Her Majesty's Government would take upon themselves the responsibility of deciding that the garrisons should be withdrawn, and direct him to go out and report on the best manner in which they should be withdrawn, he would be willing to undertake that duty; but he must be under orders from the Home Government, and not under orders from Cairo. That was all very well; but there was added to his instructions a very pregnant clause—that he would be at liberty to accept any employment from the Egyptian Government for the purpose of facilitating the matter. That was followed up by more elaborate instructions issued by the Egyptian Government, and which implied that he was to have considerable power and responsibility in the country. He was to withdraw the troops, Civil *employés*, and Europeans; he was to establish a confederation of restored Sultans as a substitute for the Egyptian Government; he was to report upon the best provision to be made for the Red Sea ports; he was to advise how to counteract the stimulus which would be given by the evacuation of Khartoum to the Slave Trade. That is a somewhat remarkable and a large order. I may remark, in passing, that it is significant that one of the immediate consequences which everyone foresaw would result from the evacuation was the encouragement that would be given to the Slave Trade. He was further to establish an organized Government in the Soudan; to restore tranquillity, justice, and order, and to maintain roads open to commerce. That was a considerable number of duties to thrust upon him. And he was to undertake to discharge all these duties by the magic of his name, and by a commission from the Khedive, without any other kind of support. He found that impossible, and after the first moment of his reception he began to perceive that it was necessary that he should have other support. But when he applied for it, that support was not forthcoming, and he was left to conduct his operations under great difficulties, without the support which he fairly might have expected. Mr. Speaker, when we come to consider the effect of all this upon the Egyptian Government, I think that we must see that we incurred a great debt to that Government in respect of the manner in which we proceeded with regard to the withdrawal of these garrisons. We had weakened Egypt. We had almost paralyzed Egypt, so that she was unable, of her own power, to accomplish that which we ordered her to perform. We gave her no assistance, but, on the contrary, we impeded and weakened her. What was the history of the withdrawal of the garrisons? It all arose from that unhappy Expedition of General Hicks, which might have been prevented by us; or, if we had not prevented it, we might, at all events, have made it of a more effective character. But whenever any reference was made to Her Majesty's Government on that subject, they were anxious to proclaim that their one great object was to save themselves from all responsibility. The Soudan might be held, or it might be lost; General Hicks might gain victories, or he might be slain or destroyed; but, whatever might be the case, our Representative at Cairo was to be as reticent as possible, and was to refuse to give any advice, or to abstain from giving it as much as he could. Sometimes he was allowed to give a passing opinion; but that, as we know from the right hon. Gentleman himself, is of very little value indeed. When there was a question as to what General Gordon might do with regard to the Mahdi, he was not allowed his own way, but was advised against it. We were told by the Prime Minister that the scheme was not negatived at all, but that only a strong opinion was given against it. That was the sort of thing that was done with regard to General Hicks's Expedition. No doubt, if that strong opinion had been expressed with equal strength to the Egyptian Government, they would have found that it was the wise and the right course to restrain General Hicks from his Expedition. But I remember the right hon. Gentleman said that that would have been an impertinent interference, and that it would not have been a very civil thing to our Egyptian friend that we should advise him not to go and conquer the Soudan. But what was the result? We had already dealt a heavy blow at Egypt, and at Tel-el-Kebir had destroyed a large part of its Army. We had taken the direction of Egyptian affairs. We were holding tight the purse-strings, and Egypt could not in this matter move without our consent. We allowed the Expedition to go on, and we were morally responsible, I hold, for the conduct of the Egyptian Government in the matter. But when the disaster happened, although we had been too timid, too scrupulous and polite to interfere before the mischief was done, all of an instant we became firm and determined, and we decided at once that the Egyptian Government should withdraw the garrisons. That was a very easy thing to say, but not such an easy thing to do; and the Egyptian Government, under Cherif Pasha, made a strong remonstrance against the proposal. To say the least, there were possibilities that the withdrawal might have taken place when it was first ordered. We overbore the Egyptian Government and drove them out of Office. A new Government was formed, nominally by the Khedive, but in reality under English influence — at all events, guided by English counsels. It might have been possible, even at that time, for the garrisons to be withdrawn with comparative ease and safety. In one despatch, it was mentioned that the gallant Colonel Coetlogon was ready to withdraw his garrison from Khartoum had he received directions to do so; and had he received orders to retire while the Mahdi was still at a distance, no doubt the garrison at Khartoum, as well as other garrisons, might have been withdrawn in a manner that was tolerably safe, and so the complications which have occurred would have been avoided. But no. Her Majesty's Government sent General Gordon nominally to report, but actually to take upon himself the responsibility of acting as Governor General of the Soudan, and of establishing something like a Government there. I need not, neither do I wish to, go into the history of the whole of these transactions; but the conclusion I wish to draw is that throughout the whole period Her Majesty's Government have been conducting their business with the fatal drawback of having to proclaim to those among whom they were going that their mission to Egypt was only temporary, and that they intended as speedily as possible to withdraw from the country. We heard the other day a few words from the Prime Minister. He is sending out forces; he is making railways, and he is giving instructions to his Military Commander; but his words fly far, and the words which he used the other day with regard to the continued desire and object of the Government to withdraw the Egyptian garrisons, and, as far as possible, to withdraw from the occupation of the Soudan—these expressions, construed as they will be, will continue that fatal impression. I want to get some clear and definite statement as to what it is that the Government are going to war for. Is it at war for some definite and useful object? If so, I hope we shall be told what their object is; for I must say that unless there is some definite object which we are to aim at, I am not one of those who desire to see the prosecution of wars. I know it is necessary to vindicate the honour of the British Army—it is necessary to vindicate the honour of your country; but it is also necessary that you should know that you are aiming at an object which is a worthy object, and which you can recommend as worthy of the great sacrifices which you are imposing on your country. Well, I believe that the object of placing this great country, or so much as we are able to place of it, on a footing of a satisfactory character is worthy of great exertions—even of the loss of life and treasure which further military operations must inevitably entail. If we could be sure that this was really your object, we should have more confidence as to what is likely to be the result of these Expeditions. But I fear that the ingrained difficulty is not removed; that it is not possible to put any confidence in Her Majesty's Government. They will alter their course of proceeding, and thus more than destroy the effect of what they do by words which give a different effect to their proceedings. The Government are very anxious to make out that they are consistent in what they are doing and what they are going to do. I do not want them to prove that they are consistent. I want to see them a little inconsistent, and to see them realize facts. It will be very inconsistent with their past line of action, indeed, if they do for once bring themselves fairly to look facts in the face. I want them to get out of the habit of putting us off by a few fine, sharp phrases, and to tell us in such a way as can be understood by all the world what they really mean to do. Therefore, I have to ask the House to affirm not only that the course of the Government has not produced great results, but that the course which they have followed has rendered it imperatively necessary that they should distinctly recognize and take measures to fulfil their responsibilities. It is that very course which you have taken to minimize your military action at first which has led to the greater demands of the present time; and, just in the same way, any such attempt now to minimize responsibility, or to leave that responsibility unfulfilled, will only increase, and increase ten-fold, the task which will ultimately fall upon you. You are now doing that which you might have done, but which you refused to do, last year, which, if you had then done it, would probably have been more effective and have produced a greater result with a far less expenditure of means. You are now about to send out large reinforcements, and to change your line of attack. You are about to put down that railway from Suakin to Berber, of which you spoke with contempt and disapprobation a year ago. You are about to open up that line which General Graham, after the slaughter at El Teb, might have proceeded upon, and then, by a rapid march, opened a way through the country, and made easier access to Berber and Khartoum. But all these things, which you laid aside then, you are taking up now. If you were right then, how can you be right now? If you were right in rejecting these plans then, it was either because you did not recognize properly the magnitude of the operations, or that you refused to undertake the responsibility so long as things remained stationary. I have stated that it is our duty to recognize our special responsibility. That special responsibility arises from the history of the whole course of these transactions. It arises from the fact, in particular, of your having broken up the Egyptian power; broken it up and weakened it seriously even at the headquarters at Cairo, and utterly destroyed it on the Southern frontier. It is impossible that you can justifiably leave things in that state, and then sit down and say, "Let all these tribes in the South have their own way," after they have gained this victory at Khartoum, which must encourage them so materially and so much further. It is impossible to let Egypt and the South take care of themselves. It is impossible that you can take such a line. You must be held responsible, not only in the eyes of the people of this country, but in the eyes of all parts of the world which have any interest in Egypt. You have been allowed to occupy a position of a very peculiar character there in consequence of the sacrifices which you have made, and in consequence of the efforts which it is supposed you would make for bringing about a satisfactory state of peace and stable government. You will not have that same facility given to you if you fail entirely in the discharge of your duty; and if the result of your interference is not to produce a stable and satisfactory Government, but one that is unstable and unable to discharge the duties of a Government, you will not maintain the position which you ought to maintain in this country and before the world. Day by day we are getting into deeper waters. Day by day our anxiety increases to hear the news which comes from the Army abroad. We admire the gallantry and skill of our officers, the pluck and endurance of our soldiers, but day by day we are more impressed by the gravity of the circumstances. I have felt that it was a serious question whether I was justified in taking the responsibility of calling attention to these matters and submitting a Motion to the House; but I felt that it was my duty to do so, whatever might be the consequences. I, therefore, now call upon the House to pronounce a verdict in this matter once again. We lay before you substantially the same case as was laid before, with the additional experience of the value of Ministerial promises and the successes of Ministerial action. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite smile when I say we lay before you the same case. In doing so I would ask them, are they really satisfied that the case is not strengthened, is not entirely made out, doubly and trebly, by the results which have followed since the Vote of Confidence which they gave? Are they about now to renew that Vote of Confidence which was given rather personally to the Ministry, than to the plans which the Ministry put forward? Are they prepared still to give *carte blanche* to the Government to do as they please in these matters, and do they not require a strict account of what they are going to do, and whether they are going to undertake this business in one spirit or the other? There will be some who will support the Ministry on grounds the very opposite to the grounds of support which will be given by others. There will be some who will say—"We will keep these Ministers in Office, because we believe that through them, at last, we shall be able to accomplish the objects we have in view, and possibly that we shall be able to stimulate and keep them up to their military operations on a scale of adequate importance, and to make a settlement of an adequate character." There will be others who will say with the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley)—"We support the Government, because we think that out of them we have the best chance of getting the accomplishment of our own wishes, that Egypt should be left alone as soon as possible." But how can the Government, in such a matter as this, go on with such divided support? How can they go on, when at every stage of their action they are in doubt as to which leg they will stand upon, whether it is a policy of abandonment, or a policy of advance? I care not whether it is a settlement in one way or the other; but how can they arrive at any satisfactory settlement when they are supported by two bodies of men who have such diametrically opposite views of the situation. I have endeavoured to avoid saying anything that would be of a pessimist character. I do not desire to magnify the dangers of the situation. I feel confident that our gallant troops will successfully carry through the task which is deputed to them. I have great confidence in our troops and their Commanders; but all the more, because I have that confidence, am I anxious that they should be relieved from the dangerous and humiliating position in which they are placed by the uncertainty in their instructions. ["No, no!"] Well, I really do not know which line they mean to follow. We are told that it will be necessary to punish, or, at all events, destroy the power of, the Mahdi. Are we told that or not, because that is the case in point? Some think we are, some that we are not. No doubt, there may be different voices in the Ministry on this subject, voices which will be raised not only among their supporters, but among themselves. I do not know how that may be; but I saw a paragraph which I read with great pleasure in the Blue Book presented to us this morning—a paragraph in Lord Northbrook's despatch, in which the noble Lord says—

> "Your Lordships will gather from the observations I have made that I cannot recommend Her Majesty's Government to fix any date at which the British troops serving in Egypt should be withdrawn."

That is a considerable advance from the position formerly taken up by the Members of the Government—even by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Hartington), when we heard that celebrated promise of withdrawing in six months. We found that at the time these six months were expiring, when it was so very important that the promise should be kept, at that very moment came the difficulty with regard to General Hicks and the embarrassment caused by the fact that our troops were actually beginning to be withdrawn. I have no doubt, in fact, nobody can doubt, that our gallant soldiers, if they are properly supported, will perform the task that is assigned to them, although the main difficulty with which they have to contend is the uncertain policy which they are called upon to carry out. On whatever side hon. Members may sit, it is their duty to demand clear explanations in these matters; and it is not only their duty to be satisfied as to the policy adopted, but it is also their duty to be satisfied that the policy adopted will be carried out. It is because I have great doubt whether the Government, as they are now circumstanced, will really do that—whether they are able to throw off, and get rid of, that special taint of, I will not call it humility, but of uncertainty, vacillation, and fear of responsibility—that I doubt whether it will be in their power to give that confidence which the people of this country demand. The people of this country know very well that Her Majesty's Government have the disposal of the power of the country, and that it rests with them to take such measures as they think fit, and that Parliament has no other voice in the matter than to give advice when from necessity they are called upon to give it, and to condemn when censure has been incurred through failure having occurred. But we are too often told—"Do not interfere with plans now in the process of execution." While General Gordon was alive we were told—"Do not interfere with his plans." When we were asking Questions, we were told that these were matters in which we had better not interfere. Now, when we see the result, the failure that has occurred, we are told—"You ought not to censure the past, because it is past." If I thought that what was past had worked a change, that the evil spirit which has been so damaging and hampering us throughout was finally renounced and done with, things might be different; but that is not the case. We have a hard enough task before us in any circumstances. We are beset with difficulties; but, at this time, I may quote words in this House which were used by a competent observer when the question of an Expedition for the relief of General Gordon was on foot. He said—"There are difficulties, no doubt, in the rescue of General Gordon; but the greatest difficulty, after all, is in the hearts of Her Majesty's Ministers." The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them to assure a good and stable Government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."—(*Sir Stafford Northcote.*)

Mr. JOHN MORLEY, in rising to move, as an Amendment—

"That this House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi,"

said: The right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) taunted the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) with the recollection of some words which were spoken a year ago—["More than that!" "Two years ago!"]—as to the probable duration of the occupation of Egypt. While the right hon. Baronet was speaking I could not help remembering some words which the right hon. Baronet himself spoke not a year ago in referring to General Gordon. I am sorry to disturb the impression of the gracious and generous eulogy which he has passed on General Gordon, by recalling the fact to his mind that in April last he spoke of the plans which he now says we all viewed with such exultant hopes, and he declared them to be "vague and extravagant." Another remark I would venture to make, in reference to his lament at the death of General Gordon, is this—that if there is one cause more than another that has conduced to that catastrophe it is the attitude that was taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite and by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), when they got up, as we all remember, in February and March of last year, incessantly importuned the Government with Questions, and brought so tremendous a pressure to bear upon the Government that they dare not—and I blame them for it—they did not dare to comply with General Gordon's own constantly repeated petition to send Zebehr Pasha to Khartoum. I am anxious to stand for the least possible time between the House and the Prime Minister, and therefore I will not enlarge upon the arguments of the right hon. Baronet, but will proceed at once to urge what can be said in favour of my Amendment. It has been represented to me that I should probably get a larger support, if the Amendment had been drawn in words more nearly approaching those of the Amendment the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) has put upon the Paper. No doubt, it may be more exhilarating to have a greater number of fellow-passengers; but that is not very satisfactory, if we are in the wrong train and get out at the wrong station. Now, the propositions of my Amendment turn upon facts which are not touched by the Laodicean plausibilities of my hon. Friend. We have had enough, and too much, of these general platitudes. It is by appealing to will-o'-the-wisps of this kind that mistake after mistake has been committed by the Government; and it is by attending to such vague generalities as this that the Government, first of all, contrary to the wish of some of us sitting here, felt the necessity of relieving the Egyptian garrisons; secondly, that they despatched General Gordon to Khartoum; thirdly, that they refused to allow him to have Zebehr; and, fourthly, that they performed that slight service to humanity which consisted in the slaughter of 8,000 Arabs at Suakin. None of these things would have taken place if a so-called clique of *doctrinaire* philosophers had had any weight in the Councils of Her Majesty's Government. If the questions now raised by the Motion of the right hon. Baronet, or raised by the recent announcement of the Prime Minister, were questions of the military necessity of the situation, there probably would be no difference of opinion among us on this side of the House, and very little difference between us and hon. Gentlemen opposite. But this is not a question of military exigency. The announcement made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister the other night was, undoubtedly, a new declaration of policy, because that declaration was an answer to the question of Lord Wolseley. What did he ask? He did not say—"What military measures do you sanction my taking?" but he said—"Tell me what is your political object, and then I will frame my measures accordingly." We, therefore, contend that the instructions that have been sent to Lord Wolseley open a new programme of Soudan policy. Now, the real issue raised by my Amendment, and not touched by the Amendment of my hon. Friend, is, whether, for the safe and honourable withdrawal of our troops, and for the defence of the Egyptian Frontier, the destruction of the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum proposed by the Prime Minister is, or is not, necessary? My Amendment contends that it is unnecessary, and I venture to defend it upon two grounds. The first of them is, that it has not been demonstrated that it is essential to destroy the power of the Mahdi. It may be, for anything we know to the contrary—and there are many reasons for thinking it is so—it may be perfectly possible to come to terms with the Mahdi. The Prime Minister admitted the other night that accommodation was not out of the question; he admitted that negotiations might be entertained if they were proffered on the part of the Mahdi. But what chance is there of the Mahdi listening to words of that kind, so long as he hears it announced that the cardinal object of our policy is to destroy his power at Khartoum? In making an announcement of that kind, you are doing something as fatal to the prospects of negotiation and arrangement, as you did something fatal to the prospects of General Gordon's pacific mission when you sent the Expedition to Suakin. You will never get the Mahdi or his emissaries to believe that you are acting in good faith, that you will leave him with certain boundaries, so long as you make declarations of this sweeping and belligerent character. My second proposition, on which I lay more stress, is that even if it could be shown that it is indispensable to destroy the power of the Mahdi, it has not been shown, and assuredly there are many reasons for thinking the contrary to be true, that the power of the Mahdi can be most effectually destroyed at Khartoum. We have always been given to understand that the policy of the Government turned upon waiting for the Soudanese power at the Southern Frontier of Egypt. That, surely, was the policy declared in the despatches written at the beginning of last year. Is it not, therefore, a serious change of policy; is it not fatal to the arguments which you have yourselves used, now to insist upon following the Mahdi to Khartoum, where he is strongest, which is the heart and centre of his power, instead of waiting for him on the frontier, where his power is weakest? You will be committing exactly the same error that destroyed the Grand Army of Napoleon. It was not that he lost a single battle on the march to Moscow; it was not the enemy that slew 250,000 of his men; they were destroyed by snow, and frost, and climate. It is not the Mahdi or his forces we have to fear, but it is the burning climate, the rainless deserts, the illimitable distances. It is the invincible forces of Nature herself you are arraying against you by this change of policy. Sir, I am at a loss to understand how it can be maintained that we are now asked to support the same policy that was announced to us last year. Why, last year, the Prime Minister said distinctly that the re-conquest of the Soudan was an enterprize to which nothing on earth could tempt him, and which he would resist with all his might. When the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) moved a Vote of Censure, the Prime Minister said the right hon. Gentleman was advising the House to use British and Christian forces against a Mahommedan people struggling for their liberty in the Soudan. Now, if this policy is to be insisted on and persisted in; if we are to carry on the campaign not merely to facilitate the speedy and honourable withdrawal of our Forces, but in order to destroy the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, are we not using British and

Christian forces for the destruction of a Mahommedan people struggling for their freedom in the Soudan? It is very clear that for so remarkable a change of policy, necessitating an enterprize of such enormous magnitude, there ought to be very good reason, and doubtless there are great and considerable objects in the minds of Her Majesty's Government. Well, the Prime Minister the other night gave us three or four of those objects. He said, in the first place, that we were bound to carry on these operations in order to do our bounden duty to those persons in Khartoum to whom the word and honour of General Gordon was irrevocably pledged. Can this be a serious argument? As it will be many months before we can be in Khartoum, can it be supposed that the persons to whom General Gordon irrevocably pledged his word and honour will not by that time have suffered the worst, or made the best terms they could with the Mahdi at Khartoum? Next we were told that the question of the Slave Trade must not be left out of the view and scope of the policy of Her Majesty's Government. But I remember well that last year my right hon. Friend at the head of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) made a very important declaration, which I hope he will not draw back from. He said—"You cannot put down the Slave Trade in the Soudan; you can only succeed in diverting it from one route to another; and the only way to stop the Slave Trade is to stop it at the outports and put an end to the market." Lord Derby, in "another place," made an equally emphatic statement. But, with the permission of the House, I will read a few words from an authority recognized by both sides of the House—namely, General Gordon himself. In 1877, he was in the heart of the Soudan, and this is what he wrote—

> "The fact is that, even with the British Government in possession of these countries, I do not see how the Slave Trade can be stopped, unless the British Government pushes its frontier up to the frontier of the Negro tribes, and there establish a line of frontier posts. I need scarcely remark," says General Gordon, "that no British Government would be so foolish or go to the expense of doing this, for it would be a dead loss. Further than that, the frontier would have to extend to Lake Tchad."

Now, I ask hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on both sides, whether they are prepared, when they profess this enthusiasm for putting an end to the Slave Trade, to extend the frontier of British power down to Lake Tchad? I cannot think that either they or the country will support the Government in any project so chimerical. The last great object is one on which right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House seem to agree, though there is some divergence as to the way in which it is to be carried out, and that is, that we must not overlook the possibility of establishing an orderly Government in Khartoum. This, I venture to say again, is a new departure on the part of the Government; because, last year, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War said—

> "It has been already my duty to repeat the disclaimer which has been made by the Government on former occasions of responsibility for establishing government in the Soudan. We have never made any such disclaimer with regard to Egypt."

And this was a perfectly fair and very important distinction. Those words clearly implied that he did disclaim any responsibility for establishing government in the Soudan. It was the noble Marquess who, on another occasion, said that—

> "The evacuation, even if it should lead to the establishment in Khartoum and other places of the Mahdi, or other heads of the insurrection, was the primary object of Gordon's mission."

This is to say, that at that moment, at least, Her Majesty's Government did contemplate leaving the Mahdi, or the other heads of the insurrection, to establish a Government in Khartoum. Well, I cannot see for the life of me what has now happened to make it impossible for the Government to acquiesce in the same resolution which found favour in their eyes then. Why should they not now acquiesce in the establishment of government by the Mahdi in Khartoum. I think General Gordon once said that the Mahdi was looked upon as a kind of Pope, and not a Sultan; a spiritual power, and not a temporal. Well, Popes before now have wielded a considerable degree of temporal power in their day; and it would surprise me very much, from all I have heard from others better acquainted than I am with the Soudan, if the Mahdi would not be very glad to establish his authority at Khartoum or elsewhere. Even if he does not, you may depend upon it that some stronger man than himself will rise up and will set up a Government there. And the very reason which now prevents competitors with the Mahdi from arising is your presence, the presence of foreign and alien invaders—it is this which causes all the tribes to combine and rally to his flag. I daresay it will be said that a Government set up there either by the Mahdi, or a successful competitor of his, would be a cruel and fierce Government. Well, I daresay it would; but do not let us forget that though these Oriental Governments are cruel, fierce, and violent, yet, under them, the people often enjoy a degree of contentment and satisfaction which they never could derive from boons conferred upon them by the cast-iron benevolence of foreigners and aliens. I have heard, with great regret, that this idea of looking to the possibility of setting up an orderly Government in Khartoum is now to be recognized by Her Majesty's Ministers as one of their objects. I cannot see in the least what obligation is imposed upon us to give them a stable and orderly Government. This is not the case of Egypt Proper. There, I can quite understand its being said that we broke up a Government, or that we prevented them getting a better one themselves. But in the Soudan we have done no such thing. The Soudanese had themselves thrown off the odious yoke of the Egyptian Government, and we have rejoiced, and do rejoice, that they have thrown off that yoke; but it is no responsibility of ours. Does anyone suppose that if we had not intervened in Egypt in 1882, the Egyptians would have been able to master the Soudanese? There was not the slightest possibility of their doing so. Therefore, I hope that this ideal will not be pursued with too much zeal by Her Majesty's Ministers. If the time comes, and the opportunity offers, I hope they will consent, in the first place, to open negotiations with the Mahdi; and, if that cannot be done, still they will drop the announcement that the power of the Mahdi must be destroyed at Khartoum, and say that the Soudan must be left to its own people to work out their own deliverance in their own fashion. I can well understand, if we had nothing else to do in the world, if we had no other tasks or burdens on our shoulders, it might be contended that we might use our power to do something for these poor people. Even then it would be very difficult to show with any precision what it is that we can actually do. But does anyone dream that we have not now more tasks on our hands than we ever can or will perform? What has been at the root of the debates that have gone on in this House for the last five years? It has been that one side has constantly insisted upon pressing public opinion forward to undertake tasks and duties, involving vast responsibilities beyond our political and military resources, and that the other side has not always had the courage—I will not say, although I had almost said, has not had the honesty—to say to the public plainly, and not only to say it, but to act without yielding upon the principle, that we have already been undertaking responsibilities long past the limits at which they can be effectually discharged. That proposition at least the Prime Minister will give a cordial adherence to. But in spite of the adherence which is given to the doctrine, it has constantly been evaded; and I have never heard, during the last five years, a more gratuitous and flagrant infraction of it than this declaration of policy that we must destroy the power of the Mahdi and set up another Power. We tried it in the case of Cetewayo. In the case of Zululand, we were told by Sir Bartle Frere that it was our duty to civilization to put an end to Cetewayo's power. We did so, and under the same General who is now in the Soudan we established a new Government, a new Authority, consisting of 13 Chiefs. But the whole fabric fell to pieces almost immediately; and if you set up a similar fabric in the Soudan, it will fall to pieces more quickly still. I am not arguing the question upon the ground of morality or justice, though it would not be very hard to show that to carry on a sanguinary war without any beneficent aim is not only a political blunder, but a very hideous moral misdemeanour. I do not care whether it is right hon. Gentlemen on the other side, or on this side, who take up the policy of making us responsible for the Sondan. The point I wish to press is this, that in either case it is a waste of national strength, and a waste unredeemed by any good object, either to the people of the Soudan, or ourselves—a waste that, at any moment, would be a grievous error, but in a moment like this is in the highest degree culpable. To-day, as every Member of the House knows, our serious interests and permanent and abiding objects of policy —even, in some quarters, possibly our territorial security—are menaced in almost every quarter of the globe. At such a moment to tie our right arm behind our back, in order to wage a random and aimless crusade against the barbarians of the Nubian Desert, is not only a tremendous error, but it is one of those signs of infatuation which history marks as the omen of a national catastrophe. I wish the moving of my Amendment had fallen into stronger hands; but believing, as I do, that we are on the eve of the most unjust, the most sanguinary, the most barren war that was ever waged by the forces of this Realm, I feel bound, in spite of private and public ties, to put on record my protest against the first beginning of so unfortunate a policy. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the first word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words "this House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi,"—(*Mr. John Morley,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I hope, Sir, the House will think I am justified in the desire to follow, without the intervention of any other Member, the two speeches we have just heard. It is quite true that these speeches are contradictory to one another and reciprocally self-destructive. But they both are speeches directed in censure of the policy of the Government, and the importance of this case is such that I think the House ought at the first moment to understand on what footing the Government feel bound to object both to the one and the other. The practice of moving Votes of Censure has attained a frequency during the last five years which may possibly, during the existence of future Governments, be found to establish an inconvenient precedent. But I find no fault with the right hon. Gentleman for the Motion he has made. I will give myself the pleasure of first noticing his speech on two points in which I am in entire sympathy with him. The right hon. Gentleman has dwelt, with the utmost propriety and the utmost feeling, on the loss which the country has sustained in the death of General Gordon. He stated that General Gordon had devoted his life, and all that makes life valuable, to his Sovereign and to his country. Sir, he might have enlarged that eulogium, for the life of General Gordon was not limited even to those great objects. It was devoted to his Sovereign, to his country, and likewise to the world. General Gordon's sympathies were not limited by race, or colour, or religion. In point of fact, he seems to have deemed it his special honour to devote his energies and to risk his existence on behalf of those with whom he had no other tie than that of human sympathy. General Gordon was a hero, and permit me to say he was still more —he was a hero among heroes. For there have been men who have obtained and deserved the praise of heroism whose heroism was manifested chiefly on the field of battle or in other conflicts, and who, when examined in the tenour of their personal lives, were not in all respects heroic; but if you take the case of this man, pursue him into privacy, investigate his heart and his mind, you will find that he proposed to himself not any ideal of wealth and power, or even fame, but to do good was the object he proposed to himself in his whole life, and for that one object it was his one desire to spend his existence. Such is the man we have lost—a loss great, indeed; but he is not all lost, for such examples are fruitful in the future, and I trust there will grow from the contemplation of that character and those deeds other men who in future time may emulate his noble and most Christian example. There is another point in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman with which I cordially concur. He says that he is most anxious to avoid the language of pessimism. No doubt, he did not attempt to dwell at large upon the difficulties the Government have had all along to encounter, and which were, to a great extent, inherent in the nature of the case. But I agree entirely with the right hon. Gentleman, and so far as my consciousness will go, I will not say a word at this crisis to abate the spirit either of the country or the Army—that noble body which is doing its duty so well to us that we are all the more bound to do our duty to it in return. On this point I entirely sympathize with the right hon. Gentleman. I come now to consider the speech and the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, and his speech I will divide, as all the House will naturally divide it, into that part of it which is retrospective and that part which relates to the future. This is an accusation against the Government, and that accusation constitutes the retrospective part of his speech. I ask the House to note what is the scope and extent of this accusation? When I saw the Notice of the right hon. Gentleman I assumed in my own mind that, to some considerable extent, the debate would be on his part a revival of the debate of last May, and an appeal for the reversal of the decision at which the House then arrived. But I hardly anticipated with what literal accuracy that anticipation would be fulfilled. There is not an act which the right hon. Gentleman has alleged against Her Majesty's Government but what was in the full cognizance of the House when it debated this question last year, on which the House then pronounced its verdict—[" No ! "]—not an act charged by the right hon. Gentleman of which that which I now say is not strictly and literally true. Why, Sir, we have heard again of the defeat of General Hicks. Not once, but more than once, has the House disposed of that question. We have heard to-night of the telegram of, I think, the 18th of April, in which General Gordon complained that Zebehr had not been sent and that no troops were sent. I want now to carry back the House to the positions assumed in that debate of last May, for that was, after all, a great inquest carried on before the greatest tribunal of the nation. We joined issue then in a manner the most distinct. The right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) then quoted the telegram of General Gordon, in which he said it would be "an indelible disgrace" not to rescue a number of garrisons, the names of which he recited. The right hon. Baronet took advantage of the cheers which he was sure to draw forth by citing such a phrase. The right hon. Gentleman has done the same to-night. Yes; but that phrase which was applicable to the policy of the Government if they should not rescue certain garrisons the right hon. Baronet last year declined, and the right hon. Gentleman this day as the expression of a policy has declined to adopt or to make himself responsible for the recommendation of General Gordon, which if not adopted General Gordon said would be an indelible disgrace. Take the benefit of the phrase if you are prepared to adopt the policy; but unless you are prepared to adopt the policy you are not entitled to the benefit of the phrase. Well, the right hon. Gentleman says that General Gordon complained that no relief was coming to him; the right hon. Gentleman complains of it. But that was in the view of the House when we debated this matter and decided it in the month of May. Then he complains of the extension of General Gordon's commission. He says that General Gordon went out to report, and that other charges were put upon him; that he went out to be a servant of the Queen, and that he was made also a servant of the Khedive. Would it not have been more candid in the right hon. Gentleman if he had stated that those extensions of the commission of General Gordon were due to General Gordon's own suggestion — that they were his counsels to us, and that we gave way to them? We were not acting upon our own initiative, but accepting the recommendations of a man who was making for us the greatest sacrifices, and to whose authority we were bound to attach the utmost weight. [*Opposition cheers.*] I can understand the cheers of hon. Gentlemen opposite. That is the history of the extension of General Gordon's commission. Then came the recommendation to send Zebehr; but it was well known that if, when that recommendation was made, we had complied with it, an Address from this House to the Crown would, before 48 hours were over, have paralyzed our action; and although it is perfectly true that the decision arrived at was the judgment of the Cabinet, it was also no less the judgment of Parliament and of the people. Well, then, there was the demand of General Gordon that two squadrons should be sent to Berber. But it must be borne in mind that, in considering a demand of that kind, you cannot wholly keep out of view the previous declarations of the same authority, and that when General Gordon left this country, and when he arrived in Egypt, he declared it to be—and I have not the smallest doubt it was—a fixed portion of his policy that no British Force should be employed in aid of his mission. But, besides that, we had to consider what would be the effect of exposing a Force at a time when the hot season had fairly begun, in the months of April and May—[*Cries of* "March!"] —to the passage of the desert. I am speaking of the telegram of April, and not of March. Therefore, I am quite correct in the date which I assign; but if it had been March it would still have been the hot season before that Force could have made any great part of the way to Berber. It was extremely doubtful whether we could obtain that military support without which we should not have been justified in risking the lives of our soldiers; and what the position of such a Force would have been upon arriving at Berber I must say it was the duty of the Government carefully to consider. I do not know whether any hon. Gentlemen still think that the despatch of those squadrons to Berber would have produced the liberation of General Gordon at Khartoum. I fear that it is far more likely that they would themselves have fallen victims to an enterprize which was not warranted or supported by professional skill and experience, and that the enterprize would have borne the character of hopelessness from the first. But all these were matters which were fully and carefully considered in the debate of May 12, and it is my duty now to carry my defence further than the attack of the right hon. Gentleman has extended. The contention of the Party opposite in the debate of last May was, as I understand—and, after listening to the right hon. Gentleman to-night, I am confirmed in that interpretation—the contention was that then and at once it was our duty to send forward the Forces of Her Majesty for the purpose of relieving General Gordon at Khartoum. That was the ground upon which they stood in the debate of last May. Considerations of distance, considerations of climate, considerations of the terrible character of those weapons which Nature wields, ten times more formidable than the sword of any enemy—all these were to be cast aside, and the Forces of the Queen were to be sent either along a railway from Suakin which did not exist, and which, under any circumstances, it must have taken several months to erect, or along the River Nile at a time when the water was low and when the journey was absolutely impossible. That was the contention of hon. Gentlemen opposite in May, supported, I grant, by all those appeals to sentiment and feeling for which the character of General Gordon and his exposed position afforded them the most ample opportunities—opportunities of which they were not slow to avail themselves. What, on the other hand, was our position? We never for a moment denied that we were under obligations to General Gordon—I mean obligations not in the sense of feeling merely, but obligations which it might be necessary to carry forward into action. But I remember particularly that in the able speech of my noble Friend, and in the speech which I myself delivered, and which, I think, principally stated the case of the Government, we acknowledged in the frankest manner those obligations. But we stated that they were subject to two conditions. One of them was that to expose the Forces of the Queen to those tremendous risks, of which we have since had but too grievous proof, was an act which could not be done by a responsible Government except upon proved necessity — proved necessity for the relief of General Gordon; and, secondly, that we must be convinced by reasonable evidence that the attainment of that end was practicable. Now, Sir, we deny that the necessity was proved. The right hon. Gentleman has to-night again made us responsible for not having acted upon declarations made by General Gordon at certain dates, but which did not come into our hands for two months afterwards. I think it would have been more candid if the right hon. Gentleman, when he quoted that remarkable communication relating to the events of July 30, had stated that the time at which that communication was received was, I rather think, in the month of November. He quotes a communication in which we are made responsible for the inadequacy of the remuneration given to a messenger; and from his speech it would be supposed that the reproaches of General Gordon were addressed to the Government. They were nothing of the kind; and when General Gordon said—"We are out of humour with you, and find fault with the small fee of 20 dollars," the reproach was addressed to some person of small authority at Suakin. [An hon. MEMBER: Massowah.] Very well, Massowah. But loud cheers followed the announcement of the right hon. Gentleman that only 20 dollars had been given to this messenger. Do hon. Members really think that that is a worthy mode of constructing a solemn accusation against the Government? Our contention was that we must be convinced that a Military Expedition for the relief of General Gordon was necessary and practicable. We had no proof, as we believed, that General Gordon was in danger within the walls of Khartoum. We believed, and I think we had reason to believe from his own expressions, that it was in the power of General Gordon to remove himself—[*Ironical cheers and laughter from the Opposition*]—and those immediately associated with him from Khartoum by going to the South; and hon. Gentlemen who just now indulged in that interruption must have failed to catch the passage quoted by the right hon. Baronet, in which General Gordon said himself, speaking of it as a thing distinctly within his own power, that he would in certain contingencies withdraw to the Equator. We did not know from the unhappy interruption of the telegraph—we did not know and could not estimate the relations which General Gordon may have formed with others than those who were immediately associated with his own party. But my noble Friend, in the speech to which I have referred, distinctly recognized the obligations which I have described, and we entered into a covenant with the House of Commons that when there was reasonable evidence that General Gordon required the advance of an Expedition, and that the sending of an Expedition forward was practicable as a military measure, we should not lose time in the discharge of our duty. And the right hon. Gentleman, in the speech which he has made to-night, has not attempted to show that after that debate on the 12th and 13th of May we failed in the slightest degree, in one single hair's-breadth, in the absolute fulfilment of that covenant. It is very easy to say now—"Why did you not at an earlier period make preparations—[*Opposition cheers*]—for going up the Nile? ["No!"] What! here are two hon. Gentlemen cheering, and they are entirely at variance with one another. The answer is very simple. The answer is that the investigation of the proper route for sending a Military Force to Khartoum, at 1,600 miles of river distance from Cairo, with large tracts of desert to be traversed almost entirely destitute of water—the choice between the Nile route and the laying down of a railway from Suakin across another desert also—although it happens that the circumstances are more favourable this year than last—attended with the greatest difficulties as to water—the examination of that question was a problem of the utmost difficulty. If you suppose because at last it was decided to try the river route that therefore it ought to have been decided upon at once—["Hear, hear!"]—well, there may be hon. Gentlemen in this House who think themselves competent to decide any matter, and who are not daunted by any difficulties; but for us ordinary mortals difficulties did exist, and we were carefully engaged in obtaining information from the best authorities, naval and military and scientific, upon the question of the Nile route and the Suakin route, When the possibility of its being right to send an Expedition to relieve General Gordon had come in view, no doubt much time was spent in the examination of the question. ["Hear, hear!" *from the Opposition.*] Well, then, are hon. Gentlemen ready to say that too much time was spent upon it? In my opinion, those who so say are very indifferent judges of the question itself. They take upon their own hands the faculty of pronouncing on a matter which is decided now, but which at that time it was of the utmost difficulty to decide. I do not hesitate to say, Sir, that, as far as the balance of evidence went for a very considerable time—I think I may say for some months—the balance of evidence appeared to be in favour of the Suakin route, difficult as it was. It was not until after that period had elapsed that at length, and with deliberation, and therefore with time, judgment appeared evidently to preponderate in favour of the Nile route. In the meantime we had no reason to believe that Khartoum was in immediate danger. The accounts which reached us all tended in an opposite direction. It is quite true that at times the enemy came near the wall; but it is also true that, as far as we can understand, continuously the steamers of General Gordon had the command of the river, and the supply of provisions was thereby insured, whereas there was no appearance on the part of the assailants of their being able to overcome the obstacle offered by the fortifications. Under these circumstances we met Parliament upon the 5th of August, and at that time we said that, in our judgment, the necessity of the Expedition had not been established, but that, as Parliament was likely soon to separate, we deemed it necessary at once to place ourselves in a position to make the Expedition should it be required. That was on the 5th of August. The House voted a sum of money, and did so on the full understanding that it was our duty not to remain absolutely within the limit so marked, but to go beyond it, and make such preparations as might appear to be necessary. Well, Sir, what followed? Because this is the the real question which should be brought under the consideration of the House by those who accuse the Government from the point of view of hon. Gentlemen opposite. What followed was this—that, having taken that Vote on the 5th of August, on the 7th of August by telegram, and on the 8th of August in a full and detailed Paper, instructions sent by my noble Friend the Secretary for War on the part of the Government were despatched to Egypt. From that moment the military preparations have never been relaxed. The operations have been continuous. I believe you will not find it possible to say that from that date forward any delay that could be avoided has occurred. While our preparations were being made we did think the evidence reached a point which showed that a movement forward was necessary. That movement forward was directed, I think, about the 23rd of August, and, either on that date or immediately after, General Lord Wolseley undertook the command of the Expedition to Egypt. Therefore, Sir, our contention is that the matter was fully debated and decided in May last. ["Oh!"] It is a matter which, of course, it is open to hon. Gentlemen to reconsider; but, at the same time, it is but fair that we, instead of wearying the House by a revival of those intricate details, should point out that you discussed it and decided it, and, so far as we are aware, decided it rightly. We adhere to the contentions that we then made, and we have adhered to the covenant into which we then entered. Those who say we have not must enter upon a line of proof which the right hon. Gentleman, with his sound judgment and his large experience, the Leader of their Party and the leader of this attack, has thought it best entirely to avoid. Now, Sir, we quite understand, and I find no fault that this debate of May last has been revived, not on account of what the Government has since that either done or failed to do, but on account of the great calamity which has occurred. Even had there been some military delay, which there has not, it had no connection with the fall of Khartoum. If Khartoum had fallen through the exhaustion of the garrison, through the breaking down of the fortifications by assault, or through the failure of provisions, I can understand that some plausible case might have arisen, though even then we should have maintained that the contentions we laid before the House in May were sound, and were perfectly in themselves irrefragable. But Khartoum was betrayed. What connection has betrayal with the question of a Relief Expedition?

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Starvation.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman has made up his mind, no doubt, by careful investigation. I admit that betrayal might have been connected with the policy of the British Government had the policy been the abandonment of General Gordon. But the policy was this—not that he should be abandoned, but that he should be succoured by the military power of Her Majesty when it appeared that he was in danger, and that succour was required. But what really happened? The betrayal occurred at a time when it was perfectly well known that the Army of Lord

Wolseley was at any rate on the way to the relief of the citadel. It is perfectly well known that he was not abandoned at the time when the Soudanese troops—on whom that generous hero had fondly relied—opened the gates to the opposing hosts. Generally speaking, one would say that this is a probable hypothesis—that betrayal could not take place at the period when the British Forces were advancing, and were within what may be called a short distance of Khartoum. It was a short distance, because Lord Wolseley's Force had reached that point upon the river at which steamers commanded it, and from which consequently the force could rapidly have been brought up to the beleaguered town. But there is this hypothesis of starvation, which some hon. Gentlemen, always ready to catch at any straw which may possibly entail condemnation of the Government, are ready, upon the surmises of a newspaper correspondent, to elevate into a fact. [Several hon. MEMBERS: The Blue Book.] Those who thus confidently appeal to the Blue Book have not carefully examined it. [*Ironical cheers.*] Oh, I am going to prove it. You need not be afraid. Generally speaking, the accounts sent by General Gordon had made no reference to the scarcity of provisions; but, on the contrary, held out an expectation that the provisions were abundant. For example, in the telegram of the 24th of August, which reached us, I now see, on the 25th of November, he says—

> "We have provisions for five months, and hope to get in more."

But on the 14th of December came this telegram—

> "Our troops in Khartoum."

—I must first explain that this is a verbal statement, believed to be trustworthy, which was given by a messenger sent from General Gordon. General Gordon wrote on a slip of paper—

> "Khartoum all right."

But the messenger who brought this message said—

> "Our troops in Khartoum are suffering from lack of provisions. Food we still have is little, some grain and biscuit. We want you to come quickly."

He then proceeded to give directions which appeared, unhappily, not to be very reconcilable with coming quickly.

> "You should come by Metammeh or Berber. Make by these two roads. Do not leave Berber in your rear."

It was not very easy, but I do not dwell upon that; the message goes on—

> "In Khartoum there are no butter nor dates, and little meat. All food is very dear."

Now, that is the statement of the messenger. But the hon. Gentleman has failed to see that that scarcity was relieved. Subsequently to this we saw that the steamers of General Gordon had made successful foraging raids and brought provisions into the town. And we had from General Lord Wolseley this passage on the 11th of January. He gives an account saying that—

> "The messenger who left Korti on the 18th of December with letters for Gordon has just returned. He was one day in Khartoum, and left it on the 28th of December."

And what was his report?

> "Gordon was in perfect health, and the troops on the five steamers he saw were well and happy. The steamers seize cattle and grain, and take them up the river to Khartoum."

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: What is the date?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have given the dates. I will give them again to the noble Lord. The date of Lord Wolseley's was on the 11th of January. The date from Khartoum, which is probably the most important, is the 28th of December, 14 days after General Gordon had very prudently and properly intimated that there had begun to be scarcity of provisions. Well, then, the hypothesis of starvation, as far as testimony is concerned, falls utterly to the ground, because subsequent reports show that supplies had been received which were obtained by the excursions of the steamers. There was no repetition whatever anywhere of any intimation of want of provisions.

MR. RITCHIE: That messenger brought a copy of the 14th of December despatch of Gordon's with him, complaining of the shortness of provisions.

MR. GLADSTONE: Possibly, but along with that despatch—Gordon did not confine himself to sending one copy of a despatch; his object was to insure that his despatches should reach their destination; and so he sent them by different persons on different days as opportunity offered. It was plain that the despatch of December 28 overrides the account of December 14, and represents a state of things in which there was not the smallest reference to a scarcity of provisions. Has it never occurred to the right hon. Gentleman that there might have been a connection between the betrayal of Khartoum and the policy of the British Government—in this respect, that the betrayal of Khartoum might have been suggested by the approach of the British Army? The right hon. Gentleman has not taken that into his view.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I alluded to it.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think that the right hon. Gentleman alluded to it as a supposition altogether extravagant and out of the question. I am, therefore, within the mark when I say that the right hon. Gentleman has not taken it into view. That is the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman sitting in this House; but there are the opinions of others who have been near the scene of action which are of an entirely different effect. There is a message which was sent off by Lord Wolseley on Saturday, and which, let me say, is not expressing any opinion of his own, but expressing opinions carried to him by those lately in Khartoum, and it runs thus. It was sent off on Saturday, and I saw it in the middle of Sunday. I imagine it came into the hands of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington) early on Sunday—

> "In conversation to-day (Saturday) with two colonels of Gordon's troops lately from Khartoum, I expressed regret at being too late to save Gordon, and at not having started from England at least a month earlier. Both said that, under no circumstances, could we have been in time, for the men who betrayed him had long ago agreed with the Mahdi to betray him, and would always have done so, whenever you arrived. Khartoum was betrayed on January 26 because the traitors had heard of your victory, and of your being on the river near Shendy, and feared you would arrive and save Gordon. This hastened their proceedings. The same story has been told by several others lately,"

then comes an undecipherable word, and—

> "from Khartoum."

It, therefore, does appear that that which the right hon. Gentleman deems so absurd and imaginary is, nevertheless, the opinion—I might possibly call it the intelligence, but I will not so far presume at the present moment—brought by gentlemen who have lately held important commands under Gordon, and by several others lately from Khartoum. Therefore, Sir, as to the question of time, I am bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman made very slight efforts indeed to substantiate his accusation. He merely cast ridicule upon any other hypothesis, and he has made not, as I have said, the smallest attempt to connect the fall of Khartoum with anything done by the Government since they took the judgment of the House upon their policy, or the smallest attempt to show in any degree that they have fallen short of the pledges that they then gave. Now, Sir, I come to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, which, in some respects, is different from his speech. I have with sorrow to admit the expenditure of much treasure. I admit with great sorrow the expenditure of lives of the greatest value, such as those of Sir Herbert Stewart, General Earle, Colonel Eyre. [An hon. Member: Burnaby.] I might go further with the enumeration—indeed, one might say that it would never end, for, in point of fact, there is no man engaged in that campaign who has not well and truly done his duty by his country. There is some comfort—you may say it is a slight one—in the reflection that, bad as this treason was towards such a man as Gordon, there is no reason at present to believe that a great effusion of blood attended the occupation of Khartoum. There is another subject of great satisfaction—I do not say it controverts the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman—to observe that, while the old valour of the British soldier has been manifested on every occasion without the smallest exception or derogation, and while on each trial as it arrived fresh proof was given of his power to put down the enemy opposed to him, there has been added to that valour, on the part of the soldiers, the laudable characteristic of consummate skill on the part of their Commanders, and, with regard to the Departments of Supply, a state of organization which has shown an efficiency of action very different from that which has characterized some of our wars in recent years. But I admit, Sir, that qualifying or consoling considerations do not traverse the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that there have been no efficient results. He desires the House to commit itself to the declaration that these proceedings, which have entailed such loss of life and treasure, have produced no beneficial results. In my opinion, that is an exaggerated statement. There have been beneficial results—to the Soudan not largely, I admit. The purpose for which we are in the Soudan is the safety of Egypt, and it was for the purpose of defending Egypt that we first concerned ourselves with the affairs of the Soudan. My hon. Friend (Mr. John Morley) who moved the Amendment has, in the exercise of an entirely justifiable freedom, said he thought the Government had been wanting in courage, and even in honesty. I quite understand what he means—in not resisting the influences that were urging us on. I am very glad to be challenged in the face of day on that point. Want of courage there may have been, want of judgment there may also have been, for it is not for me to arrogate to myself or my Colleagues infallibility. I have often owned in this House that the difficulties of the case have passed entirely beyond the limits of such political and military difficulties as I have known in the course of an experience of half a century. Therefore, I do not ask the House to believe that what we have done is necessarily right, but as to honesty of purpose, painful as the course we have had to pursue has been to me, I felt that we had no alternative. We have been bound from the time that we first covenanted to keep the Khedive upon his Throne, and at no point have we had before us the choice or the possibility of return. It is well for my hon. Friend, arguing the matter on its merits, to say that it has been an unhappy policy. Well, Sir, I will go into that matter at large, but this is not the best moment to do so; I only wish to assure him that there has been no want of honesty, but possibly want of judgment has made me, at least, a party to these decisions, which, sad and deplorable as they may have been in themselves, were yet unavoidable under the circumstances and at the moment when we were called upon to take them. The right hon. Gentleman, I think, exaggerates when he says that there have been no beneficial results; he complains that we are always saying that our stay in Egypt is to be as short as possible. But he will have great difficulty in finding any passage in any speech by any Member of the Government in which it is not stated that the stay would be as short as was compatible with the objects for which we went there. It is the fulfilment of these objects which we have steadily kept in view, and for which we have proceeded step by step in the long course of these transactions. I will not dwell long upon the fact, important as far as it goes, that the Slave Trade has been materially checked and interrupted by the military proceedings in the Soudan, and that the theatre of war, which might have been largely extended, has been limited in its scope, and has been, at all events, kept off Egypt itself, for whose tranquillity we specially care. In Egypt something has been done for civilization and improvement. To begin with, she now has a representative Government. [*Loud laughter.*] Is it very patriotic, for I think that is the favourite phrase, for hon. Gentlemen opposite to treat the matter so lightly? I remember when a representative Government was set up at Constantinople a few years ago we heard a good deal about it, although it was quite new. I was going to say that I did not dwell very greatly on the beginnings of representative Government in Egypt. I quite admit that it must be tested by its working. But the effort made so far is a real and apparently a substantial effort. A beginning has been made of Courts of Justice. That is of a very important character. I do not say that they are perfect, but I believe that they are honest and upright. Moreover, I believe this is the first occasion on which real Courts of Justiciary have been introduced into Egypt. There were two horrible abuses which disfigured the government of that country, and inflicted an infinity of suffering on the people. One of them was the kourbash. A law has been passed against the use of the kourbash, and the evidence is, I believe, satisfactory and convincing that that law is obeyed. So far as we can learn that gross and monstrous abuse has been brought virtually to its conclusion, and how much is involved in those words will be apprehended by those who recollect that there is too much reason to believe that within the last half-century, not in the view of the Government, yet through the instrumentality of subordinate officers of the Government, corporal punishment and torture similar to that have not been entirely unknown in the Indian Dominions of the Crown. Well, Sir, the other of those monstrous abuses was the *corvée*—that is to say, the abstraction of the people from their land for the purpose of compulsory and unremunerated labour. A beginning, and I believe a good beginning, has been made towards the abolition of that outrageous system — a system under which such was the inequality that prevailed that whereas upon the estates of wealthy men, such as Pashas, it amounted in money to one piastre and a-half, on the little crops of the Fellaheen the burden of it amounted to 24 piastres per acre. The laws that have been introduced, I believe, permit the application of the commutation of that labour into money, which will apply fairly to the different descriptions of land in the country. Then, Sir, I cannot go by the case of Colonel Moncrieff. Operations of immense value to Egypt have been set on foot under his able inspection for the purpose of improving and extending that system of irrigation upon which the wealth of the country principally depends. These are very great results, and results which have been attained in an extremely short space of time, in the midst of military and political difficulties, and in the face of an apparently approaching financial confusion and bankruptcy. With regard to that financial confusion and bankruptcy, I have to tell the right hon. Gentleman tonight that the agreement by which it is to be averted has not, I believe, been signed, yet I believe I may correctly say that it has been concluded. The difficulties which have faced us and caused so much labour last summer have, I believe, been overcome; and let me say that whereas one of the greatest embarrassments by which we were confronted in the arrangements which we found subsisting for the Dual Control on the part of this country and of France — one of the greatest dangers raised by that arrangement — was the danger of rupture with France and the interruption of our friendly relations with that country, we are now in a position of cordial friendship with France which has enabled the French Government, in conjunction with us, to conduct the difficult question to its present state of maturity—maturity which I can describe as substantial, and as to which I believe a very few days will see the question formally concluded. These are highly beneficial results, and entirely traverse the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. But the right hon. Gentleman is not satisfied with denying that any beneficial results have been brought about by our action in Egypt; he likewise desires us by his Motion, and not only us—for that would be a comparatively slight matter—but he requires Parliament to recognize its obligations —that is, to enter into a covenant to establish a good and stable Government in Egypt and those portions of the Soudan which are necessary for the security of Egypt. With regard to Egypt, I have shown him that the labours of the British Power have not been slight and have not been abortive. But has the right hon. Gentleman considered what this means? A pledge on the part of Parliament to establish a good and stable Government in those portions of the Soudan. What, Sir, does that mean? The right hon. Gentleman has not defined it; he is open to the reproach which he makes against us; for the indefiniteness of the purpose he has in view, he must expect to be told that he cannot be cordially supported, and that no one can understand what his policy really is. He has not given us an interpretation of his own words. He probably thinks it would be imprudent to do so. He cannot at once obtain the benefit of being vague and of being explicit. I take his statement as it stands, and I cannot trace in the words he uses—namely, "the portions of the Soudan necessary for the security of Egypt"—any narrower interpretation than this, that he means you to engage by your power, whether with the people or against the people, to establish a good and stable Government in Khartoum, and all that lies to the East of Khartoum. That is what I understand to be his meaning. Sir, would that be a resolution compatible with common prudence to be taken by this House? What is the meaning of it? It means the establishment of a British Government over aliens, it means the establishment of Christian Government over Mahommedans, it means committing your gallant Army to a struggle from year to year in a tropical climate with people who are courageous by birth and courageous by fanaticism. It means a despotic Government to be established and upheld by British hands against those who hate it. Well, Sir, we can give no such pledge, and I trust that the House will give no such pledge. In the teeth of common prudence, in the teeth of every reasonable calculation that it is possible to make, in the teeth of all the forces of Nature arrayed against you, I will say the right hon. Gentleman might as well, when he speaks of thus placing a permanent yoke on the neck of these people to be maintained by British authority and power—he might as well speak of chaining the sands of the desert when the tempest is howling over it. The right hon. Gentleman has brought no charge against us except those which have already been disposed of, and I have endeavoured to show very briefly that his prospective recommendations are unwise and unsafe. I must say a few words on the Amendment of my hon. Friend. My hon. Friend is, in the first place, perfectly right, I think, in declining to give any opinion on the measures which have been from time to time taken by Her Majesty's Government. With the view I have of the difficulties of the decision we have arrived at, I am weak enough to believe that Gentlemen sitting in this House have means of judging even inferior to ours, and it appears to me, therefore, that the House is perfectly right in declining to be committed by a positive judgment to the several steps we have taken to the best of our ability. But my hon. Friend traverses our resolution to employ the Forces of Her Majesty's Government to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. I have great respect for the motives of my hon. Friend, but I have already stated that considerations connected with the Soudan itself appear to us to prevent the adoption of any other resolution in the present juncture than that at which we have arrived. I will mention one consideration which it might be our duty to take into view in connection with the Soudan. I decline entirely to enter into any positive compact on the subject. This is a very different question from the acknowledgment of our obligations to General Gordon. They were determinate obligations. Here our obligation is simply to do that which reason and prudence will justify when we have the facts of the case before us. I take the case of the Government at Khartoum. We must recollect that the case of Khartoum is a peculiar one. When General Gordon went to the Soudan he had the plan in his mind of establishing local Sultans throughout the Soudan, but he said that the case of Khartoum was exceptional. Khartoum was a new foundation; there is no local Sultan; there are no traditions; it is a town of very great importance; it is a point through or from which there might come forces, moral or physical, which might have a very important influence upon Egypt. But what we say is, that we are not prepared at the present moment to say that there is no obligation upon us to use, according to circumstances, reasonable efforts, if we go there, to leave behind us an orderly Government. Khartoum is not a place occupied by wild and admittedly savage tribes. It is to some extent a commercial town, with the regular habits of settled life, and we could not say now at a stroke, without going further, that we will abandon at once and for ever the idea of doing anything for the establishment of a Government at Khartoum. There always remains the safety of Egypt; but there is what relates to things lying beyond Egypt which precludes us from coming to a decision of that nature. I will not follow my hon. Friend in what he has said as to accommodation with the Mahdi. Any accommodation of a reasonable character with anyone is an object much to be desired; but I am sorry to say, as matters now go, the expression of a keen anxiety on the subject would, I am afraid, tend very much to defeat its own end. My hon. Friend stated that the present question is a question of military policy.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Of military instruction. Declaration of policy.

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not mean to raise a controversy with my hon. Friend. His object is, I will not say the withdrawal—the instant withdrawal—of the British Force from the Soudan, or the neighbourhood of the Soudan. I do not think he committed himself quite so far as that; but I imagine that I do not overstate the purpose of his Amendment, when I say it is that he is opposed to all further military operations, unless it be the operation of retirement. Well, has he considered the position of military matters at present? The Army, he will readily believe, generally, is prevented by physical obstacles from descending the Nile in the hot season now approaching. With a low river, which has already begun, it is impossible to descend the Nile. As I stated to the House on Thursday, two plans of military action were pointed out to us by the General—one of them proceeding on the supposition that we were to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, and the other proceeding on the supposition that we were not to overthrow his power. My hon. Friend adopts the latter of these suppositions; but what I wish to place before my hon. Friend is this—that in the one case as much as in the other further military operations are necessary. The representation of the necessity of an Expedition to Suakin, and of making from Suakin provision that the route to Berber shall be rendered safe against Osman Digna and his forces—that demand, that necessity does not depend upon our adoption of the policy of destroying the Mahdi's power at Khartoum, but is inherent in the nature of the case as it stands. Therefore, I should not be acting above-board with my hon. Friend if I did not point out to him that, in order to secure the proper and safe retirement of the British Army, if it were to retire, and if we adopted that policy, it would still be necessary that an Expedition from Suakin should be made on military considerations. Under these circumstances, I think the House will understand that it is quite impossible for us to accede to the Motion of my hon. Friend, however much we honour the motive by which it is prompted, and however much we may wish that that prudent policy in foreign matters which he recommends should prevail in the councils of this country when there is yet time to avoid laying the foundation of those enormous difficulties which, when once that foundation is laid, cannot be escaped. I hope, Sir, that the House will deal decisively with this Motion. I almost think I shall carry with me the sympathy of the right hon. Gentleman opposite in uttering that sentiment. This is a serious crisis in the face of the world. It cannot be advantageous for any of us that we should present to the world at this moment nothing but a disparaged Government and a doubtful House of Commons. If the House, on reconsidering the issue of last May, or on any other ground, is prepared to condemn what we have done, by all means let it condemn it. But, even then, I would say let the House, if it is prudent, eschew those entangling engagements which the right hon. Gentleman has embodied in his Motion, and which, if it adopts them, will be the seed and the beginning of a series of new difficulties still worse than any with which we have yet had to contend. If the House believes that we have gone grossly wrong, that we have palpably failed in our duty, by all means let it condemn us, and we shall cheerfully accept its decision. But if it believes that we have, upon the whole, not only with fair intention, but without palpable error of judgment on main considerations—if it believes that we have performed our obligations as Ministers of the Crown, then let it not withhold from us some distinct expression of its confidence, which will fortify, I will not say our hands—that is a small matter—but the hands of the country in the face of the world. If we receive that Vote of Confidence, we shall persevere in applying as we best can what are known to be our principles to a state of facts more difficult and entangled than any which has recently marked the history of this country. We shall endeavour, Sir, to maintain the honour of the British name, to fulfil every engagement into which we have entered directly or constructively, and to discharge every duty, onerous though it may be, which is inseparable at a crisis of this kind from the possession of a great and a world-wide Empire.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: Sir, I confess that I rise under considerable difficulties to address the House after the eloquent oration of the Prime Minister to which we have just listened; but the more I consider that oration the more the conclusion is forced upon me that, however great may be the rhetorical force displayed, it has failed utterly and entirely in its object of vindicating the policy of Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Gentleman told us, in words which I think came somewhat late, how he appreciated the services of that great man who is now no more. He paid a tardy tribute to General Gordon; and that tribute, tardy as it was, removed from my mind certainly, and perhaps from the minds of others, somewhat of that amazement and regret which must have been felt by all those who listened the other day to the speech of the Prime Minister, when he passed over the subject without a recognition even of the services of that fallen hero. I could not help thinking that he himself bore mute testimony to the rightness of this Vote of Censure. The right hon. Gentleman did not pay a tribute to General Gordon, because he felt the responsibility which would attach to him as the Head of the Government for his loss. That mute testimony was, perhaps, stronger than the words he used to-day. But I must say that, in listening to the defence which the Prime Minister made, one would scarcely have imagined the gravity of the accusation which he had to meet. This Vote of Censure, if it means anything, is not merely a condemnation from the mouth of the recognized Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition, but it is a condemnation spoken by him as the mouthpiece of the people of England. It has seldom fallen to the lot of Parliament, therefore, to discuss questions of greater gravity, or a subject more worthy of consideration, than the Vote which is now before the House. The Prime Minister defended himself by saying that the arguments of the Leader of the Opposition were mainly retrospective, and that, as regards his prospective argument, he was not prepared already to enunciate any policy which should take the place of the want of policy hitherto displayed by Her Majesty's Ministers. With regard to the retrospect contained in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, all I can say is that I think he was, if anything, too kind in his criticism, and that it is in the retrospect of the Government policy that the whole gist of this accusation lies. Their policy has been one continuous chain of failures—no link is wanting—one continuous chain of acts of vacillation, the result of their policy of shifting the responsibility which, by right, rested on their shoulders, on to the shoulders of others. How did the Prime Minister meet this? Why, Sir he assured the House that, after all, there was little to complain of with regard to the policy which Her Majesty's Government had adopted respecting General Gordon. And how did he attempt to prove this? Why, he read that famous despatch of many months ago, in which General Gordon alluded to the "indelible disgrace" which would fall upon Her Majesty's Government. The Prime Minister, in alluding to that despatch, said the debate was a repetition of the debate of May last. It is, but with this difference — that the "indelible disgrace," only foreshadowed in the despatch of General Gordon, is now an accomplished fact—the "indelible disgrace" which Gordon foretold, and which Her Majesty's Government in its short-sightedness failed to see, is now a fact recognized by the whole world, except, perhaps, the Prime Minister, and those who occupy the Treasury Bench. The Prime Minister then went on to say that the purpose for which we went to the Soudan was the safety of Egypt. I should have thought if there was one phrase which the Prime Minister would have avoided it was that; because, if the object of the Government in going to the Soudan was the safety of Egypt, how is that compatible with the statement, repeated over and over again, that so soon as the force of the Mahdi can be crushed Her Majesty's Government intend to retire? If the safety of Egypt is the policy of Her Majesty's Government, that safety can only be insured so long as England's force is paramount in Egypt. It appears to me illogical and absurd in the extreme that the Prime Minister should meet the arguments of this side of the House by endeavouring to conciliate his Friends on the other side, and explain his policy by saying we are occupying the Soudan in order to preserve the safety of Egypt, while he also declares that as soon as the force of the Mahdi is crushed they intend to retire. Then, again, the Prime Minister congratulated the House upon the wonderful achievements which had been performed by Her Majesty's Government, and on the way in which the punishment of flogging by the kourbash had been abolished; also on the fact that the *corvée* did not exist as formerly; and that, to some extent, they had introduced a system of irrigation. Does the Prime Minister mean to say that the policy which he has adopted in

Egypt, and which he is still pursuing unchanged, the Forces we are sending out, and the blood we are shedding, had for its object the result of doing away with certain inhuman flogging in the prisons, of abolishing a bad system of enforced labour, and of introducing a better system of irrigation of the land? Why, in the first place, the necessity for these reforms had almost ceased to exist years since. I have had some experience of Egypt, and I know perfectly well that the cases of the application of the kourbash were extremely rare in 1875-6; that the *corvée* was equally rare; and that, as regards irrigation, it has existed throughout Egypt since the days of the Pharoahs. I do not propose to go into those old questions of policy, which, as the Prime Minister said, have been so often presented to the House, during the various debates, in successive Sessions; but I do think, at a moment like this, when the whole country, almost without exception, condemns the invertebrate policy of Her Majesty's Ministers, it is for those who agree with that majority to place, as clearly as they can, before this House and before the country, that chain of events which, as they become history, are forgotten, but which, nevertheless, explain the reasons of the disasters which have now fallen upon us. At the time of the bombardment of Alexandria, I ventured to say in this House that the first shot fired gave us not only the right, but imposed upon us the necessity and the duty, of establishing a fixed and definite form of government in Egypt. I say that the shunting of responsibilities by the Government began with that event. When Lord Alcester fired that shot, he fired it not in the capacity of an Admiral under the circumstances of naval warfare which led the great Nelson to disregard the signals by placing his glass to his blind eye, but he did so because the political responsibility, which of right belonged to Her Majesty's Government, had, in the first instance, been shunted by them upon his shoulders. Upon him rested the responsibility which, of right, did not belong to him; but in the exercise of that responsibility, wrongly placed upon him, he fired the first shot at Alexandria, which was, as I said before, the beginning of our obligations towards Egypt, and of the Government policy of shift and drift. The first shot having been fired by our political Admiral, this was followed by the landing of Forces in Egypt, under the command of our political General. Upon him, again, was shunted the responsibility, which, of right, belonged to Her Majesty's Government; and thus we have two links of the chain, which can be unfolded to interminable length, as the record of the persistent vacillation of incompetent Ministers. After that, as we know, came the battles of Tel-el-Kebir and Kassassin—victories, no doubt, not secured by Her Majesty's Government, but by the bravery of our soldiers. They were followed up by the occupation of Cairo by English troops. Then there was a pause, and during that pause many disasters took place. The result was that which always follows the shunting of responsibility—namely, disaster; because this timidity in carrying out our obligations had impressed upon the people, whose government we had taken over, that we were conscious of our own weakness. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War, anxious to conciliate hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, immediately followed up the military successes of Tel-el-Kebir and Kassassin by the declarations at the Mansion House, and in this House, that the time had now arrived when, in a very few months, the last English soldier would leave Egyptian soil. What was the result of that declaration? Why—these are matters of history—the results were the massacre of the Army of Hicks Pasha, the destruction of Moncrieff's and Baker's troops in the neighbourhood of Suakin, and the massacres of Sinkat, Tokar, and other garrisons. Then the Government were awakened to the necessity of taking action, and employed their Force at Suakin against Osman Digna, with the result that English blood and English discipline naturally overcame the mere brute courage of Arab hordes. But did the Government follow up that result? Did they follow the advice of competent military authorities, and open up the route from Suakin to Berber? They did nothing of the sort; they again shunted their responsibility. For the same reason that the railway was not made from Sibi to Quetta, that route from Suakin to Berber was not opened up. It was not done because the Government were afraid of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway; they were afraid of the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) and the junior Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) — those philosophical statesmen who consider that they can govern every country by giving it independence. The railway from Suakin to Berber was not made; but the Government required still further to shunt their responsibilities, and they found a willing and able man on whose shoulders to put them. General Gordon was sent, like the scapegoat of Holy Writ, into the Desert, to try to catch up the failing policy of Her Majesty's Government; and if not able to do so, to be sacrificed for its sins. No sooner had he been sent to the Desert than Her Majesty's Government felt themselves free, once again, from those obligations which were imposed upon them, and turned their attention to other lines of policy to divert the minds of the English public from the blunders they were committing in foreign policy. The Egyptian Question gave way to Reform demonstrations in England. Bucolics were the order of the day. Whitechapel hop-pickers paraded the streets, and paid a tribute to blushing Liberal statesmen, who bowed their acknowledgments from the balcony of the Reform Club. Her Majesty's Ministers seated themselves on a powder magazine, and smoked the calumet of peace, without thinking of the consequences. While they were occupying the country with this cry of Reform, Gordon was perishing, day by day and hour by hour, within the walls of Khartoum. The Prime Minister thinks little of that, and he tries to prove that General Gordon was not in a position of danger. I recollect that, when in this House, the Minister for War told us that if General Gordon attempted to establish a good Government in the Soudan he would be exceeding the instructions given to him, I pointed out that General Gordon had been ordered to do his utmost to establish a good form of government in the Soudan. All this seems to be forgotten. General Gordon went forth with the command of Her Majesty's Ministers to do his utmost to save the garrisons; and he had, on his arrival, to write despatch after despatch, pointing out the "indelible disgrace" of the inaction of the Government. The Prime Minister contents himself with saying that we have introduced reforms into Egypt; have done away with the kourbash and *corvée*, and have improved the system of irrigation; and he thinks that is an answer to this Vote of Censure. He tells us that we—the Opposition—are unwilling to accept the responsibility of the position; but we say that the terms of this Vote of Censure are the measure of the responsibility we are willing to undertake. That is a position which is, I think, a just and fair one for the Opposition to take up. The Premier thinks otherwise. When it comes to the question of responsibility, he makes a sort of appeal *ad misericordiam.* He says, at this moment of danger, are we to present to Europe and England the spectacle of divided counsels; or, in other words, would we show to the nations the weakness of the Government? The acme, I say, of bad government and of the endurance of this country has now been reached. I confess, when I look through the long, sad history of Government failures, I begin to despair of possible improvement on their part; but when I hear, from the lips of the Prime Minister, that all we have to do now is to smash the Mahdi, and then to retire, I begin to think that the difficulties of the situation must have affected the intellectual eyesight of every Member of the Cabinet. But one crumb of consolation is afforded by the Prime Minister. He tells us, in a spirit of exultation, that an Agreement is about to be concluded by which the financial control of Egypt shall be handed over to the Great Powers. I ask the House to consider this. Are we so blind, so little accustomed to the ways of the world, as to believe that the control of the finances of Egypt does not mean the control of the administration of Egypt? The Premier and every Member of the Cabinet have inveighed, in no measured terms, against the Dual Control—a Control which they themselves allowed to continue, and which was terminated not by them, but by the French Government. And now the Prime Minister comes down and congratulates the House upon a Control far more dangerous than the old one—a Multiple Control. Such a Control by the Great Powers means giving them the power over that in which we have the greatest interest. England has far greater interests in Egypt than any one of the other Great

Powers. England can have but one voice under this new arrangement. If ever, at any time, it was important for us to obtain the control of the administration of Egypt, there is no period of our history when it was so important as it is now. I know it is difficult to treat this subject without introducing into it other circumstances not directly connected with it; but I must make one observation—that the position of this country, and the advances of Russia on the Afghan Frontier, render it more important than ever that England should have the ruling vote in Egypt. A man, who was certainly the greatest Ruler and the greatest General, perhaps, the world has ever produced—Napoleon I.—speaking of the importance of Egypt in the 5th volume of his Memoirs, in a despatch addressed to the French Directory, dated October, 7, 1798, said—

> "The possession of Egypt is decisive for India. That European Power which is the mistress of Egypt is, in the long run, the mistress of India."

There is no man who does not know that England's adversity would be Russia's opportunity; and, if that is the case, we must consider whether this is the moment, after spending millions of money, and sacrificing thousands of lives, to support the Party which says that all we have to do is to chasten the Mahdi for his bad deeds, and then to scuttle out of the country as quickly as we can. I will not believe that the common sense of the country will tolerate such a policy as that. We may admit that a mechanical and servile majority is prepared to vote at the bidding of a tyrannical Prime Minister, and to sacrifice its political conscience. But I deny that the decision of this majority would represent the feeling of the country. As to the proposals to negotiate with the Mahdi, the moment we do that we give him the right to that title which we dispute. The moment we enter into negotiations with the False Prophet, the news will go through the Desert, to Cairo, and to India, that the Agents of the Queen negotiated with one whom they could not overcome owing to his Divine origin. What would be the effect of such a policy in India? It would be said that we went with "bated breath and whispering humbleness" to the Mahdi, and asked him to make a Treaty. Then France, seeing our failure, would be obliged to assert her power. She would advance to Syria, if necessary, to assert the supremacy of her Forces over her Mahommedan subjects. This is no imaginary picture. The policy advocated by the junior Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) and his Friends is simply one of peace with dishonour, and would inflict a lasting danger on our rule over our Mahommedan subjects in India. All this is of essential importance to the subject we are discussing. The moment we scuttle out of Egypt, other Powers will take advantage of our weakness, and the high road to India will be endangered. We recollect how the Prime Minister wrote in *The Nineteenth Century* for August, 1877—

> "Suppose the Canal is stopped; what then? . . . . It seems to be forgotten by many that there is a route to India round the Cape of Good Hope. . . . . Supposing that, in time of war, we were compelled to resort to this route . . . . the result would be a loss of three weeks to Bombay, and less to Calcutta, as compared with the present route by Brindisi. But as the Continent cannot be counted on for war time, we must make the comparison with the voyage from Southampton, which lengthens the present passage by some days, and thus reduces the loss below three weeks. . . . . This will hardly make the difference to us between life and death in the maintenance of our Indian Empire."

He speaks of a delay of three weeks, and minimizes the importance of such a delay. Has not the House and the country had a sufficient example, in the case of Gordon, of the terrible effects of delay? His life has been sacrificed to it; and if we were to adopt the Prime Minister's view, the existence of India would be sacrificed to it. However hon. Gentlemen opposite may be carried away with partizan spirit, they must recognize the danger of allowing India to be threatened, for surely, in their hearts, they must be Englishmen first and partizans afterwards. Let it not be forgotten that Egypt is of greater value to us than to any other country in the world. We have already accepted the responsibility of the position. The Prime Minister says the safety of Egypt is our guiding principle. The safety of Egypt means that Khartoum should not be imperilled. England must maintain its supremacy in Egypt. That is the policy of the Conservative Party, and I believe it is the policy of the people of England. It will be cowardly, as well as reckless and extravagant, to waste further blood and treasure without a definite object. The Government ought to feel bound to declare their policy clearly. In conclusion, I would remark that there are men in this country who seem to think that the England of to-day is the same as she was at the time of the great battle of Waterloo. But other Powers have grown up since then. The Germany of that day was a chaotic mass of small States; France had been weakened by revolution and by a disastrous war; Russia was but a small, weak Power as compared with the Russia of to-day; and England had the undisputed command of the seas. This is all changed. New Powers have consolidated their strength and their Empires; while England, under 50 years of Liberal Administration, may have economized, but has not strengthened her resources. To that class of politicians who still believe England to be what she was, I commend a more accurate study of the strength and condition of the Powers to which I have alluded. They are cosmopolitan philosophers rather than patriotic statesmen. There may be some who admire the stoical equanimity with which these hon. Gentlemen look upon events, such as the death of General Gordon, as beyond human control; but while we marvel at the calmness of their resignation, we must regret the absence of patriotic spirit which characterizes it. Those politicians are economists before everything else. They look upon England as a large producing establishment, the resources of which must be utilized to the utmost for the purpose of providing for the material requirements of the people, forgetting that the prosperity of a country, like that of an individual, begets the jealousy of neighbours; and that to maintain that prosperity, and to keep open those vast channels of enterprize, those sources of wealth, like our Indian Dominions and our Colonial Possessions, England must be strong, bold, and, while avoiding useless acts of annexation or spoliation, must be able to assert, if necessary, by force of arms that position among the nations of the world by which alone she can endure and exist co-ordinately with them. It must not have divided counsels. We must not seek to be aggressive, but to maintain ourselves with honour and dignity. I say that our present Government is an incompetent Government, which is acting to the detriment of the interests of the country, and that it is the duty of every Member who places patriotism first and Party afterwards to support this Vote of Censure.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that he was one of the small band who had consistently opposed the Government policy in Egypt from the bombardment of Alexandria down to the present time. Holding, therefore, the views he did, he had heard the other day with astonishment and alarm the declaration of the Prime Minister that it was the intention of the Government to overthrow and "smash the Mahdi;" but he was glad to say that the speech of the Prime Minister that evening had to a large extent whittled away the most dangerous portion of his previous utterances. The Prime Minister, in answering the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, was powerful and convincing; but it appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman did not really reply at all to the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). This, he hoped, arose, not from a want of power, but from a want of will on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to answer it. The right hon. Gentleman said that it was very desirable that the Government should not commit themselves to any decision at the present moment. What he did say was in the nature of an excuse, which he (Sir George Campbell) admitted might be a justifiable and a valid one as far as it went. The right hon. Gentleman told them in effect that if they were going to retreat, it was necessary to send these regiments to Suakin for the purpose of keeping the road clear for the troops to return. He (Sir George Campbell) hoped that that was the only policy contemplated, for it was the only one which, he believed, was consistent with a prudent regard for the interests of this country. They must all feel that the reconquering of that great Empire in the heart of Africa was an enormous undertaking; and, looking to their position with France, Germany, and Russia, he thought they would do well to be wise in time. He, therefore, trusted that the Government were about to reconsider their policy, and to follow a more prudent course in the future. If the Soudanese were to have a Government of some kind, why not let them have the Government which, as far as he knew, they had chosen for themselves—namely, the Government of the Mahdi? What we called treachery at Khartoum the Soudanese might, perhaps, term a popular revolution. Why should we condemn their Leader unheard? Why should we not come to terms with him? We had no reason to assume that he was not a highly-respectable Mahommedan gentleman. He agreed with the whole of the speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle, except that part of it in which his hon. Friend seemed to assume that the rule of the Mahdi must necessarily be a hard and a cruel rule. The Mahdi was a religious man, and his rule might be a good one. A year ago Her Majesty's Government came to the decision that the Soudan ought to be abandoned, and it would be very inconsistent for them now to determine to reconquer that country under circumstances of enormously-increased difficulty. The policy of our going to Khartoum to overthrow the power of the Mahdi was utterly unjustifiable. It must involve us in a great war which would cost us thousands of lives and tens of millions of money; and in face of the dangers threatening us in various parts of the world it would be a monstrous infatuation to send away from this country every efficient regiment we possessed, and to leave ourselves without any adequate means of defence at home. He trusted Her Majesty's Government were not influenced by religious fanaticism, for it would be monstrous for the Government of the Queen, who had so many millions of Mahommedan subjects, to embark on a crusade against this Mahommedan Leader. In his opinion, there was no danger of the Mahommedans in India being opposed to us in consequence of our pursuing a fair policy towards their co-religionists in Africa. He should be astonished if we were let into this great war and expedition by the man whom, of all others, he regarded as the apostle of peace. Was it for this that he and other Scotch Members had sworn by all their gods to support the principles of Mid Lothian in 1880? For his own part he venerated the Prime Minister, and for that reason hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not be carried away by a kind of Maelstrom of Jingoism. Let the right hon. Gentleman read the articles he wrote in 1877, and let him not abandon those with whom he then sat.

Colonel DAWNAY said, he gathered from the speech of the Prime Minister that he was under the impression that his policy in the Soudan had been attended by considerable success, and that the fall of Khartoum and the murder of Gordon were merely unfortunate incidents for which the Government were in no way responsible. But he did not believe that the people of England endorsed the impressions of the Prime Minister; and he felt that the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) only inadequately conveyed the deep indignation felt throughout the country against the present Government. He believed that if the right hon. Gentleman had framed his Resolution in accordance with the convictions of 99 Englishmen out of every 100, it would mean something to the effect that all the bloodshed in the Soudan, culminating in the fall of Khartoum and the murder of General Gordon, was solely due to the timid purposes and vacillating policy of Her Majesty's Government. The course pursued by the Government had rendered almost impossible the attainment of the end which they had in view—that of the establishment of a good and stable Government in the country. It had brought Egypt to a state of anarchy and bankruptcy, and landed this country in a series of the gravest complications with more than one Power in Europe, besides involving the most terrible sacrifice of life and the death of gallant officers and soldiers who died for their country, but died in vain. Could anything be more heart-stirring than the news we heard last Friday of the death of the youngest and one of the most distinguished Generals in the British Army, dying in full retreat before that same enemy whom he had defeated so brilliantly and so decisively only three weeks before? And why was he in full retreat? Because the fall of Khartoum had set free the Forces of the Mahdi, and enabled him to act on the offensive. And why had Khartoum fallen? Because the Prime Minister, deaf to every warning and every entreaty, had deliberately abandoned to his fate the hero who for 11 months, alone and unaided, had upheld the cause of civilization and the honour of England against Arab fanaticism. The Prime Minister had told them that for six months he was weighing the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the alternative routes. On March 31 last, Gordon wrote that 500 determined men could put down the revolt. Notwithstanding that, on Thursday last the Prime Minister told them that almost all the time Gordon could have secured his own personal safety. That was an argument worthy of the Prime Minister who abandoned Sinkat almost within reach of an English Force, but it was an outrage on the honour and humanity of General Gordon. Two squadrons of Cavalry, as had been suggested by Sir Herbert Stewart, if sent to Berber at the proper time, could have enabled General Gordon to effect his retreat from Khartoum. The refusal of the Prime Minister to send those 500 men was now involving a summer campaign in the Soudan—an undertaking the terrible character of which could be well appreciated by Indian officers. What were they now going to do with the Expedition which was being sent to Suakin? If it was necessary for the safety of Lord Wolseley's Army to open up the way between Berber and Suakin, the work must be done regardless of any sacrifice. But if the troops were to lie there throughout an African tropical summer, wholesale murder could only be the result, and the undertaking would only add another to the long list of massacres. It was easy to talk glibly about smashing the Mahdi; but he, for one, thought our duty was to take care that the Mahdi did not smash us, for the question was one, not of victory, but of retreat, and how far General Buller could extricate his force from its critical position. Then, again, suppose the Mahdi retreated to Kordofan, were we to follow him in the tracks of General Hicks's Army? And what if the forces —not of the Mahdi, but of Nature in Equatorial Africa—proved too strong for us—where would their *prestige* be then? It would be gone the way of their Army —swallowed up in the Desert sands. He did not advocate a policy of revenge and retreat; but only that a decided course should be adopted and carried out with adequate means. If it were true, as he had been told by good authorities, that it would require 40,000 men to recapture Khartoum, where were the men to be found in the present state of the Army? It was said that the voice of faction ought now to be hushed, and that both Parties should join to defeat the dangers threatening the country; but while he agreed that that was necessary, in his view one duty at least was clear, and that one preliminary step was to dismiss the Government, which was responsible for all the incalculable evils and disasters which had befallen us in the Soudan. They were now embarked in an enterprize which must tax the resources of the country, in which they could reap no honour or glory, and in which failure might bring ruinous consequences. He believed that so long as the present Government remained in Office they could not expect God's blessing to rest upon the undertakings of this country. The sands of the existence of the present Parliament were running out. Its record was an unbroken one of evil, a record of triumphant sedition at home and needless and useless bloodshed abroad. It had one last opportunity of atoning for its past shortcomings, and, by dismissing the Government, the author of all their misfortunes, of proving that even at the eleventh hour it represented the just and deep indignation of the English people.

MR. SUTHERLAND said, that, having been for many years closely associated with Egypt in matters of business, he naturally took a very great interest in all that concerned the fortunes of that country. The circumstances under which this discussion were held were of very grave and anxious moment to that House and the country. They had lost a brave and eminent man, perhaps one of the most distinguished servants this country had ever had. They had sacrificed many valuable lives and vast expenditure in an endeavour to secure the safety of General Gordon. They had been brought face to face with an Army that was most powerful, and had to equip an armament greater than any since the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny; and now they were brought face to face with a Motion which was intended to call on Her Majesty's Government to vindicate themselves in this matter. It was only natural, indeed it was almost inevitable, that under the present conditions the public mind was in the first instance disposed to attach great blame to the Government for all that had happened and was happening in Egypt. He said it was natural, because that was by far the easiest way for the public mind to deal with a matter of that kind. It thus rid itself of all necessity for investigation and consideration; and it was inevitable that an Opposition should take that opportunity for making an attack on the Government of the country. When, however, he came to examine the indictment which had been framed by the Opposition, he confessed that he had been unable to discover any adequate proof in support of it. He granted that many interesting and startling side issues had been raised by the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution, and also in the speeches of those who had followed him; but he could not see that at the back of those side issues there had been any real argument in support of the Motion. He found that the right hon. Gentleman based his arguments on such statements as that the present Government had weakened Egypt, and that Egypt was, therefore, unable to deal with the state of affairs of the Soudan after the defeat of Hicks Pasha. If there was one thing clearer than another to his mind, it was that Egypt had been weakened long before the present Government came into Office, at the time of the Dual Control, when the financial arrangements of the country and its Revenues were pledged under that arrangement. The facts, if he mistook not, were these. When the news of Hicks Pasha's defeat reached Cairo, Cherif Pasha proposed to apply to Turkey for assistance to put down the rebellion in the Soudan; and failing Turkey, asked this country if it was willing to undertake the work, because Egypt was without funds for such an undertaking. If that were so, he thought no one would have been bold enough to have come forward at that time with a proposal to send an English Force to the Soudan. Since November, 1883, their education with reference to Soudanese matters had been improving; but at the time of the defeat of Hicks Pasha no Minister would have ventured to make a proposal of the character he had mentioned. If any other argument were necessary to show that Egypt was weakened long before the time when the present Government became responsible for her internal or external affairs, it was clearly shown in the fact that the Egyptian Government was unable of itself to put down the insurrection of Arabi Pasha. That being the case, he asked how it was that the right hon. Gentleman rested his argument for holding Her Majesty's Government responsible for the affairs in the Soudan on the idea that Egypt had been weakened by the present Government? He did not understand from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that he for a single moment attempted to make out that he held the Government to blame for what had transpired in the Soudan before the defeat of Hicks Pasha; and he believed it was now held by all the best military authorities that there could not have been a more reckless or more unfortunate attempt to help General Gordon than by sending a small Cavalry Force to attempt the passage to Berber. If so, he did not understand the Opposition to say an error was committed in sending the Relief Expedition by the route they did. On that subject there was a general consensus of military authority that the only possible time at which the Expedition could be commenced was that at which it was commenced, and the only route was that actually taken by Lord Wolseley; and certainly the Government might fully claim their share of credit for the admirable manner in which the force was equipped, and the wonderful way in which the work had been continued. Unhappily, the fact remained that Lord Wolseley was not able to save General Gordon's life; but he did not find in any of the statements put forward any argument against the Government in regard to the steps they took respecting the Expedition. No doubt they were face to face with a considerable difficulty in the Soudan at this moment; and here he might say that he could not support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), because, although he had no objection to accommodation being arrived at with the Mahdi, he did not think it possible at a time when the Mahdi virtually held a pistol at their heads. The time might come for negotiation; but it would not be successful now. As to the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman, he thought it was in a certain measure contradictory, because if the Government were to take the best steps they possibly could to arrange matters in the Soudan, surely it was out of the question and somewhat inconsistent that they should be expected at the same time to effect that without military operations and the loss of life and heavy expenditure. For that reason he could not see how the two parts of the right hon. Gentleman's Motion hung together.

MR. BRODRICK said, there was not that unanimity of accord on the Ministerial side of the House which they might have expected to see. The only point upon which hon. Gentlemen on the other side appeared to be agreed was in the determination to put all differences of opinion on one side and vote for the Government. The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), in his Resolution, had refrained from expressing any opinion as to the future policy of the Government; and yet that hon. Gentleman was one of those who believed that 30 Members might, if they had spoken out, have prevented the bombardment of Alexandria and the first invasion of Egypt. He had a great deal of sympathy with the hon. Member; but it led him to a very different conclusion to that at which the hon. Gentleman had arrived, for he felt it his duty to oppose the Government, and to warn them against carrying out a policy which in the future might prove more disastrous than ever to British arms. Was the hon. Member for Newcastle the man who said a year ago that he, at least, would not go a step further upon this road until he knew where he was going? They wanted to know what course the Government intended to take in the future, and what policy they proposed to pursue after they had destroyed the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum? At one time General Gordon stated that 500 determined men might put down the rebellion; but now things were come to such a pass that 20,000 troops were required. Twelve months ago General Gordon told them that he would undertake to put down the rebellion with £200,000 or £300,000. How did they stand now? The truth was they had spent over £10,000,000. The present Government—a body of Radical economists—came into power to reduce the Income Tax; and now they must have the Income Tax at 6*d.*, and would most probably divert the Sinking Fund of the National Debt. With all this they would not be able to meet their liabilities in Egypt. He could not but feel that the more the Government believed that their doctrines were right, the more they must admit that their tactics were wrong. They desired peace, and had to acquiesce in four Expeditions. They desired to economize, and had muddled the finances of Egypt, and demoralized their own. The fact was the Government had been, and were now, carrying on a war with no definite end in view, and carrying it on with a nation struggling to get free. They knew the effect which the utterances of Her Majesty's Government as to the evacuation of the Soudan had on the Mahdi. They were told that when the Mahdi heard that they were going to give up the Soudan he and his followers were greatly rejoiced, and that he sent out emissaries in various directions to collect new forces. So that at the very moment that they were using all the resources of the Crown to put down the Mahdi they were raising his spirits and recruiting his forces. He thought the House might well complain that whatever the policy of Her Majesty's Government was they had not the sense to keep it within their own minds. The Prime Minister had no right to wink with one eye at the House of Commons and with another at the Mahdi, while using language which they were told the British soldier was bitterly lamenting. A great deal had been said about the Berber-Suakin route; and the right hon. Gentleman very naturally asked why it was to be opened this year, when last year it was declared to be impracticable? Earl Granville had said that for a large body of European troops of all arms the Military Authorities regarded an Expedition by that route as impossible. When the noble Earl made that statement in November, was he aware that Hicks Pasha's Army had crossed that Desert in numbers of more than 1,000 at a time? But now their enemies were increased, Osman Digna was in better courage, and the difficulty of making the railroad in the hot weather was greater than ever. When the Prime Minister took credit for this—that the Government held themselves bound throughout to support Gordon, it seemed rather inconsistent that all those months they should have been unable to make up their minds as to the route. The difficulties of the Suakin-Berber route were very great; but what he complained of was that the Government did not until the last moment make up their mind to overcome them. He did not desire to treat this question in a Party spirit; but if the Opposition were to go into the Lobby with a minority, he thought, nevertheless, they were bound to register a protest against the course pursued by the Government; although, on the other side, those who were the apostles of peace and retirement would be found in the same Lobby as those who were responsible for the war, and for forcing upon them a North African Empire which would be more dangerous and difficult for them than their Empire in South Africa. They had a right to make a protest, because they were undertaking an Expedition of which no one could see the object. Was it to relieve Gordon? He had already perished. Was it to save Khartoum? Khartoum was abandoned. Was it to set up a fresh Government? How was it to be maintained? Was it to conquer the country? The Soudan would be a costly and a worthless possession, unless they confined themselves to those portions of it which were necessary to the safety of Egypt, and as to that no definition of any kind had been given. If there was one thing more than another which added a sting to the privations which their Army had to encounter it was the fact that they had no goal to their operations. He rejoiced that the Conservative Party would by this Resolution enter their protest against the policy which had involved this country in such grave difficulties and responsibility.

Mr. PICTON said, that much that had been advanced by hon. Members opposite commanded his admiration and likewise his respect. For instance, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Brodrick) had made a speech which ought to induce him to enter the Lobby in support of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). Nevertheless, although the opinions of the hon. Member would logically lead him in that direction, he (Mr. Picton) had no doubt that the hon. Member would be found in the opposite Lobby, voting in support of the Resolution, against the policy of which he had protested. The hon. Member told the House he objected to the bombardment of Alexandria. He (Mr. Picton) agreed with the hon. Member, and he imagined that most of them now condemned that bombardment, as in the highest degree objectionable. The hon. Member further regarded the original sending out of General Gordon as most objectionable. So did hon. Members on that (the Liberal) side of the House, or, at any rate, a great many of them, and, he was inclined to believe, the majority of those who were now present. The hon. Member said he had no doubt that he would find the hon. Member for Newcastle in the Lobby supporting the Government, and he wondered why. In his (Mr. Picton's) humble way, he would endeavour to enlighten the hon. Member. He presumed that if his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle found himself defeated upon the Amendment, he would, as a *dernier resort*, support Her Majesty's Government. A certain King of old based his claim to popularity among his subjects on the ground that, whereas his father had chastised them with whips, he would chastise them with scorpions. It was on the same principle that the Opposition now asked for the support of the Liberals—namely, that whereas there had been a great deal of war under the guidance of the Ministry there would be a great deal more war if they passed the Resolution moved by the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition. He (Mr. Picton) could not pretend to be satisfied with the policy of Her Majesty's Government, or with the mode in which it had been carried out; but the hon. Member for Newcastle, after all, if his Amendment were not accepted by the House, would be content to continue his support to the Government owing to the greater hostility which he bore to the Opposition. The Amendment was intended to act upon the better consciences of Ministers as a wholesome tonic. Her Majesty's Government had repeatedly declared their opposition to schemes of conquest and aggrandizement. Over and over again, Europe had been assured that they did not intend to enlarge the limits of the Empire by annexing land either in Egypt or the Soudan. The dictates of the better consciences of the Ministry were inscribed on many official documents which had been laid upon the Table last year and recently.

For instance, in the former set of documents the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville), in a despatch to Mr. Egerton, dated April 23, 1884, told that gentleman that he was to assure General Gordon that expeditions against the Mahdi were beyond the scope of his mission, and were at variance with the pacific policy which was the purpose of his mission. The despatch went on to say that the special purpose of the mission of General Gordon was to secure the safety and withdrawal, if possible, of the Egyptian garrisons; but added that that object was to be secured by pacific means. It was not intended that the operations should include or involve measures for the purpose of crushing the Mahdi, or suppressing the revolution by force. That was a distinct declaration in the sense of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle—namely, that the suppression of the Mahdi by force was no part of the policy of Her Majesty's Government. For a long time the tone of the despatches was in strict accordance with that declaration. He might quote, if it were necessary, Despatch No. 89 in the Blue Book, where the Foreign Secretary most strenuously repudiated any responsibility, either then or in the future, for any failure that might ensue in the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrisons from the Soudan. What was the reason for the emphasis with which any kind of responsibility, except for the safety of the Egyptian garrisons, was repudiated? It was not only the difficulty of maintaining them, but the injustice of making war against the Soudanese, who were only contending for freedom. As had been accurately stated by more than one hon. Member in the course of the debate, the Prime Minister had, on various occasions, expressed his sympathy, to a certain extent, with the Soudanese in their struggles for tribal liberty, and the right of managing their own affairs. In fact, the despatches throughout implied and suggested that the Mahdi's success was in consequence of the spontaneous rising of Islam to maintain its freedom from Christian rule. With that he did not think they had any right to interfere. Then, he would like to know what had occurred since these despatches were written which had so considerably altered the policy of the Government? Khartoum had fallen, and the heroic General Gordon, alas! had disappeared from the world. He (Mr. Picton) acknowledged that those tragic events were something terrible to contemplate; but, surely, it must be acknowledged that they formed an additional proof of the firm resolve of the Soudanese to maintain their own independence, for, if anything could have kept them from asserting that independence, it would have been the influence of the man who had so much sympathy for them. The death of General Gordon was a terrible grief; but he could not but think that it was a fatal rebuke to the initial mistake of sending him out. At any rate, it shed a lurid light on the testimony which proceeded from a hundred different sources that this so-called rebellion was not the work of a small knot of conspirators, but was the almost unanimous consensus of a whole people. Then, he asked, why should they go on to attempt the impossible, for impossible it would turn out to be in the long run to suppress this insurrection? On all sides, anything in the shape of vengeance was repudiated. They were told—but he was afraid that the story was too good to be true—that the Mahdi had seized the traitor who opened the gates of Khartoum, and had hanged him. He could only hope that it might turn out to be true, because he held that any man who acted treacherously and falsely deserved such a fate; but, at the same time, he would far rather that the Mahdi should be the traitor's executioner than ourselves. General Gordon, like most other men of heroic mould, despised a spirit of revenge; and the very worst tribute they could pay to his memory would be to sin against the example he himself had set. It was needless, however, to argue in that strain, for he was certain that the almost unanimous feeling of the country would be against anything like the manifestation of a spirit of un-Christian revenge. They heard a great deal about *prestige* in various articles of the Press, and in some of the speeches delivered in that House. *Prestige* was a French word, and it seemed to him to express a very un-English idea. It might be proper for a people who, under the malignant influence of Imperialism, had been trained up to think far more of glory than of truth and right; but if, by *prestige*, hon. Members meant reputation, he would ask whether, in this ancient Kingdom, we had much need to be nervous about our reputation? If it was a reputation for fighting qualities that we were anxious about, he wished to ask why, after more than 1,000 years of fighting, and generally fighting of a victorious character, we should be so timid upon the subject now? Nor could it be said that this very campaign had lowered our *prestige* in this respect. Had there been any real defeat? Although he detested war, he was not insensible to military courage. He could admire the quality of pluck wherever he saw it; and he held that never had British troops given more direct proof of their heroic qualities than they had done in the campaign in the Soudan. When the House considered the difficulties attending the passage of a waterless desert; when they remembered the separation of the column from its base; when they remembered the overwhelming odds against which the troops had to contend, he thought the march to Gubat and the subsequent retreat, so far as it had proceeded, formed one of the most extraordinary achievements in our military history. If this were so, it only furnished all the stronger reason why they should protest against the useless waste of such noble lives as were now in peril. As for the rescue of General Gordon, for which they were sent out, death had interposed an impregnable barrier against that; and although they must return in grief and sadness, it was certainly impossible for them to return in disgrace. He had heard, when the idea of a retreat was suggested, an insidious reference to Majuba Hill, and similar occurrences in English history; but he thought that the circumstances in this case were very different. They were different because, in this case, our Army had been continuously victorious; and he would go so far as to say that, just because we should now withdraw from victory, whereas, in the case of Majuba Hill, we withdrew from defeat, this retreat would be only less honourable than that, for it was probable that there was not another nation in the world who would have dared to make such a retreat as that which this country made from Majuba Hill. No other people would have had the moral courage to have made such a retreat. There were other considerations alleged in defence of aggression; for instance, the interests of trade, on which, however, he need not dilate, because he did not think there was much trade to be done in the Deserts of the Soudan. At any rate, a destructive war was not likely to encourage a profitable trade and commerce. Then, again, they were told that the fanaticism of Islam ought to be repressed. Why? Was there no such thing as Christian fanaticism? They sometimes found that a revival of any religion was necessarily accompanied by a certain amount of fanaticism, and yet that it carried a certain degree of moral regeneration with it. He could point to several instances which had occurred in his own country; and we had no right, therefore, to speak of the revival of Islamism as necessarily implying mere destruction. Narrowness and bigotry were not unfrequently inspired in dealing with religions of our own. But General Gordon himself gave us a better example; for when General Gordon was engaged, on a former mission, as Governor of the Soudan, he related in his epistolary diary that he had watched the enemy on the other side of the river engaged in prayer; and somehow, from the earnestness which they showed, he was induced to entertain some misgivings. The prayer, he said, was an earnest prayer for Celestial aid in an undertaking in which the men who prayed knew they needed help from some unknown power in order to avert danger; the Native might not know who was the true God; but God knew him, and moved him to prayer in order to avert destruction at the hands of Gordon's followers. Mahommedanism had not always been a curse; and in its early days, before it was oppressed by the Turk, it had often been associated with the progress of literature, art, and science. Much of the terminology of science was derived from the Arabic. [*Cries of* "Question!"] He ventured to think that that was the Question, because there was no reason to suppose that, if the Mahdi was successful, a deluge of barbarism would necessarily follow his success. But, at the same time, if it were felt necessary to prevent the increase of Mahommedanism in Egypt, surely the Southern Borders of Egypt were the proper place in which to draw the line. He was one of those who thought that we were first bound to consider the higher interests of our own country, which were not necessarily associated and bound up with those of bondholders, financiers, and capitalists. He attached greater value to the interests of the labouring millions of the country, and he was certain that those interests would not be served by such indefinite wars as that in which it was now proposed to enter. The expenses of civilization were continually increasing; the work of promoting science and art continually required more money; while, at the same time, the cost of barbarism—for such he must consider warlike operations—was also becoming more expensive. Both could not continue to be carried on; and if he were asked which ought to be preferred, he would say "sacrifice your warlike operations." It was foolish to suppose that the democracy were in favour of war. Could it be true that the toilers of the country were favourable to an everlasting policy of bloodshed and waste? It might be true that the idlers at the shop windows, who gazed at a senseless picture of a military square fighting against Arabs, were in favour of war, or that the loungers in the music halls, echoing sanguinary choruses, were eager for war; but the ordinary democracy—the democracy of organized industry—were impatient of war, and disgusted also. They knew that a blood tax robbed them of their earnings and retarded education, science, and art; they believed that a warlike policy engendered feelings of bitterness, and encouraged, on the part of our rulers, a feeling of recklessness which was both dangerous and perilous. The working classes did not comprehend why slaughter and destruction should be so much more honourable than constructive labour. They had not yet, unfortunately, had their due weight in the Councils of the nation. The new Reform Bill would help them to some extent; and he believed that when they became fully conscious of their power they would speak in a voice which neither contemporary nor future Rulers would dare to disobey.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD: Sir, I think we are all of us familiar with our old friend, the Dual Control; but the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Picton) has introduced us to the novelty of a duality of Ministerial confidence. One feels great difficulty in understanding what is the particular proposition which Her Majesty's Ministers call upon their supporters to approve and support by their votes. No one, I think, who heard the Prime Minister to-night, and who is familiar with his marvellous powers, but must have been struck with the effect which his speech has had upon the House. Not even his eloquence could give a spark of vitality to a case hopelessly dead. Why, Sir, it was apology from beginning to end; and we have exhausted all the subterfuges of language from the familiar cry of past history—the uselessness of repining over spilt milk, and so forth —to show that it is not necessary to sit in judgment upon the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in the past. But, be it observed, that the form in which the Resolution is framed is one which renders some little contemplation of the past a necessary preamble in enabling the House to form a judgment upon the most important part of the question —namely, what Her Majesty's Ministers propose to do in the future. Important as it is to see what Her Majesty's Government have done in the past, I believe that nine-tenths of the House, and nine-tenths of the country, are more interested in knowing what is the course to be pursued in the future, and that they are no longer content to be put off with language which palters with the national interests in a double sense. Even to-night, although no word was uttered by the Prime Minister to retract the engagement to overthrow the power of the Mahdi, yet it was impossible not to observe how immediately some of his followers caught at some proposed alteration in his tone, and, assuming that he might, perhaps, have altered his mind, with that hope promised that they would still give him their support—not that he had altered one word of what he had stated before, but because there was something in the tone in which he spoke which induced them to hope for an alteration. I must say that I was a little amused to hear the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Sutherland), who addressed the House for the first time to-night, and who told us that he has been familiar with Egyptian affairs, uttering some of the sentiments he did, and referring to some supposed facts. I am afraid that the debates in this House and the Blue Books have not been called to his attention. He seems to have been under the impression that the Soudan was abandoned by the Egyptian Government, and that Her Majesty's Government had nothing to do with it. He does not appear to have read the despatch of Lord Granville of the 4th of January, in which, in language very different from the ordinary ambiguity of diplomacy, he informed the Egyptian Government that if a particular Minister would not do what Downing Street required, they must find another Minister who would. Since that time they have assumed and directed everything; and the pretence of an Egyptian Government has long since been exploded. Of that fact the hon. Member for Greenock (Mr. Sutherland) appears to have been in entire ignorance; but it is a most important factor in the situation. We are constantly taken back to the Dual Control. For my part, I do not want to discuss the question of the bombardment of Alexandria, which the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) said that he deplored, and regarded as a great mistake. But we have not heard Her Majesty's Government say, or any one of Her Majesty's Ministers admit, that it was a great mistake. Further than that, when dealing with the mode in which Egyptian affairs have since been managed by Her Majesty's Government, one cannot help thinking that some hon. Members opposite do not seem to have been aware that the mission which was undertaken by General Gordon was one which had a double object in view. General Gordon was not sent on a purely pacific mission. He was not sent out with the view of converting the Mahdi, and, if that would not do, of then coming back again; but General Gordon was sent with a double mission —namely, to aid and assist in the evacuation of the Soudan, and to surrender the government of the Soudan to those from whom it had been taken—the Egyptian Government. Again, I must say that I am amazed at the arguments we have just heard, and I think the Prine Minister is labouring under the same delusion, because we hear, from time to time, about a people struggling for freedom—of a people oppressed by military power seeking to establish their freedom. I think the close of the oration of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down—the hon. Member for Leicester—was a little at variance with the earlier part of it, because the hon. Member told us that the rebellion is an outbreak of Islamism. Is that freedom? Is that the notion the hon. Member has of freedom—the Koran or the sword? If that is the sort of struggling for freedom that is meant, I congratulate the Prime Minister and his ally on the views they entertain of the right of private judgment, whether in regard to religion or any other matter. But with reference to the subject more immediately before us, I cannot help thinking that the great difficulty throughout our whole discussion has been that people will not call things by their right names. I do not know whether it is admitted that we are at war even now. Are they "military operations" still, or are we at war; and if we are at war, with whom are we at war, on what account, and with what object? [An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] Some hon. Member opposite says "Hear, hear!" but, nevertheless, he is going to support the Government, who have always refused to answer that question. Is it the real meaning that this is a military operation, and that we are only executing it for the purpose of establishing orderly and stable government? The hon. Member who last addressed the House took some objection to the use of the word *prestige*, which he said was a French word; but whether we call it "character" or *prestige*, we are obliged to admit that, in either case, we borrow from a foreign language the word we use, the only difference being that the one word is a little more novel than the other. Both mean the same thing, and I believe that, in regard to the government of any nation, whether in the East or in the West, the character which the nation possesses is one of the most important elements in the maintenance of peace, and that if a Government allows it to be known that their rights and their interests may with impunity be disregarded, they will have wars enough on their hands. That is the object of maintaining *prestige*, or character, or whatever the hon. Member likes to call it. Why did General Gordon go? The hon. Member says that he was called away upon a pacific mission. But what was the mission? Was it the re-establishment or suppression of the Slave Trade? Was that a pacific mission; or was it for the purpose of carrying out the views of Her Majesty's Ministers in England in connection with the Government of what the Prime Minister has called "Egypt Proper," although I do not know whether I am correctly stating that or not? It is, however, a proposition we could understand, if it were so. But what had General Gordon to do at Khartoum at all? Was he to retire the garrisons? What does General Gordon himself say on that subject? He says—"You send me out with six other persons; and if I am to endeavour to effect that object, why the Arabs will only laugh at the notion." That was General Gordon's view of the matter. But before he got there he was invested with a power which Her Majesty's Government themselves described as having a much wider range and involving a much more important mission than that of the mere retirement of the garrisons. I am afraid hon. Members opposite have again omitted to refer to the Blue Books on that subject; and I will remind them of what was said just 12 months ago in this House by the Prime Minister. I cannot find the precise quotation at this moment; but the effect of it was that General Gordon's original commission had been absorbed in the wider one he had received from the Egyptian Government, with the sanction and authority of Her Majesty's Government, and for which the Government of this country had undertaken to give him both their moral and political responsibility. If that was what General Gordon had to do, and if the Prime Minister undertook the full responsibility of what General Gordon did, what is the meaning of the cry which has been raised from time to time, as an apology for the Government, that they had not sufficient knowledge of what General Gordon's wants were? "It is very unjust," says the Prime Minister, "not to remember that we did not get General Gordon's messages until a much later date than they were sent to us." Are these things matters which were not thought of before? Did the Government suppose that by the mission intrusted to General Gordon he would be sent to Khartoum, and left unsupported by reinforcements, or aid of any kind whatever, until the Government got return messages from General Gordon as to what he wanted? With almost grim humour, in the month of May, a despatch was sent to him, in which he was asked to state what his objects were in remaining in Khartoum if he found it impossible to effect the objects which Her Majesty's Government had at heart. What did General Gordon reply? General Gordon said—"The reason I am here is that the Arabs have surrounded me, and I cannot get out." Was that a contingency wholly beyond the contemplation or imagination of Her Majesty's Ministers? Did they really contemplate that while they were remaining in their seats in Downing Street, and doing nothing to aid and assist General Gordon, they would not receive a despairing cry from him when it was too late to despatch that kind of help that would be of assistance to him? Let me pass on to what has been stated as an excuse for the Government for not having sent aid at an earlier period. The case of the Government, as stated by the Prime Minister to-night, is about the most extraordinary statement I ever heard. That statement is, that after having accepted full responsibility, and having made a pledge to Parliament that they would recognize their responsibility to General Gordon, for some reason or other they did not wake up to a sense of the situation until the 5th of August. Were no preparations desirable before that date? Can the Government protect themselves from responsibility by saying, after the discussion in May, and after having obtained a Vote of Confidence, they remained considering the matter for months, allowing the period to go by when preparations could be made, on account of want of knowledge as to what General Gordon wished? And then, when they ultimately did come down to the House of Commons, what is it that was done? Was it anything that Her Majesty's Government can now look back upon with satisfaction? They proposed a Vote to the House of Commons of a character which, I venture to say, is the most discreditable that can possibly be imagined. No Minister could possibly, for a single instant, have imagined that it was either adequate to the circumstances of the case, or that it was not imposing the grossest deception upon the country, to endeavour to lead the country to suppose that it was at all adequate to the requirements of the occasion. Then, what followed? The Expedition started, and with regard to that the Prime Minister has given us a little information to-night. I was very glad to hear, although it was read for another purpose, the despatch from Lord Wolseley, which was received on Sunday; because I find that in it Lord Wolseley, who is a high authority on military matters, and who has taken so important a part in these operations, expresses his regret at being too late to save General Gordon, and for not having started from England at least a month earlier. If, therefore, the Government had been alive to a sense of the situation, would they not have started the Expedition from England at least a month earlier? Then it is said that that would not have saved General Gordon; but that depends upon a somewhat curious conversation with gentlemen who came from Khartoum. I presume they were not in the councils of the traitors; and, therefore, that they only give, from conjecture, what the traitors in Khartoum intended to do. The argument to be derived from that conversation is that the Government ought never to have sent the Expedition at all at any time. The real truth is that the Government, in this as well as in other things, have contented themselves with phrases instead of action. When they were told that General Gordon was surrounded, the Prime Minister objected to the phrase "surrounded," and said he was not surrounded, but "hemmed in." But what are we to say now, after our more recent experience? The Prime Minister has suggested to-night that it is only a repetition of the debate which took place in May last, and that we are not to judge by the light of subsequent experience to see whether the statements as well as the prophecies of the Government reflect any light as to what was the issue of that debate. The grand proposition then was, "Gordon is in no danger. We do not admit that there is the least danger to General Gordon." The Prime Minister and others, in the course of that debate, pointed out that they had the most complete belief in the success of Gordon's mission, and that it was an unreasonable and unwarrantable anxiety that was disturbing the minds of hon. Members on this side of the House. But what did General Gordon himself say on the subject? Did he so treat it? General Gordon regarded himself as having been abandoned. In the despatch which has been already alluded to, and I think that the Prime Minister made an unfair use of that despatch—I refer to the one which was quoted by my right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote)—the first demand made by General Gordon was for military aid. He not only requested that Zebehr should be sent, but he demanded military aid, and both of his requirements were refused. It was only when General Gordon received the intimation from Her Majesty's Government that he was not to receive assistance from English or Turkish troops, that he used that phrase which will ever remain stamped on the Government who sent him there—that his abandonment by Her Majesty's Government would entail indelible disgrace upon them. [An hon. MEMBER: He did not say that.] I will read the exact words if the hon. Member desires it; but probably it is unnecessary to detain the House, because I believe the passage has been read already a great many times. The hon. Member seems to question the accuracy of my quotation; but I still believe it to be accurate. Even if the interruption were well-founded, and my remarks were open to verbal criticism, and I had used some word, owing to lapse of memory, for the moment, which was a misuse of words—which, however, I do not think I did—there can be no doubt that General Gordon spoke of the indelible disgrace which the desertion of him by Her Majesty's Government would fix upon them. And now let me ask what is to be done, for that is a question far more important than anything we can discuss as to what is past? The Prime Minister, adverting to the speech of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), has suggested that there were reasons and considerations which may justify the course which the Government proposed to adopt. What I complain of is that the same uncertain and ambiguous language is still persevered with, and Her Majesty's Government will not tell the House or the country what it is they are going to do in Egypt or the Soudan. Every kind of effort has been made to bring them to a clear and definite statement of what they mean to do; and yet they evaded the responsibility. I believe that the country would gladly condone what is past if they could be satisfied that the Government mean to adopt a straightforward policy in the future.

But what answer do we get on that subject? The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister says that Egypt has benefited by the abolition of the kourbash and the *corvée.* I expect you will find that the facts are not all one way, and that there is a considerable difference of opinion as to them among those who have come from Egypt. But is that what we want to know when we are considering whether we are right in despatching 20,000 troops from this country at the present moment? Nothing can more accurately describe the position this country holds than what was said by the hon. Member for Newcastle. We are threatened with great danger — we are threatened in every quarter of the world with great peril; and I think the people of this country would like to know, before they see the tenth legion sent away to the African deserts, what is the policy that is to be pursued by Her Majesty's Government. The Prime Minister has avoided telling us that to-night. It is one thing to say that we must overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum; but it is another to state distinctly whether we intend or not to assume a Protectorate over Egypt until she can be safely left to herself. Has anyone attempted to give a solution of that difficulty? With regard to the comments which have been mado upon the definition of those spots which are necessary for the safety of Egypt, I should have thought that anything more rash than to attempt to define them could hardly be imagined. To do so would have been to assume a degree of military knowledge and minute geographical experience which I suppose my right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) hardly affects to possess. But surely the language of the Resolution is intelligible enough. It does not indicate spot A or spot B, but only such spots as are necessary for the safety of Egypt. Do the Government accept that proposition? Are they going to enforce the possession of such spots as are necessary to the security of Egypt, and to provide that Egypt herself shall not be invaded, or her interests imperilled, either from the Soudan or elsewhere? I believe that a declaration of that sort would go far to satisfy the minds of many people in this country; but that is exactly the declaration which, from the first moment up to the present hour, Her Majesty's Government have refused to make. They will not tell us what they intend to do. The phrases which they use are delusive; they may mean anything or they may mean nothing. They may mean that the Prime Minister will go to-morrow into the same Lobby with the hon. Member for Newcastle, for the maintenance of Khartoum as an outpost of Egypt; or they may mean that they intend to take Khartoum, as General Gordon intended to take it, and fix a stable Government there. The House of Commons and the country are entitled to know what it is that Her Majesty's Government mean. Everybody listened with rapt attention when the Prime Minister came to that part of the subject in order to know what the policy of the Government was; but, exactly at that part of his speech, when, after a few observations which were somewhat complimentary to the hon. Member for Newcastle and deprecatory to those who take extreme views, the Prime Minister allowed the matter to drop. Is that a satisfactory answer to the Resolution of my right hon. Friend? Here is a Ministry challenged to say what their policy is. They are challenged by a vote in the House of Commons to recognize their responsibility. They say that they do so, and that they will take care, when they are called upon, to act in pursuance of their declarations. But when directly challenged, the Prime Minister has nothing further to say, in answer to the challenge, than what the House has heard to-night. I claim the agreement of every Member opposite to the proposition, that if there is no policy which is fixed and certain, that if there is nothing adequate in its importance to the British Empire—aye, and for the interests of Egypt, of which they are at present the protectors—all the blood which has been shed, and all the blood which is about to be shed, will rest upon the heads of those who are waging a useless and sanguinary conflict. I could understand the hon. Member for Newcastle, and those who think with him, objecting to war altogether. That is an intelligible, although I believe it to be a very fatal, proposition to put forward before the world. I could understand a proposition of the character that, inasmuch as we are in possession of Egypt, and as the Soudan may be—I do not say that it is—or some parts of it may be, necessary for the maintenance and security of Egypt, that is an adequate motive by reason whereof the Forces of the Crown should be launched into the Desert; but I do not understand the half-hearted, ambiguous, vacillating statement that it may become necessary to do this, that, or the other, without any definite proposition of what it is sought to establish. Then it comes to this—that we are to hear, day after day, sickening accounts of bloodshed; we are shocked by the ever-increasing note of woe, as each telegram arrives from day to day telling of some gallant life sacrificed, and of some noble career checked. All this, however, would be less hard to bear if there was some great object in view; if we were assisting the cause of freedom in some distant country where freedom had been struck down, or if we were lighting the torch of civilization; but if we are going on from day to day to support Her Majesty's Ministers in a policy which they will not explain, or which they cannot explain, because they have no settled line of policy, then I maintain that each of these battles deserves the strongest animadversion. No hon. Member opposite, or any Member of the Peace Association, would speak more strongly than I would against proceedings which, having no object to attain but merely to save the occupants of Office for the time being, should wage this causeless, wicked, wanton, and unnecessary conflict.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he did not intend to trespass long upon the attention of the House; but, as a Member who represented an Irish constituency, he wished to avail himself of the opportunity of expressing an opinion which he believed to be held not only by his constituents, but by the people of Ireland generally, with reference to the action of the Government in prosecuting what must be deemed a most causeless and disastrous war. It appeared, from the statement made by the Prime Minister that evening, that General Gordon was despatched to the Soudan for the purpose of establishing good government and peace in a vast territory by the exercise of his influence alone. Now, he did not know what the estimate of General Gordon's influence might be; but he thought it must be the opinion of very many persons in the country that the Government, in despatching a single British officer to a country like the Soudan, in the belief that, however great his influence might be, it would be sufficient to bring about peace and good government to a people who had been oppressed and almost robbed of their nationality, must have been prejudice indeed. General Gordon's mission to the Soudan naturally failed; but it did not appear, from the action of the Government, that they had ever anticipated that it would fail at all. Since the failure of General Gordon's mission became apparent, arrangements had been made which, as hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench said, were tardily made to afford relief and rescue General Gordon. Undoubtedly, General Gordon was a brave man, and the sympathy expressed for him was shared by every man in the country who knew the feelings by which General Gordon was animated, and the sympathy he felt for all nationalities that were struggling to be free. But the persons who sent General Gordon upon that mission to the Soudan, and who did not understand or believe that failure was possible, and who did not, in sending out General Gordon, make some arrangements for his protection and for his rescue, if failure overtook him, had committed an act of a most useless character, and had wantonly sacrificed the life of a brave and gallant officer. General Gordon went out to the Soudan for the purpose of bringing peace and good government to the people of that country. He should have thought that the lesson which might have been derived from the overthrow of Arabi Pasha in Egypt might have been sufficient to convince the Government of this country that it was not possible for any Englishman, no matter how excellent his personal qualities might be, to exercise sufficient influence to govern the people of a country like the Soudan by his own personal influence alone. However, General Gordon went out to the Soudan, and found himself, in the end, blocked in at Khartoum. An Expedition was therefore despatched from this country for the purpose, and for the purpose alone, of rescuing General Gordon. That Expedition could no longer succeed in carrying out the object for which it was originally sent out. General Gordon was dead. His friends had, in one way or another, been disposed of at Khartoum, and that city was now in the hands of the Mahdi. So long as General Gordon was to be rescued at Khartoum; so long as he was unwilling to leave the men who had stood by him in that city, the feeling might be easily understood which prompted the Government to send out an Expedition for his relief. But, now that there was nobody to be relieved in Khartoum, he (Mr. W. Redmond) maintained that the object for which this war was initiated had distinctly ceased to exist; and he believed that it was the opinion of nine-tenths of the people, not only in Ireland, but in this country, that to proceed further with that war would be only wantonly to sacrifice the lives of innocent men, and to jeopardize the liberties of the Soudanese people, who were, after all, as the Prime Minister had said, only struggling to be free. It was apparently out of the power of Her Majesty's Government to bring peace and good government to the people of the Soudan. It might reasonably be understood that it would be a much easier task for a person in the position of the Mahdi to bring tranquillity to the Soudan, than for an army of British soldiers. It was a great mistake for the Government of this country—and it had been manifested in other interests besides this—to believe that where ostensibly their object was to bring liberty to a struggling country, the only means of securing that liberty was to enforce it at the point of the bayonet. Surely it would be far better to place the work of restoring tranquillity in the hands of some Native of the country, in whose liberty he would himself have the deepest personal interest. The reason why the government of Ireland by this country had become not only ludicrous, but dangerous, was that no Irishman, or person conversant with Ireland, had ever been entrusted with the task of tranquillizing the country. It was precisely for the same reason that Her Majesty's Government now found themselves in a dangerous and difficult position in the Soudan. They declared that it was their desire to bring tranquillity to the Soudanese people; but, instead of allowing someone who was acquainted with the country and the habits of the people to build up a peaceful and orderly Government, which, being based upon the good will of the people, would successfully succeed in tranquillizing the country—instead of placing that task in the hands of a man like the Mahdi, they were endeavouring to establish that good government by storming cities, burning villages, and robbing the people right and left. He did not know, nor did he care, whether Great Britain would allow the present Government, or any other Government that might come into power, to prosecute so aimless and wicked a war as that which had been initiated in the Soudan; but he did know this, and he was satisfied that every one of his Colleagues would bear him out when he stated that nine-tenths of the people of Ireland viewed with unmitigated indignation and horror the action of Her Majesty's Ministers. Having treated Ireland so badly, they were now on the eve of bringing the same desolation and misery into existence in another country and among another people. The Government, and the action of the Government, had been arraigned from the Front Opposition Bench by the hon. and learned Gentleman who spoke last (Sir Hardinge Giffard), and the right hon. Baronet who opened the discussion (Sir Stafford Northcote). By those right hon. and learned Members the action of Her Majesty's Government in the Soudan had been severely criticized; but it appeared to him (Mr. W. Redmond) that the only difference there was between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party in this matter was that, while the Liberals were prepared to go on with the war to a certain extent, the Conservatives were not at all averse to the idea of war, but were only anxious for power, because they had a notion that that war might not have been sufficiently prolonged and sufficiently bloody to meet their views. It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench to criticize the action of the Government; but they said that, so far as the smashing up of the Mahdi was concerned, they thoroughly agreed with that. All they wanted to know was, what was to be done afterwards? He presumed that the Conservative Party would not be content with the smashing up of the Mahdi, which he sincerely hoped Her Majesty's Government would not succeed in doing; but that they would like to occupy the

Soudan and Egypt Proper afterwards. Ever since the English Government went to the Soudan and Egypt, with their money and their bayonets, there had been no peace; but, on the contrary, nothing but misery for the Soudanese and the Egyptians. He sincerely believed that so long as English money and English bayonets were employed in the Soudan and in Egypt, so long would the people of those countries be in a state of anarchy and rebellion, and so long would peace, order, prosperity, and good government be banished from those countries. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in the course of his speech, attempted to justify the war in the Soudan at the present time; and one of the reasons he gave, in the grandiloquent speech he delivered, was that the Soudanese had banished from their country all the Egyptian garrisons. The right hon. Gentleman also regarded with satisfaction the mercies which he considered to have been showered on the people of Egypt by the abolition of the kourbash. For his own part, he (Mr. W. Redmond) would like the people of the country to be polled, and asked their opinion with regard to the respective merits of the kourbash and British taxation; and he felt pretty confident that their reply would be that the kourbash was nothing at all to be compared to the misery which had been brought upon them by our invasion. There had been a great deal of talk in the course of the debate of the gallantry and heroism of the British troops; but, so far as he and his hon. Friends were able to understand the matter, it would seem that it was the general opinion in Ireland that the British troops had as much as they could possibly do to hold their own; that they had not quite succeeded in doing this; and that, at the present moment, our brave soldiers of the Soudan were retreating as fast as they were able, pell mell, with the followers of the Mahdi at their heels. If it had cost so many lives, and taken so many men, to meet the few of the Mahdi's followers who had been brought face to face with them up to the present time, how many soldiers, how many lives, and how much treasure would it cost to face the whole power of the man, whom British statesmen had, to their cost, estimated so low, and whom they now knew was not to be despised? There could, he believed, have been an amicable arrangement arrived at long ago with regard to the Soudan had the Government only shown their wish to make overtures to the Mahdi and approached him as a man who had power. Some arrangement might have been arrived at which would probably have resulted in the saving of General Gordon's life, and have avoided the disasters and bloodshed which had taken place, not to say the necessity of the war now being carried on in the Soudan. The one great mistake was that which had always been the besetting sin of England, and which had generally brought her to her knees; the Government were too proud to recognize that this dusky warrior of the Soudan was a foe worthy of consideration. They hoped to deal with him by means of a couple of battalions of British troops, which they thought were sufficient to sweep the Mahdi out of their way; and, without looking into his position, they launched their soldiers at him and declared war. Even now, at the eleventh hour, they might make overtures to him; but the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had declared that whatever else they might do the Mahdi must be smashed up. Hon. Members opposite, however, had pointed out that the Mahdi had now nothing else to do but to fight with all his might and main, seeing that the head statesman of this proud nation declared that it was their intention to smash him up, and destroy his power. The Government blamed the Mahdi for fighting; but how could they do that consistently, having sent him word that it was their intention to smash him up? In making these remarks he had no other wish than to give expression to the opinions which he believed to be held by nine-tenths of the people of Ireland, which opinions clearly pointed to a desire on the part of the Irish people to see the Mahdi successful. They did not wish to see the Mahdi injuring the people, or infringing the rights of the people of any country; but they recognized in him a man of a peculiar race and creed, fighting to protect his country and faith from another people hostile to them—a patriot struggling for his liberty; and as such the people of Ireland wished him every success. And he was sure, when the time came for the Irish Members to give their votes, that they would go distinctly and unanimously to show that the feeling of the Irish people was that the British nation had no business in the Soudan, and that the British Government should allow the Soudanese and Egyptians to govern themselves according to their own lights and customs, and that it was the desire of the Irish people that as long as the English nation retained its hold in the Soudan, by tyrannizing over people that seemed weaker than themselves, so long as British troops occupied the Soudan, so long would there be in Ireland fervent and hearty prayers that the Mahdi might be successful, and drive the British troops out of Egypt, and that the time might not be far distant when the Mahdi and the Irish people would congratulate together on having achieved the same object, of freeing themselves from British tyranny.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Goschen,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [20th February] *reported.*

First Three Resolutions *agreed to.*

Fourth Resolution read a second time.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he was one of those who held the opinion that Ireland was, so to speak, over-policed at the present time; and he should be prepared now, and on all other suitable occasions, to protest against the extra outlay charged on account of the Police Force. The item for the police at the Mullingar Barracks was merely part of a very large sum which had to be paid by the taxpayers of the country, and which was productive of very little good. He was not, as a rule, opposed to the expenditure of British money in Ireland, except when it was an unreasonable outlay; and then such Votes would be always sure to meet with his opposition. But he was especially opposed to this Vote for the Police Force in Ireland, thinking that the men would be much better occupied in the Soudan, where they could exercise their talents to advantage, and, at the same time, rid Ireland of a very objectionable class of persons.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£7,500," in order to insert "£6,923,"—(*Mr. Biggar,*)—instead thereof.

Question put, "That '£7,500' stand part of the said Resolution."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 56; Noes 12: Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 28.)

Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.*

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. SEXTON said, he wished to put a Question to Mr. Speaker on a point of Order. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had put on the Paper a Notice of his intention to move for leave to bring in a Bill dealing with Ireland; and he (Mr. Sexton) wished to ask, whether it was not competent for some other Member of the Government, in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman, to move for leave in his behalf?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Motion has been put off, I understand.

Mr. SEXTON: To what day?

Mr. SPEAKER: To-morrow.

THEATRES, &C. REGULATION (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Bill for the better Regulation of Theatres and Music Halls within the Metropolitan area, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Dixon-Hartland and Mr. Macfarlane.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 67.]

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 24th February, 1885.

MINUTES.]—*Took the Oath for the First Time*—The Lord Bishop of Newcastle.

Select Committee—Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, The Lord Privy Seal *added.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Prevention of Crimes Amendment * (20); Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) * (21).

Select Committee—Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) * (6), The Lord Sudeley *added.*

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—PARLIAMENT STREET.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON asked, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to empower a private company to widen Parliament Street and to carry out all the other projected improvements in the vicinity of the Houses of Parliament? The noble Lord said, he desired to congratulate the noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery) on his appointment as First Commissioner of Works, and the House upon the fact that that Department was now directly represented in their Lordships' House. There was great need of the Public Offices being concentrated in the vicinity of the Houses of Parliament, and it was with regret that he found that it had been decided that the new Admiralty and War Offices were not to be built on the George Street site. The site chosen was not only too distant from the Houses of Parliament, but the buildings would be a disfigurement and injury to the Park. The proposed scheme to which his Question referred would prevent that concentration of the Public Offices in the vicinity of Parliament which had always been considered so desirable, and leave the land in the hands of private speculators. He understood that the Government intended to place all these improvements in the hands of a private Company—that was to say, would give the Company that site which was the best for Public Offices; but he could not believe that such a thing on the part of the Government could be possible. He thought that it was the duty of the Government to carry out the improvements required, and to obtain the best sites they could in the neighbourhood of Parliament for the numerous Offices, independently of the Admiralty and War Offices which now needed to be located there.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, in reply, said, he had no reason to complain of the tone of the noble Lord in asking this Question; and he should not find it necessary, in answering it, to excuse himself on the ground that he was unacquainted with the business of the Board of Works. As a matter of fact, it was not the intention of the Government to empower any private Company to take any steps to widen Parliament Street. It was true that a private Company had brought a Bill into Parliament asking for powers to do these things; but it had no connection with the Government, and was not empowered by the Government to deal with the matter. The noble Lord must be aware of the difficulty of dealing with this great question of Parliament Street. He would only say, further, that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being on either side could be persuaded to take the matter up, it would, no doubt, be desirable; but in the present case he did not see why, if the interests of the Government were properly safeguarded, the Department he represented should offer any opposition to the proposal. That was a very large admission to make; but as regarded the actual Question of the noble Lord, his answer was that the Government had given no power to any private Company to deal with this matter.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, anything more important than that Parliament should allow a private Company to deal with the land in and behind Parliament Street really could not be well imagined. The proposal was that the Company should deal with the land and streets near Parliament Street, re-arrange the streets, and make new ones, and do some unnecessary works. The Company proposed to raise a capital of £300,000, and to suppose that the Government could not provide that sum was perfectly absurd. The whole question should be carefully inquired into. He had never heard of a more mischievous proposal than that which the noble Earl seemed inclined to sanction. The work ought to be carried out by a Public Department for public objects, otherwise not only would sites required for Public Offices be lost, but the alterations made would have the effect of improving the property of the individuals interested, at the expense of much-needed public improvements.

ARMY—THE 20TH HUSSARS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD rose to ask a Question with respect to the service equipment of some Cavalry recently ordered abroad. Among the troops told off for the Egyptian Expedition were two squadrons of 20th Hussars at Aldershot. They had received notice that their equipments would be given out to them at Aldershot, and they accordingly returned to store their ordinary clothing, except fatigue suits. Their Service equipment did not arrive at Aldershot, with the exception of helmets, which were of the wrong pattern, and at the last moment some sort of substitute for gaiters, and the bandolier cartridge belts, which attached themselves very badly to the ordinary clothing of the men. In this—Bashi-Bazouk fashion—they had marched from Aldershot. If the Queen, whose interest in her soldiers was well-known, had met those irregulars upon the road, Her Majesty would have required a strict explanation of the matter. This was not a very large matter, but if a small force could not be equipped at our principal Military Station without the contradictory orders and confusion there exhibited, then all their short-service, and territorial system, and Staff College, and Intelligence Department had been instituted in vain. He begged to ask the Question of which he had given Notice—namely, Whether the squadron of the 20th Hussars that marched from Aldershot on the 18th instant was in all respects properly equipped for the service upon which it was ordered?

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in reply, said, he thought that nothing could be more unfair or in a greater degree inaccurate than the manner in which the noble Earl had asked this Question. The state of the case was that the clothing of the whole force recently ordered to the Soudan and Egypt had to be prepared in about 14 days, and no man had been sent without a full equipment of clothing for service. What happened in this case? No doubt, two squadrons were a small force; but it had been arranged that all the clothing should be prepared by the date of embarkation, which had been fixed for this force the 19th of this month. As a matter of fact, they had left Aldershot on the 18th, with the view of marching down to Portsmouth for embarkation. It had been arranged that the whole of the equipment to be used in the Soudan should be shipped for them on the transport, but they were very properly to go down to Portsmouth in their ordinary clothing; and he would be glad to hear from the noble Earl whether he thought that troops ought to march in February in England with clothing to be worn in the middle of summer in Egypt. As to the helmets being of a wrong pattern, that history was not difficult to explain. It had at one time been thought fit to give out pith helmets, and these had been designed for all branches of the Service. They had been sent to Aldershot two or three days before the start; but the officer in command sent a telegram to say that, in consequence of not having chin straps, they could not be used for Cavalry. It was impossible to attach straps to a pith helmet; but, on receipt of the telegram, a supply of ordinary helmets was sent down, and the troops started with these two kinds of helmets, and they would be at liberty to use one or the other of them. He ventured to say that there had not been the slightest confusion nor the least delay.

THE EARL OF LONGFORD observed that every word he had said had been borne out by statements of the noble Earl.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE BABBICOMBE MURDER—OFFICE OF PUBLIC EXECUTIONER.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL COWPER said, he rose to call attention to the mismanagement attending a recent attempt at the infliction of capital punishment; and to ask, Whether it is not now the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that there should be a public executioner for the whole of the United Kingdom, appointed and removable by one of Her Majesty's Secretaries of State? The attention of all must have been attracted by a piece of great mismanagement on the part of the executioner at Exeter. He would not enter into details; but he thought that it was natural that he should take the present opportunity of once more bringing the matter forward. In this case, after repeated failures to hang him, the prisoner had been respited, which, perhaps, made the matter less horrible than it would otherwise have been. Although the alternative of respiting a man who had committed murder in a most aggravated form was, no doubt, a difficult one to choose, he could feel that the Home Secretary had been placed in a position of great difficulty, and of two evils had chosen the lesser. He did not wish to prejudge the matter, into which, no doubt, an inquiry would be made; but they could hardly think that the Sheriff could be blamed, or the Under Sheriff. As to the hangman, there was really no such office; a man was only deputed for the occasion, and then disappeared. The Sheriff's duty was to see the sentence carried out, and he had to find anyone that he could. As a general rule, it was true, the same man was employed by the different Sheriffs in the different counties. What he wished, however, was that there should be one man for the whole country, and that he should be under the Home Office and responsible to the Home Secretary. When he had brought forward this matter last year, he had been met by two objections. In the first place, he had been asked why it was likely that the Home Secretary would make a better selection than the Sheriffs? In answer to that, he maintained that it would be easier to get a good man for a permanent place of, say, £200 or £300 a-year. Then another objection was that they could not expect to get a good man for the performance of such disgusting operations. But upon the last vacancy there had been no less than 800 applications, and it would surely be easy to get a man who could perform his duty out of so many. He might say, in passing, that there was such a general idea that it was a Crown office that the greater number of these 800 applicants had sent in their applications to the Home Secretary. He was himself in favour of capital punishment, and thought that it was absolutely necessary in order to put a stop to murder; but no criminal ought to be unnecessarily tortured. If, however, they were to have occurrences like this, it would be difficult to retain it. The noble Earl concluded by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

Lord MONSON said, he was sorry that his noble Friend (the Earl of Dalhousie), who represented the Home Office in that House, was absent through ill health, and therefore not able to answer the Question. When the noble Earl (Earl Cowper) had brought this matter forward on the last occasion, he had rested his arguments on the fact that the executioner was not a competent man in his profession, and that he was also not in a very sober state at the time of the execution. The unfortunate case which occurred yesterday morning at Exeter rested upon altogether different grounds. He would not go into that matter now, because it must be inquired into by direction of the Secretary of State. What he had now to state was that the Secretary of State yesterday took steps to have a strict investigation made into all the facts, and it was not yet quite clear that the fault of what happened yesterday morning lay with the executioner.

PREVENTION OF CRIMES AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Prevention of Crimes Act, 1871—Was *presented* by The Earl of Milltown; read 1ª. (No. 20.)

WATER COMPANIES (REGULATION OF POWERS) BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to regulate the powers of Water Companies which by any special Act incorporate the Waterworks Clauses Act, 1847—Was *presented* by The Earl of Camperdown; read 1ª. (No. 21.)

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill after *Friday* the 13*th day of March* next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice after *Tuesday* the 12*th day of May* next:

That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after *Tuesday* the 12*th day of May* next:

Ordered, That this order be *printed* and *published*, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall. (No. 23.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to
Thursday next, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 24th February, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Labourers (Ireland) * [68]; Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) * [69]; Duration of Parliaments * [70].

QUESTIONS.

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TREATY OF BERLIN—ARTICLE XXIII.—MACEDONIA.

MR. BRYCE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give the House any further information regarding the condition of Macedonia, and the anarchy reputed to exist there; and when the Report of Major Trotter upon the state of that country is expected to be received and presented to the House?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, Whether Her Majesty's Government will take advantage of the presence of a Special Envoy from the Sultan, and the approaches for friendly relations made by that Potentate, to obtain the fulfilment of the Twenty-third Article of the Treaty of Berlin, by which the Sultan is bound to establish autonomous institutions in the Provinces of his Empire, and to impress on him that he can expect nothing from England till he fulfils his Treaty obligations?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I will answer both Questions. Her Majesty's Government think it advisable to defer making any statement until the receipt of Major Trotter's Report, which is on its way home. Any representations which it may be considered advisable to make to the Porte in regard to the condition of the European Provinces of Turkey will be made in the manner most likely to be effectual; but no pledge can be given as to the mode of communication.

MR. BRYCE: When does the noble Lord think it is likely that the Report of Major Trotter will be presented to the House?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Very soon, indeed. It has been telegraphed for, and is now on its way home.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: May I ask for an answer to my Question? The answer of the noble Lord has no connection whatever with it.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Whatever steps Her Majesty's Government may take must depend to a considerable extent on the Report of Major Trotter. I do not anticipate that the Special Ambassador from the Sultan will be in England very much longer; and probably he will not be here when action is taken respecting one of the most important of the remaining Provinces of European Turkey.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Cannot the Government, in concert with the other Powers of Europe, with which the Government seems to be on such good terms, make representations with a view of pressing on Turkey the obligations of the Treaty of Berlin?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: That Question is a very fair one to ask, and really raises one of the principal points. The obligation is one which is incumbent not merely upon this country, but upon all the other Powers of Europe.

INLAND REVENUE—BREWERS' LICENCES.

MR. BIRKBECK asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, taking into consideration the small amount of revenue received on account of Brewers' Licences where the annual value of the house does not exceed £10, and the hardship of agricultural labourers having to pay an annual licence of six shillings for brewing home brewed beer for their own consumption, he will for the future relinquish or abate the tax?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I promised last year that I would consider the question of the 6*s*. and 9*s*. brewing licences before this year's Budget, and at present I am not able to say more. But I must point out to the hon. Member, and to those who have appealed to me on this subject, that private brewers' licences are understood to be not so much taken out by agricultural labourers as by farmers whose dwelling-houses are not valued above £10; and in these cases they give beer to their labourers without payment of any duty but the licence, which is not nearly equal to the beer duty.

Were it not for the licence very serious inroads would be made on the beer duty, as well as injustice done to small country brewers for sale, who pay both licence and duty.

ARMY—REMOVAL OF AN INSANE SOLDIER FROM ENGLAND TO IRELAND.

Colonel NOLAN asked the Secretary of State for War, If a War Office route was signed by his Department about the 10th February ordering a lance sergeant of the Scotch Fusilier Guards and an escort to proceed from England to Tuam, and there to consign to the parish authorities a soldier of that regiment, who was an alleged lunatic; if this soldier had seen any war service; and, if so, where; if there was any proof that this soldier had ever been in Tuam beyond his statement on attestation; how long this soldier had been quartered in England, or had been on active service, and how long he had been out of Ireland previous to his enlistment; if the soldier referred to was entitled to £16 deferred pay; and, if he would take steps to guard against soldiers being handed over by an escort to a parish when no longer useful to the War Department, and until this change is effected to afford some intimation to the Poor Law authorities before they are requested or ordered to take charge of such cases?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Such a route was signed on the 2nd instant, in accordance with the provisions of Clause 91 of the Army Act of 1881. The soldier served in the Egyptian Campaign of 1882. There was not any proof that he had ever been in Tuam beyond his statement on attestation. With the exception of service in Egypt in 1882, the soldier had been quartered in England since January, 1879. He was enlisted at Glasgow, and was supposed to have found his way there in search of work; but it is not known how long before enlistment he had been out of Ireland. He was entitled to deferred pay, amounting to £15 19*s.* 4*d.* I will take care that reasonable notice shall in such cases be afforded to the Local Authorities; but I am not prepared at present to recommend any change in the Act.

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND)—ASSISTANT SURVEYOR OF BUILDINGS.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Secretary to the Treasury the following Questions with regard to the appointment to one of the two then vacant offices of Assistant Surveyor of Buildings in the Department of Public Works in Ireland which was made last November, and, according to the answer given in this House, was made "by promotion from persons of twenty years' service;"—What were the qualifications of the person promoted; what post he actually held previous to this appointment, and whether it was of a temporary nature; what is his age; and was he medically examined with a view to his post; and by whom, and when, the rule of twenty years' service entitling to promotion was instituted?

Mr. HIBBERT: The hon. Member seems to be misinformed as to the state of the case, as he will see by reference to *Hansard's* report of my Predecessor's reply to his former Question. The officer promoted on the occasion referred to had been for 20 years permanently employed in different branches of the Office as an architectural and engineering draftsman; he is 38 years of age, and holds the Civil Service certificate of his qualification, including health. There is no such rule as that suggested in the last paragraph of the Question; and I should have thought that no exception could be taken to promoting a man after 20 years of good service to a newly created post.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF JOHN EGAN.

Mr. SEXTON asked, Whether one John Egan, of Derryea, county Mayo, is now enduring a sentence of two years' imprisonment, upon a conviction obtained on a charge of having assaulted one John Walsh, in December 1883; whether, on the 23rd of December last, John M'Manus, of Derry, county Mayo, went before Mr. Joseph D'Arcy, a justice of the said county, and made a declaration on oath, admitting that he had committed the assault in respect of which John Egan had been convicted, and that he is ready and willing to abide the result of his confession; whether, the sworn declaration of John M'Manus having been transmitted to the Lord Lieutenant, His Excellency, on the 2nd ult., caused the announcement to be made that "the Law must take its course;" whether this is to be taken as a final answer; and, whether a copy of the notes of the Judge who tried the case will be laid upon the Table?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER), in reply, said: The man mentioned in the Question is undergoing a period of two years' imprisonment for a serious assault on one John Walsh, committed in December, 1883. The case was very clearly proved. It is true that John M'Manus, who is brother-in-law of Egan, has made the declaration referred to; but he was examined as a witness for the defence at the trial, where he swore equally positively that it was not he who struck the blow. No credence can be attached to his statement, and His Excellency has decided that the law must take its course, and this may be regarded as the final answer. I cannot undertake to lay the Judge's notes on the Table. It is not the practice to do so.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—THE RIVER NORE—ALLEGED ACTION OF THE POLICE.

MR. MARUM asked, Whether it is the fact that the Constabulary force stationed at Bennettsbridge, in the county Kilkenny, are in the habit of acting as water bailiffs over the River Nore, instead of confining their duties to the enforcement of the fishery regulations thereof; whether they are in the habit of flinging stones and long ropes with iron crooks at the ends called "drags" from the summit of a bridge over the river at boatmen beneath, to the imminent danger of inflicting grievous bodily injury; whether some fishermen have been seriously injured thereby; and, whether he will cause inquiry to be made and steps to be taken to prevent such illegal practices?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): It is not the fact that the Constabulary at Bennettsbridge are in the habit of acting as water bailiffs over the river, nor have they, or any of them, flung stones or "drags," as alleged in the Question. It is understood that stones have been thrown at men who were illegally fishing in the river, and that on one occasion shots were fired over their heads. This was not done by the Constabulary, but it is believed by other fishermen, with the object of frightening the poachers, and driving them away.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER FERGUS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How much the Government has lent towards the River Fergus reclamation scheme, in county Clare; what is now the position of the land proposed to be reclaimed, when the tide is full; how much do the Government engineers estimate it would now take to finish the work; and, what is their idea of the value of the property when finished?

MR. HIBBERT: About £92,000 has been expended on this work, and it is hoped that between £7,000 and £8,000 more will complete it. The estimated value of the land to be reclaimed exceeds £70,000. The land is still covered with water at high tide, as the sea cannot be excluded until the bank is finished.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND)—THE DERRY CENTRAL RAILWAY.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the extent of the mortgage of the Government against the Derry Central Railway; what is the rate of interest; and, whether the interest has been punctually paid up till the present; and, if not, how much arrears of interest is due?

MR. HIBBERT: The mortgage in this case is for £100,000, bearing interest at 4 per cent. I am sorry to say the interest has not been paid punctually, and the arrears have accumulated to the amount of about £10,000. The Company is, however, paying over the whole of its net revenue, and with improved traffic we may hope to see the arrears reduced.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE asked whether there were other railways in the same position?

MR. HIBBERT said, it was only too true that there were other railways in the same position.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE: What are their names?

MR. HIBBERT said, he could not tell the names at present.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE BABBICOMBE MURDER—ATTEMPTED EXECUTION AT EXETER.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the account which has appeared of the attempted execution at Exeter is true; and, what course he intends to take in the present case, and also in the future, in order to prevent the recurrence of such a scandal? I assume that the answer to the first part of my Question will be in the affirmative. With regard to the second, the Home Secretary had said he did not think public opinion would uphold him in carrying out the execution if this person were brought to be hung again, in which statement I am bound to say I agree. But I should like to ask the third Question—that is, as regards the future—whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman means to take any steps to prevent the recurrence of such a scandal? I ask this, because I think it is of importance to be known whether the responsibility of finding the scaffold rests on the Sheriff or the officers of the prison; and if, as I suppose the answer will be, it rests on the Sheriff, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman proposes fresh legislation to make any alteration in this position?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am extremely glad to receive the support of the right hon. Gentleman in the decision at which I have arrived, because I am quite sure it will carry great weight in public opinion. As regards the first Question he has asked me as to the cause of this deplorable miscarriage in the execution, substantially, I believe, the account that has appeared in the newspapers is true. I have received this afternoon an account from men who were sent down to inquire into what happened in the gaol, and, of course, there will be a more formal Report and investigation in the case. With reference to the Question as regards the responsible authority in matters of this kind, there can be no doubt that the entire responsibility for the execution of capital sentences in all respects rests with the Sheriff. That is a fundamental part of the Constitution of this country, and when various changes have taken place in the gaols, both in the Act of 1865 and the Act of 1877, great care was taken that the position of the Sheriff in that respect should remain entirely unaltered; and, therefore, whatever the officers of the prison do in respect of these executions, they do simply and directly under the orders of the Sheriff; and there was a lettter from the right hon. Gentleman in December, 1878, to the Governors of prisons, ordering them, when the prisons came under the control of the Government, to obey and to carry out the orders of the Sheriff in this respect. I confess myself, on the best consideration I could give to the matter, I do not see that there would be any advantage—but, on the contrary, considerable disadvantage—in altering that state of things. Though the right hon. Gentleman has been good enough to express his concurrence in the decision I arrived at in reference to the respite, perhaps, as some doubt has been expressed on the subject, I may say a word upon that matter. Of course, the responsibility of a decision in that matter rests absolutely and entirely upon the Secretary of State. It is, of course, a very grave and very onerous responsibility; but I confess in this case I never entertained one moment's doubt upon it. At the same time, it is desirable that the truth should be understood—I do not mean in this House, but outside this House. The fact is that the exercise of the Prerogative of mercy does not depend upon principles of strict law and justice; still less does it depend upon sentiment in any way. It is really a question of policy and of judgment in each individual case; and, in my opinion, a capital execution, which in its circumstances creates horror and compassion for the culprit rather than a sense of indignation at his crime, is a great evil, and when such events occur it becomes more and more difficult to maintain the punishment of death at all. This is a question that cannot be decided on precedents alone—it is not a question of precedents. But it is important to consider what we have done in cases of this kind in former times. When I had to decide this case, which I had to do at once, I had in my recollection a book I recently read—*The Chronicles of Newgate*—which contains a quantity of incidents of this character which have happened in former times, when executions were more carelessly performed than they are now. In those cases there were frequent instances of the rope breaking; and still oftener there were cases of persons being resuscitated after they were supposed to have been hanged. In many of these cases—indeed, in most of them—the practice was, when the execution had miscarried, not after an interval of time to revert to it, and carry it into effect. I do not know whether I should be taking up the time of the House too much; but I should like to mention a case which is very much like the present. There was a horrid scene at Jersey at the beginning of this century. The hangman added his weight to that of the suspended culprit, and having first pulled him sideways, he then got on his shoulders, so that the rope broke, and to the surprise of all, the criminal rose to his feet with the hangman on his shoulders, and with his fingers loosened the rope. After that the Sheriff sent for another rope; but the spectators interfered, and the man was carried back to gaol. The whole case was referred to the King, and the poor wretch, whose crime had been a military one, was pardoned. That shows what in former times was the view taken in these cases; and I do not think that anybody would desire that our manners should be more savage and barbarous than they were at the beginning of the century.

FISHING VESSELS (REGULATIONS AS TO LIGHTS).

MR. BIRKBECK asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether a Memorial from a portion of the trawling smack-owners at Grimsby was presented to the Board of Trade, during the week ending 6th December last, in favour of a new proposal for trawlers' lights, viz. a duplex coloured lanthorn in addition to a white masthead light; whether such proposal was condemned at a Conference of delegates from Scarborough, Hull, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Ramsgate, Brixham, and Plymouth, held in London on 16th December last; whether he is aware that the Memorial was only supported by a portion of the smack-owners of Grimsby and some Northern ports, principally interested in steam trawlers; whether it is a fact that the duplex lanthorn proposal was only submitted to individual members of a Departmental Committee (not assembled), and was recommended, without previous trial by the Board of Trade, for legalisation within twenty-three days of the presentation of the Grimsby Memorial, and without any opportunity being afforded by the Board of Trade to the smack-owners of England to express an opinion on the new regulation; whether the proposal was legalised by Order in Council on 30th December last; and, whether he is aware that at the conclusion of the debate on fishing vessels lights on 31st May 1881, he is reported by *Hansard* to have said—

> "As to the new regulations he would undertake that they should not come into force until a further Report was made;" and "that the House would have an opportunity of considering any new regulations that might be proposed, anything that differed from the present practice?"

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The history of the case as set forth in the hon. Member's Question is, in the main, correct. The proposal, however, for the adoption of a duplex lanthorn came from a large and influential section of the trawling interest. The hon. Member has quoted some observations which I made in the course of a debate with regard to fishing vessels lights, which took place in this House in May, 1881. If he will carefully refer to the context he will see that the pledge which I gave was that the present regulations should not be altered until the House had had an opportunity of considering the proposed alterations. The existing regulations have not been altered, and are not affected by the permissive use of the duplex lanthorn, which is all that has been sanctioned by the Order in Council.

HOSPITALS AND INFIRMARIES (IRELAND)—GRANTS TO DUBLIN HOSPITALS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is true, as stated, that the Treasury claim to have the power to capitalise the various sums annually voted by this House in aid of certain hospitals in Dublin; and, whether he will undertake on the part of the Government that no step will be taken towards capitalising those annual grants, or any of them, until the Estimate in that regard for the current year has been dealt with, and until the House has had an opportunity of considering the principle upon which the grants are now distributed?

MR. HIBBERT: The matter to which the hon. Member refers is still under the careful consideration of the Government. As it would be impossible to capitalize the grants without the authority of Parliament, there will be necessarily afforded the opportunity of discussion which the hon. Member desires.

NAVY—ARMOUR OF SHIPS OF WAR.

SIR EDWARD J. REED asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to apply any additional armour to Her Majesty's Ships *Ajax*, *Agamemnon*, *Colossus*, *Edinburgh*, *Collingwood*, *Rodney*, *Howe*, *Anson*, *Benbow*, *Camperdown*, *Impérieuse*, and *Warspite*, for the purpose of protecting them against the fire of machine guns?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The Board of Admiralty have not decided to apply additional armour to the ships enumerated by the hon. Member. Various suggestions connected with the armour and armaments of these ships have been submitted from time to time by the professional officers, and they are receiving most careful consideration.

SIR EDWARD J. REED: In consequence of the unsatisfactory answer I have received I will repeat the Question shortly. The hon. Member then asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether his attention has been called to that portion of the Report of the 1871 Committee on Designs, in which they refer to so-called citadel ships with unarmoured ends—

> "Constructed on a cellular system, or containing some buoyant substance such as cork,"

and say—

> "in the absence of any practical experience of the effect of large shells or torpedoes upon such a structure as that which we have in view, it is impossible to say with confidence that the object aimed at would be thus attained, but, if it were, consequences of so much importance and value would follow that we think it right to indicate this line of inquiry as worthy of experimental investigation;

whether he is aware that the Director of Naval Construction in 1877 expressed his full agreement with that part of the Committee's Report; whether the experimental investigation thus recommended has ever been made; if not, whether it is true that, notwithstanding the strongly expressed opinion of the Committee on Designs and of our own Chief Professional Adviser that—

> "It is impossible to say with confidence that the object aimed at would be thus attained,"

the Board of Admiralty have proceeded with the construction of such ships, to the exclusion of all other armoured ships, until the total expenditure upon them which has been made or undertaken has exceeded the sum of seven millions sterling, exclusive of the cost of their armaments and stores; and, whether the Admiralty propose, before further ships of this kind are recommended to Parliament, to carry out the experimental investigation so strongly recommended by the Committee on Designs and by the Director of Naval Construction?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The question of the shipbuilding policy of the Admiralty during many years involves so much controversial matter, and would require so much explanatory statement in order to deal with it properly, that I venture to submit to the general sense of the House that the hon. Member would do better to place his views before Parliament in the form of a Motion, or to bring them forward upon the Navy Estimates.

SIR EDWARD J. REED: As my Question relates purely to matters of historical fact I shall repeat it this day week.

NAVY—ENGINEER OFFICERS OF THE NAVY.

SIR EDWARD J. REED asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he is able to state what improvements in the pay, rank, and uniform of the Engineer Officers of the Royal Navy have been recently made, or are in contemplation?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: We regret that we have not been able to include in the Estimates any addition to the pay of the engineers; but the question of pay, rank, and uniform are under the consideration of the Board.

MR. PULESTON asked when the Report on the subject was likely to be made?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The Report has already been made, and is under the consideration of the Naval Lords.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will state what armament the Admiralty now intend to place in the *Benbow*, *Rodney*, *Howe, Camperdown, Edinburgh, Collingwood, Hero, Impérieuse,* and *Warspite,* on what dates respectively the guns will be required, and the dates also on which it is now intended and expected that the ships will be ready for sea; and, whether the War Department has undertaken to supply the guns within the requisite time?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: In reply to the Question of my right hon. Friend, I have to state that the main armament of the *Benbow* includes two 110-ton guns and 10 6-inch guns. The guns will be required in September, 1886. The main armament of the *Rodney* and *Howe* includes four 64-ton and six 6-inch guns. The guns will be required in June, 1886. The *Camperdown* carries a similar armament. The guns will be required in June, 1887. The *Edinburgh* and *Collingwood* will be armed with four 43-ton guns and five and six 6-inch guns respectively. The guns will be required in June and July of this year. The *Hero* will be armed with two 43-ton and four 6-inch guns. The guns will be required in September, 1886. The *Impérieuse* and *Warspite* will carry four 18-ton guns and six 6-inch guns. The guns are required for the *Impérieuse* in April next, and for the *Warspite* in March. The War Office has undertaken to supply all the guns by the time they are required. The dates proposed for the completion of the ships are approximately six months after the delivery of the guns.

MR. PULESTON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether his attention has been called to the letter in *The Times* last week from the honourable Member for Cardiff, formerly Chief Constructor of the Navy, and especially the following paragraph, viz.:—

> "I will here repeat in the most public and responsible manner that the *Ajax, Agamemnon, Colossus,* and *Edinburgh,* and the six ships of the *Admiral* class, are all utterly unfit to engage the corresponding French ships; unfit to enter the line of battle at all; unfit to be retained on the list of armoured ships; and I demand that they be at least afforded protection against that swift destruction from the fire of the smallest guns afloat which now awaits them; if this be not done, then upon the heads of the present Board of Admiralty must continue to rest, after this public warning, the responsibility of delivering 10 British ships of the largest class an easy and certain prey to destruction should war arise;"

and, what course the Government intend to take with respect to those ships?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The Board of Admiralty do not concur with the opinion expressed by the hon. Member for Cardiff in a recent letter to *The Times* with reference to the fighting qualities of the ships built by successive Boards of Admiralty, which he enumerates. The course which the Government intend to take is to do all in their power to complete five ships rapidly, and to make them thoroughly effective vessels of war.

FRANCE AND BURMAH—THE COMMERCIAL TREATY.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Government have received particulars of the Treaty stated to have been made between France and Burmah; if so, whether it is a purely Commercial Treaty, or connected with the political situation; also, whether this country is represented at the Court of Mandalay?

MR. J. K. CROSS: This country is not now represented at the Court of Mandalay. The Treaty between France and Burmah has not yet been ratified in the French Chamber; but M. Ferry has furnished Her Majesty's Government with a copy of the Convention, which appears to be a purely commercial one. It is supplementary to the Treaty, signed in Paris on January 29, 1873, but not put in force till June 1 last, which established between France and Burmah a mutual right to accredit Diplomatic and Consular Representatives.

POST OFFICE — PARCEL POST TO EGYPT FOR SOLDIERS SERVING IN THAT COUNTRY.

COLONEL MAKINS asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in consequence of the great cost to the wives and friends of our soldiers in Egypt of sending small parcels to them at ordinary postage rates, he can arrange for the Parcel Post tariff applying to Egypt as it does to India; or, at any rate, to parcels addressed to those serving with the Army in Egypt?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: In reply to the Question of the hon. and gallant Member, I am glad to state that I have so far been able to anticipate the object he has in view that by the last mail I made a proposal to the Egyptian Post Office for a parcel post between this country and Egypt. On learning that my proposal is accepted, and subject to the approval of the Treasury, I shall be able to carry out the arrangement at once.

GENERAL GORDON'S LETTERS AND DIARIES.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he would have any objection to place in the Tea Room or Library, properly protected by glass, some of the actual letters received from General Gordon from Khartoum, including those on small pieces of paper saying "Khartoum all right," and "could hold out for years;" and, whether he considers the latter genuine?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The originals of the messages which the hon. Member specially mentions have not yet been received. Lord Wolseley has not sent home all General Gordon's original letters and messages; but he has been instructed by telegraph to do so. There will, probably, be no objection to treat some of them as the hon. Member proposes, in order to give to hon. Members the opportunity of judging whether they are genuine.

THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT asked the Chairman of Ways and Means, who has reported to the House that the Manchester Ship Canal Bill is to go first before a Committee of the Lords, Whether, since a Bill to connect Manchester with the sea was passed by a Committee of the Commons and thrown out by a Committee of the Lords in the Session of 1883, and a similar Bill was passed by a Committee of the Lords and thrown out by a Committee of the Commons in the Session of 1884, there is any reason to suppose that the present Session will afford time for two inquiries into so large a subject; whether it is a fact that in the two last Sessions the second inquiry took place in the greatest difficulty with regard to time; and, whether, under the special circumstances of this case, having regard both to time and cost, he would support a Motion to refer this Bill to a Joint Committee of the two Houses?

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY: In accordance with the arrangements which exist for the conduct of Private Business in both Houses of Parliament, the Bill to which the Question of my hon. Friend relates has been in due course referred to the House of Lords. Any proposition, therefore, for a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament on the Manchester Ship Canal Bill, would have to be originated in that House. I do not understand my hon. Friend to desire me to express any opinion as to the merits of the Bill, and I am anxious to avoid the supposition of doing so. But there can be no doubt that a project to connect Manchester with the sea and to make it a seaport is one of great importance and interest, not only to that great commercial city, but also to Liverpool and the whole of Lancashire. That project has already been considered by both Houses of Parliament on two occasions and with varying fortunes in each. In 1883 it was introduced in this House and examined by a Committee for 39 days, when it was passed. It went to the House of Lords on the 12th of July, and after 10 days' consideration in Committee in that House it was rejected. In 1884 the Bill was introduced in the House of Lords, and was for 41 days under the consideration of a Select Committee there, who passed the Bill. It then came before a Committee here on the 7th of July, and after being under consideration during 20 days it was rejected. Thus there has been a very great expenditure of money involved in these proceedings, amounting, I am told, to between £100,000 and £200,000, and the labours of four Committees have been rendered fruitless. Now, Sir, considering the very exceptional character of this Bill, I am persuaded that it might, with advantage, having regard to several precedents, be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses. I shall be very glad to co-operate with any arrangement of that character when the proper time comes for so doing.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON: In reference to the remarks which have just fallen from the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means, may I ask if hon. Members will be allowed to offer an opinion, if there is a proposal to refer this Bill to a Joint Committee of both Houses? It is a matter upon which, Sir, Liverpool would certainly have something to say.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY: I do not know whether what I said caught the ear of my noble Friend, but I stated that any proposition for submitting the Bill to a Joint Committe must originate with the House of Lords. If such a proposal, after having been originated in the House of Lords, were brought down for the consideration of this House, there would be, unquestionably, an opportunity afforded to every hon. Member for expressing an opinion upon it.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE KILKENNY DRAINAGE DISTRICT SCHEME.

MR. MARUM asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is aware of the proposed formation of an arterial drainage district in North Kilkenny, projected by certain tenant farmers, and extending over an area of some twenty miles in length; that the county surveyor of Kilkenny has executed all the necessary maps, plans, and specifications, on their behalf, which have been lodged with the Board of Works at the expense of those tenant farmers; that the engineer of the Board of Works has held an inquiry, after deposit of funds made by those tenant farmers, that he has reported favourably as to this proposed arterial drainage scheme, and that the sum of over £32,000 proposed to be expended would realise at the lowest estimate 6½ per cent. upon the outlay; that a deputation waited upon his predecessor, Mr. Trevelyan, in 1883, requesting exceptionable terms as to the interest upon the sum of £32,000 required for the project, and likewise encouragement and assistance in reference to the formation of the drainage district and the action of the Board of Works in relation thereto; that by a letter dated the 6th day of December 1883, Mr. Trevelyan intimated that some alteration in the law in regard to giving tenants a voice in the undertaking of arterial drainage works would be introduced into the Land Improvement (Ireland) Consolidation Bill of the former Session in the event of its being re-introduced in the then next Session, and that Mr. Trevelyan recommended upon the whole matter—

> "That the promoters of the Kilkenny scheme should hold it over until those matters had been considered and decided by the Government;"

that the Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage (Ireland) Bill of 1883 was withdrawn, and subsequently the Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage (Ireland) Bill of 1884 was likewise withdrawn; that the tenant farmers of this extensive drainage district, namely, of Urlingford, Johnstown, Cullohill, Rathdowney, and Durrow, who have expended a large sum in preliminary expenses, in reference to those projected drainage works, have been and are much disappointed, and likewise the labourers of the locality; and, whether the Government are prepared to introduce provisions into the Arterial Drainage Bill now brought in, that will carry out the undertaking of Mr. Trevelyan as to giving a voice to the tenants on the Drainage Board by constituting "Statutory termors" owners of land for the purposes of the Act, and otherwise?

MR. HIBBERT: The circumstances stated by the hon. Member are known to me, and I am glad to recognize the intelligent zeal of the tenant farmers for the improvement of their land. In reply to the substantive part of this Question, I beg to refer him to the Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage Bill now before the House, Clause 45 of which would effect the object he desires, and which contains many other useful improvements in the existing law. Unfortunately, however, these improvements seem to be disapproved by the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar).

THE MAGISTRACY (GREAT BRITAIN)—PROHIBITION OF PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PROCESSIONS.

MR. MARUM asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether there is any circular or instruction issued to the local magistracy of Great Britain, in reference to the prohibition of public meetings or processions, or their action in relation thereto; whether his attention has been directed to the Salvation Army case (Beatly and others, Appellants; Gillbanks, Respondent, Law Reports, Q.B. 308), wherein the following "Public Notice" was placarded through the streets of Weston-super-Mare:—

> "Whereas it hath been made appear to us the undersigned, two of Her Majesty's justices of the peace for the county of Somerset, acting in and for the division upon the oath of divers persons, that a riotous and tumultuous assembly

did take place on the night of the 23rd of March in certain public streets in Weston-super-Mare, and further, that there are reasonable grounds for apprehending a repetition of such riotous and tumultuous assembly in the public streets of Weston-super-Mare. We do therefore hereby require, order, and direct all persons to abstain from assembling to the disturbance of the public peace, in the public streets, within the parish." (Signed by two magistrates.)

That, thereupon one Beatly and others were arrested for holding an assembly and forming a procession in contravention of this magisterial notice or proclamation, and were subsequently convicted by the local magistrates and ordered to find sureties to keep the peace. That such conviction and order was set aside, with costs, in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice (13th June, 1882); that the appellants assembled with others for a lawful purpose and with no intention of carrying it out unlawfully, but with the knowledge that their assembly would be opposed, and with good reason to suppose that a breach of the peace would be committed by those opposed to it; that it was held by Field and Cave, T.S. that they could not be rightly convicted of an unlawful assembly; that Mr. Justice Field, in the course of giving judgment, said—

> "What has happened here is that an unlawful organisation has assumed to itself the right to prevent the appellants and others from lawfully assembling together, and the finding of the justices (magistrates at petty sessions) amounts to this, that a man may be convicted for doing a lawful act if he knows that his doing it may cause another to do an unlawful act. There is no authority for such a proposition;"

whether he acquiesces in the principles of Law laid down by the learned judges in the above case, and that the prohibition of public meetings or public processions, under the circumstances therein occurring, and proclamations or public notices purporting to suppress such public meetings or public processions in local authorities are not warranted by Law in Great Britain; and, whether, in consequence of this decision, he has felt it to be his duty to withdraw or modify any former circular or instruction to local magistracy or issue any fresh one; and, if so, whether he will lay a copy of the same before the House?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that he had not issued any such Circular. He had no power to send instructions to local magistrates as to their duty; he never attempted to do so. When applied to for advice, he had given the best information and advice he could. Before the decision in the Weston-super-Mare case the Home Office gave advice, founded upon opinions given by Law Officers of the Crown. Papers were laid upon the Table in 1882 in connection with what was called the Basingstoke case. Then came the legal decision referred to, and after that, whenever magistrates appealed to the Home Office, they were referred to that decision. The whole matter was fully set out in a speech he made on the 15th of July last year on the Cleator Moor case.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Punj Deh is garrisoned by Afghan troops, and at what distance from Punj Deh the Russian advanced force now is?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Punj Deh is garrisoned by Afghan troops. It is about 24 miles south of Sariyazi, which is reported to have been lately occupied by the Russians.

ARMY (INDIA)—BRITISH REINFORCEMENTS.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, having regard to recent events, it is intended to strengthen the British Forces in India?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: In answering this Question I will also reply to the hon. Member for Athlone (Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy). The Earl of Dufferin has not asked for any increase of the number of British troops; and Her Majesty's Government have not thought it necessary to strengthen the British Forces in India.

COMMITTEE ON ARMY AND NAVY EXPENDITURE—SHORT SERVICE.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the question of Short Service, especially as regards Indian Reliefs and the depletion of Regiments, also the numbers of men constantly in hospital, will form parts of the subject for the Select

Committee on Army and Navy Expenditure, or be within the province of such Committee?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The whole question of Army and Navy Expenditure is proposed to be referred to the Committee, and it will be for the Committee itself to determine what branches of expenditure it will take up.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—STEAMERS ON THE NILE.

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government intend building portable shallow water steel-clad steamers suitable for the protection of the Lower and Upper Nile Valleys; if so, whether he can inform the House what number are to be ordered, also how they are to be armed, and when they are to be ready for shipment to Alexandria?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: We are making every preparation to afford Lord Wolseley all the assistance he may require in the matter of steamers for the Nile or otherwise; but, in the interests of the Expedition, I must ask hon. Members not to expect me to describe in detail the preparations, knowledge of which might become valuable to the enemy.

FRANCE AND CHINA—THE HOSTILITIES—BLOCKING OF SHANGHAI RIVER.

MR. SUTHERLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether information has been received by the Foreign Office to the effect that the Chinese authorities have, within the last forty-eight hours, publicly intimated that the entrance to the Shanghai River at Woosung will be blocked, so as to prevent the access of shipping to that port, and that vessels are now being stopped by their owners at Woosung in consequence of this notification; and, if so, whether he can hold out any hopes that the influence of Her Majesty's Government may be successfully employed to avert this extreme measure, which, if carried out, must be the cause of most serious loss and inconvenience to British trade?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have not been informed that the Chinese authorities at Shanghai have given notice that the river is about to be blocked; but they are aware that preparations have been made for that purpose, and that it is the intention of the authorities to obstruct the access to the river if they think it necessary for purposes of defence. Her Majesty's Government have urged, and will continue to urge, upon the Chinese Government that there should be no unnecessary interference with trade; but they would not be justified in preventing the Chinese authorities from the adoption of defensive measures. From a telegram received to-day at Lloyd's it appears that the French Minister in China has re-affirmed an agreement made last year between the French and Chinese officials at Shanghai that Shanghai and Woosung should remain outside the range of hostilities.

FRANCE AND CHINA—THE HOSTILITIES—INTERNATIONAL LAW.

MR. CROPPER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has seen the following report in *The Times*:—

> "Hong Kong, Feb. 2.
>
> "At Taiwan there are only three French vessels blockading the south-west of Formosa. The French are, however, destroying hundreds of fishing and trading craft along the coast, the crews being killed, or taken to Kelung and treated barbarously:
>
> "Much indignation is expressed at Hong Kong being allowed to be used as a base for such operations;"

and, if he will inform the House if the Foreign Enlistment Act is yet fairly put in force at our Stations in China?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I beg to refer the hon. Member to Earl Granville's full and explicit statement in the House of Lords yesterday, in answer to Lord Denman's Question, and to state that the Foreign Enlistment Act is being enforced in Her Majesty's Colonies in the East.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AT BIRMINGHAM—MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to a speech delivered at Birmingham by the President of the Board of Trade on the 5th January, and in which he is reported in *The Times* of the 6th to have said—

> "But I ask what ransom will property pay for the security which it enjoys," and "what substitute will it make for the natural rights which have ceased to be recognized;"

and, whether these sentiments express the policy of the Cabinet as a body; and, if not, whether the principle that those who hold landed property may be compelled to ransom it, is an open question on which each Minister of the Crown is free to hold his own opinion?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Question of the hon. Gentleman leads me to state that I had some communication—about 10 days, or I believe more than that —a fortnight ago with my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade on the subject of the speech to which the hon. Member refers. My right hon. Friend was kind enough to give me an explanation of his general meaning. The House will forgive me if I read the passage of the letter, although it is longer than I should wish to introduce ordinarily in reply to a Question. My right hon. Friend says in a letter to me, which is dated February 7—

> "Starting with the proposition that the obligations as well as the rights of property must be strictly enforced, I argued that the community, as a whole, owed to its poorer members something more in the way of social legislation than it already had conceded in the Poor Law and the Education Act. I urged that the incidence of taxation still bore unequally on the working classes, and that the burden should be in proportion to the means. I also argued in favour of some practical attempt to multiply small owners and tenants."

My right hon. Friend then further illustrates his meaning by reference to a speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). He says—

> "I find, for instance, Mr. Goschen, at Edinburgh, declaring the greatest happiness of the greatest number to be the peculiar object of Liberal policy, and advocating, in particular, as one of the applications of the general doctrine, the multiplication of small holders. He expresses disapproval of the methods suggested in my speeches; but I note a remarkable passage in which he says, in regard to the proposals of State socialism, he thinks it wiser to extend the functions of local authorities in order to entrust to them the work which cannot be safely performed by the State. This completely covers by main suggestion, that the local authorities should have power to purchase land, and expend money in connection with the creation of occupying ownerships and allotments."

I therefore understand that my right hon. Friend considers that the incidence of taxation is still bearing unequally upon the working classes, and that the burden ought to be in proportion to the means of the taxpayer. These are opinions which appear to me to be matters for discussion, and which it is totally impossible for me to discuss in making a reply to a Question; but, undoubtedly, if there is anyone in the House in whose case it is unnecessary that such exposition should be given, I am that person; because for the last 30 years it has been my incessant duty—or, at all events, my practice—to inflict upon the House of Commons the most detailed knowledge of all my opinions upon every question of money and finance. But the hon. Gentleman has added another Question, which I have some difficulty in construing. I have said these opinions of my right hon. Friend are matters for discussion; but, in my opinion, they do not express, nor do they purport to express, the policy of the Cabinet as a body. They are his own particular sentiments, and have nothing to do with any matter now under the consideration of the Cabinet. And then the hon. Gentleman asks whether the principle that those who hold landed property may be compelled to ransom it, is an open question on which each Minister of the Crown is free to hold his own opinion? I am not aware that any such principle is announced with regard to landed property. I am bound to say the only serious attack I have ever known made on landed property was an attack made, whether knowingly or not, by the Party opposite, strange as it may seem; for in the year 1852—the right hon. Gentleman who leads the Party opposite is not responsible for it, for he was not then in the House—but in that year it was proposed by the Party opposite, when in power under the Leadership of that distinguished man, Mr. Disraeli, to introduce into the Income Tax the principle of taxing Schedule A, together with Schedule C, at a higher rate than Schedule D and the other Schedules. Undoubtedly that was, in my opinion, a most formidable attack on landed property, which I have on every occasion, for 30 years, done my best to oppose; and if my right hon. Friend leans at all to an opinion of that kind, he certainly will find in me one of his antagonists. But I have communicated with my right hon. Friend, and I find he by no means follows the Party opposite in this matter. He assures me that what he has said is—not in his fixed conviction, but, as I understand him, he thinks it a fair subject for consideration—that all property should, whether anything in the nature of investments, whether personal or in land, be taxed at a higher rate than precarious incomes. This seems to me to be a matter for fair Parliamentary consideration; and undoubtedly it is impossible for me to quarrel with my right hon. Friend for holding that opinion, though I entirely dissent from it, when I recollect that he stops far short of a doctrine announced as a matter of practical legislation by Gentlemen who sit on the Benches opposite.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND: I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman has not looked at my Question. The Question I asked is, whether he has seen the extracts from the speech which contained the following words:—

> "But I ask what ransom will property pay for the security which it enjoys;"

and—

> "what substitute will it make for the natural rights which have ceased to be recognised?"

The right hon. Gentleman simply reads an explanation of other parts of the President of the Board of Trade's speech; but does not answer my Question.

MR. GLADSTONE: I beg pardon; I began by saying that, having seen and had my attention called to these expressions, I asked my right hon. Friend what he intended to convey by them, and I have read to the House his explanation. There was nothing said, either in these expressions or anywhere else, about landed property, on which the stress of the hon. Gentleman's Question was meant to bear; and I really venture to doubt whether the hon. Gentleman has read his own Question.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—PUBLIC PRAYER FOR THE TROOPS.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as the state of public affairs in the Soudan and elsewhere has constituted a case of great emergency, he will advise the Crown to issue its mandate for public Prayer to be offered to Almighty God for our seamen and soldiers engaged in warlike operations, and for the success of Her Majesty's arms by sea and land?

MR. SEXTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman did not consider prayers voluntarily offered to the Almighty of more efficacy than prayers consequent on the mandate of Her Majesty's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: In reply to the Question of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have already informed him that I have had communications with the Primate of the Church of England, and I have found that provision had been made, by means not political, for the offering of prayers of this kind, and I believe they are universally used at the present time throughout the country. That being so, there is no intention on the part of the Government to attempt any interference.

CENTRAL ASIA—HERAT.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government have taken, are taking, or will take, any measures with a view to the security of Herat, and to prevent its being taken by a *coup de main?*

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, in reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government are engaged in taking the steps which they deem best for ascertaining and securing the entire frontier of Afghanistan, including Herat; and they cannot enter into any statement of particulars, because they conceive it would be disadvantageous to the public interest.

GENERAL GORDON—TRIBUTE OF HONOUR.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER, who had given Notice to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is his intention, or of any responsible Minister of the Crown in the House of Commons, to pay any verbal tribute of honour to the memory of General Gordon? said, that after the eloquent, but rather tardy, tribute paid by the Prime Minister the previous night to the memory of General Gordon, he would not put the Question.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—THE EVACUATION OF THE SOUDAN.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the following statements, made by the Correspondent of *The Standard* at Suakin on the 23rd :—

> "The avowed determination of Government to abandon the Soudan after taking Khartoum must have the effect of driving every tribesman inclined to help us into the arms of the Mahdi, it will in no way disarm the fanatical hostility of the enemy; the news known here to-day will be carried to-morrow across the Desert. In ten days it will be known at Berber and Khartoum, and throughout the whole of the valley of the Upper Nile, and will be a direct incitement on the part of the English Government to every tribe in the Soudan to rise on the flanks and rear of our little army there, for it is a notice that all who take our part or show us friendship will be finally abandoned to the vengeance of the Mahdi. The most intense bitterness is felt and expressed by officers and men here. They feel that Government has thus once more, at a critical moment, increased the difficulties and dangers of their arduous undertaking, and has added one more to the series of blunders which will have to be retrieved by their life blood; the declaration last year that the Soudan was to be abandoned doomed General Gordon's mission to failure, and cost him his life. The consequences of the reiteration of that pledge to-day are likely to prove scarcely less disastrous;"

and, whether he will now make a declaration that will avert these disastrous results?

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman has been misled by the statements of a correspondent. I am not surprised that the correspondent should have been misled; but I am a little surprised that the hon. Gentleman should have been, as he heard the statement which I made in this House the other day. He calls my attention, and asks me to read a recantation in consequence of a statement of the Correspondent of *The Standard* that there has been an avowed determination on the part of the Government to abandon the Soudan after taking Khartoum. Who has expressed that determination? I have never said a word about it. ["Oh!"] I am speaking now of what has taken place since Parliament met after the Adjournment. What I spoke of, Sir, in the explanation which I addressed to Parliament in the House of Commons on Thursday last was, not the abandonment of the Soudan after the taking of Khartoum—it was the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt. I have never said a word on the subject of the withdrawal or of the evacuation of the Soudan by Her Majesty's Forces. [*Opposition laughter.*] Sir, I explained myself, I think, with tolerable fulness on this subject last night; but I am endeavouring to correct what is evidently a gross misapprehension which seems to have consisted in this—that I have stated that Her Majesty's Forces were to evacuate the Soudan immediately after they had succeeded in taking Khartoum. I have never entered into the subject in the form of any particular statement. What I have said is, that the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt and its restoration to freedom constituted the original policy of Her Majesty's Government, and that that policy had not been altered, but that events had occurred which prevented its immediate execution. And then, in dealing with the question of the taking of Khartoum, I pointed out that the effect of a negative decision on that question would have been the abandonment at one stroke of a variety of purposes—some of which I enumerated, and which consisted of matters with respect to which I believe I said more than once that, in our view, any reasonable effort ought to be made to deal with them. Consequently, there is no truth in the statement that Her Majesty's Forces were simply to execute a military operation and then retire. I now wish to say that I adhere to my full statement of last night as the explanation more at large of my sentiments; but the reason why I dwell more on the phrase "evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt" is this—that on Thursday I was speaking, not as I usually do, but from a note made, after careful consideration, with my Colleagues, and I find the phrase I used—"the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt"—is carefully reported in the newspapers.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether, in view of the very important statement of the Prime Minister, and the importance of the precise meaning of the Government being properly understood in the East, they were to understand from the reply just given that Her Majesty's Government would not give up their control, political or military, over the Soudan which they were endeavouring to obtain till a fixed and orderly Government had been established there?

MR. GLADSTONE: I refer the hon. Member to the speech I made last night, and to the explanations I gave on Thursday. I abide by those explanations, and I refer the hon. Gentleman to them so far as I am concerned.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—PRINCE HASSAN.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Prime Minister, If he could now state whether Prince Hassan was a functionary of the British Government or of the Egyptian?

MR. GLADSTONE: I apprehend that the case is, as it was stated by my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that Prince Hassan is to be considered as a person holding an appointment having relations with other persons who are under the authority of the Khedive of Egypt; but that that appointment was made with the approval and counsel of British functionaries in the Soudan.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Prime Minister, Whether, as it had been publicly stated that Prince Hassan was to be made Governor of Khartoum, Her Majesty's Government would therefore prevent his going as Civil Commissioner with Lord Wolseley?

MR. GLADSTONE: No; Her Majesty's Government do not intend to prevent his going as Civil Commissioner.

EGYPT—ARABI PASHA.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in consideration of the present condition of affairs in Egypt, Her Majesty's Government can see their way to cause the recall of Arabi Pasha from exile in Ceylon, and to further cause his restoration to authority in the administration of the government of the country?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; Her Majesty's Government will not adopt the suggestion contained in the hon. Member's Question.

NAVY—THE TROOPSHIP "POONAH."

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he could give any information with regard to the transport *Poonah*, which was reported to be somewhere in the Irish Channel, having injured her shaft?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The transport *Poonah*, on her way from Malta to Queenstown, partially fractured her main shaft. The Canadian voyageurs who formed part of her passengers were landed at Queenstown. After a consultation with the representatives of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and on the report of the Admiral and engineer officials at Queenstown, it was considered safe to let the ship proceed to Portsmouth accompanied by two tugs. Off the Longships the hawsers parted, and one of the tugs which had lost sight of the steamer in the night came into Falmouth on Monday morning and reported the circumstance. About 7.30 P.M. last night the *Mount Etna*, the other tug which had been engaged, parted with the *Poonah* off the coast of Cornwall. The Admiralty have despatched the powerful tug *Stormcock* from Pembroke, two tugs from Devonport, and a hired tug from Queenstown. They are expected to fall in with the *Poonah* this afternoon.

THE SELECT COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked as to the time when the Chancellor of the Exchequer would move for the appointment of the Select Committees on Army and Navy Expenditure, and on the expenditure for Miscellaneous and other Services?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I do not see any prospect of the Motion for the two Committees being reached before half-past 12 to-night; but I shall move them on the first occasion permitted by the Rules of the House.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman was really going to move a Vote of Censure on his two Colleagues at 12 o'clock at night?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that it was the wish of the House in 1883 and 1884 —a wish pointedly expressed by the Leader of the Party to which the noble Lord belonged—that this Committee to which the noble Lord referred should be appointed, and he should certainly take the first opportunity of moving for its appointment.

GENERAL GORDON—LETTER FROM LORD WOLSELEY.

LORD JOHN MANNERS: I wish to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has any objection to laying on the Table the letter from Lord Wolseley to General Gordon intrusted to Sir Charles Wilson?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have made inquiry, and find that no copy of that letter has been sent home.

MOTION.

—o—

ORDERS OF THE DAY—EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—THE VOTE OF CENSURE—NOTICES OF MOTIONS.

RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Notices of Motions be postponed until after the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. JOHN REDMOND, who had a Notice on the Paper to call attention to the case of District Inspector Murphy, said, that he rose for the purpose of opposing the Motion which had been made by the Prime Minister. He should not have taken this course if there had been the slightest probability of his being able, as a private Member, to have called attention to the subject standing in his name upon any other occasion, as the Government had appropriated all the days of private Members for an indefinite period. He could quite understand the impatience with which English Members might regard the introduction of merely Irish questions at a time like that; but they should remember the position which the Irish Members occupied in that House. They had no other means of calling to account the men ruling their country, who were invested with absolutely arbitrary powers; and it should also be remembered that the Irish Members were not at all interested in the solemn sham fight going on between the rival English political Parties. There were two reasons why the Motion which stood in his name should not be pushed aside by the carrying of the Resolution before the matter had been adequately discussed and disposed of. The matter was one which could brook no delay, for although it might appear to some Members that the subject was an insignificant one, still it should be distinctly understood that this view would not be taken by those who represented the Irish Executive. It related to the dismissal from the Irish Constabulary of an officer who, after 18 years' meritorious service, had been removed from the Force without pension in the most arbitrary and unjust manner, and, as he (Mr. Redmond) believed he would be able to show, most illegally.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must remind the hon. Member that the Rule of Relevancy strictly applies to this debate. The hon. Member would not be in order in going into the details of the case he has referred to upon the Motion now before the House.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said, he was most anxious to observe the ruling of the Chair. He had no intention of going into the details of the case; but he believed he was entitled, as a matter of argument, to show that his Motion was one of such importance that it would not brook delay, and ought not to be overridden by the proposal which the Prime Minister had just made. If he were right in that view, he would continue his remarks, bearing in mind most strictly the ruling of the Chair. His Motion dealt not only with the unjust and illegal dismissal of an officer, but with the conduct of the Executive Government.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That would be entirely out of Order. The question of the dismissal of this officer is not the point now before the House, and cannot be discussed.

MR. JOHN REDMOND continued. He was most anxious to observe the ruling of the Chair, and he was only proceeding to show the relevancy of the subject. But if the right hon. Gentleman decided against him, of course he would submit to his ruling. His argument was that the Motion which appeared on the Paper in his name was one which called to account the conduct of certain leading Irish officials, who had unjustly and illegally dismissed a man from the Royal Irish Constabulary simply on the ground of revenge.

MR. SPEAKER: I must again call the hon. Member to Order. I have already twice pointed out to the hon. Member that the way in which he is discussing this subject is not in Order, and I beg that he will observe the ruling of the Chair.

MR. JOHN REDMOND reminded the Speaker that he had said he was anxious to observe the ruling of the Chair. [*Laughter.*] That statement might afford some amusement to certain hon. Members, but, nevertheless, it was true. The relative importance of the debate upon the Vote of Censure, and the

Motion which stood in his name on the Paper, was such that Irish Members were justified in opposing the proposal of the Prime Minister by every means in their power. He believed that he was entitled to ask the Government to afford him some facilities for the consideration of his Motion. He should be satisfied if the Prime Minister would undertake to give him an opportunity for bringing the matter forward within the next three or four weeks. The discussion need not be a long one. The Solicitor General for Ireland had blocked the Notice so that the Motion could not be discussed that evening after 12.30. This looked as if the hon. and learned Gentleman was deliberately trying to suppress the discussion in the interest of his Colleagues in Dublin Castle.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was quite willing to give way should any Members of the Government be desirous of answering the appeal of his hon. Friend. He did not want to occupy the time of the House; but as nobody had risen he would make a few observations in support of the objection made by his hon. Friend. It must have struck every hon. Member that this was the second occasion during the present Session that the Prime Minister had stood up and asked the House to deprive Irish Members of their privileges, and of the advantages which they had obtained from the ballot. He would point out that the Government had already monopolized the whole of the time of the House, to the prejudice of the Irish Members, who were extremely anxious to discuss various questions which vitally affected the interests of their constituents. The debate on the Vote of Censure might without any disadvantage be postponed until after the discussion of the Motion of his hon. Friend, or even for three or four weeks. All the speeches on the Motion of the Leader of the Opposition, up to the present, had been extremely dull. He should have been glad, if possible, to make an exception in favour of the Prime Minister; but in justice he felt reluctantly compelled to include the right hon. Gentleman in the description. The debate excited no interest either in the House or out of it. As far as he could see, both sides of the House seemed to look upon the result of the debate as a foregone conclusion. The Government would not go out, and the Tories would not take their places if they did go out; and the discussion was, therefore, a most unwarrantable waste of time. His hon. Friend the Member for New Ross (Mr. John Redmond) had a distinct cause of complaint against the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) for the block he had placed against the Motion, because otherwise the Motion itself might have been discussed at a later hour. The action of the hon. and learned Gentleman showed him to be more Viceregal than the Viceroy himself.

MR. GLADSTONE said, that if, as stated by the hon. Member who had just sat down, the debate on the Vote of Censure had to them been without spirit or animation, the hon. Member might still hope that thenceforth it would be both powerful and animated. Hon. Members could not suppose that the Government were so desperately enamoured of Votes of Censure upon themselves that they had an interested motive in proposing the Motion now before the House. It was in accordance with established rule and practice that a debate on a Motion of Censure should, if possible, be proceeded with without interruption to its close. He could assure the hon. Member that no one felt more than he (Mr. Gladstone) did the inconvenience to which he had been put. He was anxious to facilitate any arrangement which might be feasible to forward their views, although he could not agree with the hon. Member that in Ireland there was an absolute and arbitrary system of government. He fully agreed with him in the desire that Members from Ireland should have the fullest liberty of submitting anything which they thought partook of the nature of a grievance to the House. With regard to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman, it had been observed that his hon. Friend the Chief Secretary was not in his place; but the reason was that he was unable to be in his place that evening, and that warranted the Solicitor General in taking the step which he had. The hon. Gentleman had given an assurance that this discussion would not occupy any great length of time. That being so, what he had to say to him was this—no opposition would be made to his bringing on his Motion on a future evening after the adjournment of the debate had been proposed. He need not, however, point out the great difficulty which there would be in that case in securing a House for any great length of time. It was not absolutely in the power of the Government to secure a House for the hon. Member, but he could assure him that no obstacle would be placed in his way.

Mr. SEXTON said, that the right hon. Gentleman had quoted custom and usage in support of a Motion for proceeding with the discussion on the Vote of Censure; but he believed that he was entitled to say that custom and usage might be occasionally wisely departed from. The hon. Member for New Ross desired to bring forward a Motion relating to Ireland, and he believed that the Government would act wisely in allowing that debate to go on and be disposed of without further expenditure of time. He attached no importance to the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The Irish Members would be glad that evening to accept the Solicitor General for Ireland as a substitute for the right hon. Gentleman. The hon. and learned Gentleman had been so rigorous in his silence lately that they would all be glad to hear him. He objected to the manner in which the hon. Member for New Ross had been met by the Prime Minister. The proposal was by no means a fair one, and gave them no assurance of any certainty that they would be able to bring the case of District Inspector Murphy forward. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed a desire that Irish questions should be treated promptly and fully in that House. If he really felt such a desire, why, then, did he allow his legal subordinate, the Solicitor General, to block the Motion? In reference to the Soudan debate, he asked any impartial Member if the discussion had not run itself out? A duller, more pointless, more spiritless debate had not taken place in the course of the present Parliament. A stumbling attack on the Government had been followed by a bewildering defence; and if many more explanations should be made in the course of the debate similar to that which the Prime Minister had volunteered at the Table that evening, it would make confusion more confounded. The Leaders on both sides had spoken, and their followers were not likely to have anything new or wise to add. Everyone had made up his mind as to the division, and nothing hinged on the debate, for they all knew that the Government did not intend to go out, and that the Opposition did not want to go in. Nobody in the country was athirst for the matured wisdom of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen); and, under all the circumstances, he would suggest to the House that their respective forces should be drawn off in this sham battle, and that they should take the vote at once; or, if it was inconvenient to do so now, let the debate be adjourned until a future day, when a division could be taken.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, that the offer of the Prime Minister was altogether illusory, as there could be little hope that they would have another opportunity of bringing this Motion forward. It would be wiser for the Government to cut short the debate on the Vote of Censure rather than incur the charge of having suppressed the Motion of his hon. Friend; for that was really what their proceeding amounted to. If the Irish Members were denied the opportunity of challenging the conduct of the Irish Government in regard to District Inspector Murphy, the matter would be practically shelved for the Session. The case of the grievance of an ordinary individual might well wait; but Mr. Murphy had no remedy at law, and his livelihood and character—he might say his very life—depended on an appeal to Parliament for an inquiry. He urged, therefore, that his hon. Friend should be permitted to bring forward his Motion. Everybody was really pretty tired of this debate on the Vote of Censure. The Opposition did not want the Government out, and he was sure the Radicals did not. No interest whatever was taken in the matter except by the Members who had their speeches in type. He was sure that in justice to Mr. Murphy the Government should afford Irish Members an opportunity of clearing his character from the imputations made by what they could could not help regarding as a conspiracy against him. If the Government persisted by the mere force of a majority of that House in depriving them of that opportunity, all he could say was that a majority of the Irish people would know very well how to view the action of the

Government, and would believe them responsible for this conspiracy.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND thought that the Government were practically shelving the Motion of the hon. Member. Their action in this matter would be regarded by the Irish people as a sign that the Irish Executive were afraid to allow the case of Mr. Murphy to be investigated. The proposals of the right hon. Gentleman would not be received with any degree of satisfaction either by the Irish Members or the Irish people. The right hon. Gentleman and his followers must be aware that the Government of Dublin Castle was detested by the people of Ireland.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Rule 5 (Irrelevance or Repetition).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not now addressing himself to the subject before the House. His observations are quite irrelevant.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I bow to your ruling, Sir; but I am glad to hear that Dublin Castle is irrelevant.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is altogether irrelevant, and I must call upon him to discontinue his speech.

Mr. REDMOND resumed his seat.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he could not share in the opinion of some of his hon. Friends that the debate on the Soudan was a sham fight, an empty form; for, no doubt, English Members on both sides, as well as the Government, were anxious that a direct answer should be given to the challenge thrown out by the Front Opposition Bench. At the same time, he felt bound to complain of the ruthless manner in which the Government dealt with the rights of private Members. Unfortunately, the Irish Members were now almost the only champions of those rights. He would remind the Prime Minister that the precedents quoted by him were drawn from a time when the constitution of Parliament was very much different from what it was now. The Irish Members would not be justified in allowing the Government to push aside the important Motion of his hon. Friend without remonstrance. He would, therefore, move, as an Amendment to the Motion of the Prime Minister, to insert, after the word "Motion," these words—"Except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy)." They would, however, be satisfied if the Government promised to adjourn the debate on Thursday night at 11 o'clock, so that his hon. Friend's Motion could be brought forward.

Amendment proposed,

After the word "Motions," to insert the words "except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy)."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. DEASY supported the Amendment, and argued that the debate on the Vote of Censure was not of such importance as to take precedence of the other important Motions of private Members. He suggested that the Irish Members should be allowed by the Government to set down this Motion for Thursday night at 11 o'clock; and if they were not permitted to discuss the case of Inspector Murphy now, they would feel it their duty to enter into it more fully whenever they had an opportunity of doing so. Probably they would not be allowed to discuss any important matter until the Prince of Wales had been to Ireland. He might say that it would not add to the warmth of the reception the Prince would get there when it became known that, immediately after the Government had decided on this visit, they took the extreme course of preventing the Irish Members from ventilating their grievances in that House.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY and Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND rose together, but the latter gave way.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Rule 1 (Putting the Question).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is my duty to inform the House that I consider that this subject has been adequately discussed; and I think it is the evident sense of the House that the Question should be put.

Mr. GLADSTONE rose with a copy of the Standing Orders in his hand, but was prevented from making himself heard by loud ironical cheers from the Benches occupied by the Irish Members. The right hon. Gentleman remained standing at the Table.

An Irish MEMBER: This is the Liberal policy.

MR. O'BRIEN: We will remember this in Ireland.

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Rule 9 (Order in Debate).

MR. SPEAKER: I Name Mr. O'Brien for disregarding the authority of the Chair.

MR. KENNY (and other Irish MEMBERS): Name away.

MR. GLADSTONE: I was on the point, Sir, of making another Motion in accordance with the intimation which fell from you at the moment when the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) was Named from the Chair. My duty, however, in relation to the Naming of a Member takes precedence of the duty I was about to perform. I now beg to move—"That Mr. O'Brien be suspended from the service of the House."

MR. O'BRIEN: It is the only honour I have any ambition for.

MR. SEXTON: I rise to a point of Order.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question I have to put is, "That Mr. O'Brien be suspended from the service of the House."

Mr. SEXTON remained standing.

An Irish MEMBER: The object is to destroy our votes.

MR. SEXTON: I wish, Sir, to address you on a point of Order.

MR. SPEAKER: No debate can be allowed upon this Question.

MR. SEXTON: I have no desire to raise a debate; but I rise to a point of Order. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Chair!"]

MR. SPEAKER: As no debate is allowed on this Question it is my duty to put it from the Chair.

MR. SEXTON: I repeat, Sir, that I do not rise for the purpose of raising a debate, but merely to speak upon a point of Order.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member rises to a point of Order he can be heard.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to submit to you, Sir, that on every occasion hitherto, when a Member has been suspended from the service of the House for disregarding the authority of the Chair, this formula has always been observed by the Speaker—"Mr. So-and-so, I Name you to the House for disregarding the authority of the Chair;" and then a Minister of the Crown has moved a Motion to suspend him from the service of the House. On this occasion, Sir, the only words which passed your lips were "Mr. O'Brien." You said nothing further.

MR. SPEAKER: The course which I adopted was perfectly regular. The Question is, "That Mr. O'Brien be suspended from the service of the House."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 244; Noes 20: Majority 224.—(Div. List, No. 28.)

MR. SPEAKER, having read the numbers, said: I now call upon the hon. Member for Mallow to withdraw.

MR. O'BRIEN, rising: Certainly, Mr. Speaker; and I shall leave the House with far more pleasure than I ever entered it.

Mr. O'BRIEN then withdrew.

MR. GLADSTONE: In consequence of the declaration made from the Chair immediately before the last Question was put, I beg now to move "That the Question be now put."

MR. SPEAKER: The original Question was—

"That the Notices of Motions be postponed until after the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan"—

since which an Amendment has been moved, after the word "Motions," to insert the words "except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy)." The Question I have now to put is, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. PARNELL: I rise to a point of Order. I wish to submit to you, Sir, that the Question is not "That those words be there inserted," but that in accordance with the Standing Order you should first put the Question, "That the Question be now put."

MR. SPEAKER: It is in accordance with the Standing Order that I have now put the Question—the Question being the insertion of these words.

The House was cleared for a Division.

MR. GORST (speaking seated, and covered): I beg to submit a point of Order. You, Sir, having, in accordance with the Standing Order, intimated that in your opinion the subject has been adequately discussed, and that the evident sense of the House is in favour of coming to a conclusion upon it, I submit that in accordance with the Standing Order the Question put from the Chair should be, "That the Question be now put." Upon the Question being so proposed and put from the Chair there may be a Division. If in that Division fewer than 200 Members vote for the Motion, then the debate ought to be continued, unless the minority is less than 40. I submit, therefore, that the mode in which the Question has been put is not regular, and is not in accordance with the Standing Order.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question immediately before the House was the Amendment, and the Question put to the House was, "That the Question be now put." The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister made that Motion.

MR. SEXTON: You never put that Question.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman put the Question, "That the Question be now put."

MR. SEXTON: With all due deference, the right hon. Gentleman only made that Motion; he could not put it.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: You never put the Question, "That the Question be now put." It was for you, Sir, to put that Question to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: I put the Question to the House from the Chair, "That the Question be now put."

Several Irish MEMBERS: No, Sir; certainly not. Never.

MR. SPEAKER: I am in the recollection of the House, and I said that the Motion was, "That the Question be now put." The Question then immediately before the House was the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Queen's County; and I thought it was my duty to put the Question, "That the Question be now put," on the Amendment as well as on the Main Question.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I wish to represent to you, Sir, that the House has not had an opportunity of deciding the question whether the Question be now put.

MR. PARNELL: I submit, with great respect, that one Question only can be put at a time, and that we should, in accordance with the Standing Order, be permitted to ascertain the sense of the House on the first Question—namely, "That the Question be now put."

MR. SPEAKER: My view was that I did put to the House the Question "That the Question be now put" upon the Amendment, which was then before the House. I should again have to put the Question "That the Question be now put" upon the Main Question, when that came up for decision. That is the view which I took, and I believe that it is in compliance with the Standing Order.

MR. GORST: Is the Question now before the House, and upon which the House is now about to vote, the Question "That the Question be now put?"

MR. SPEAKER: Yes; the Question before the House is "That the Question be now put."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 207; Noes 46: Majority 161.—(Div. List, No. 29.)

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe, Sir, that under your ruling from the Chair it now devolves upon me to make a Motion—[*Cries of* "Question!" *from the Irish Members.*]

Question put, "That the words 'except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy)' be there inserted."

The House *divided:*—Ayes 235; Noes 19: Majority 216.—(Div. List, No. 30.)

Main Question again proposed.

MR. PARNELL: I must say that I sympathize very greatly with the desire of my hon. Friends to secure from the Government an opportunity for discussing the question of the case of Mr. Inspector Murphy; but as that matter has been finally decided by the vote of the House, of course I shall not be permitted by the Rules of the House to refer to it any further. I will only, in speaking on the general question of the postponement of the Orders of the Day, say that I am bound to think that my hon. Friends have made out their case, that there was no urgency whatever for the Motion of the Prime Minister; and I am bound to think that the House might very easily be allowed to pursue its ordinary course without diverging into the shoals and quicksands of the Soudan and Arabian politics. For my part, I look upon the debate which commenced and proceeded yesterday as, to a considerable extent, a sham debate, and one of a foregone conclusion; and although, undoubtedly, it is customary, when the Leader of the Front Opposition Bench makes a request that the Government of the day should place facilities at his disposal for the purpose of moving a Vote of Censure, that the Government should afford such facilities under such circumstances, yet still, if ever there was an occasion when that custom might have been departed from, it was now, when, after repeated assaults and Motions of no confidence in the Government, the Front Opposition Bench with their Party came forward once more with a Motion which is evidently some subterfuge, and not based on any real desire to upset Her Majesty's Government. Therefore I say that, from that point of view, the Government might reasonably have refused the request of the Leader of the Opposition to be furnished with Government time for the purpose of carrying on the debate on the Vote of Censure. But, Sir, the case is still stronger as regards private Members, and certainly as regards the private Members who sit in this part of the House. We were asked earlier in the Session, in the interests of the Redistribution Bill, to give up all opportunities of discussing Irish questions until that Bill had been passed. We are now asked to-night to give up all opportunities of discussing Irish questions until this Vote of Censure has been disposed of; and I submit that there is no ground whatever why either the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition should make such a demand upon us. The opportunities which belong to private Members have been steadily infringed upon of recent years; but it has been reserved for this Session for the Government to turn over what is practically a new leaf, and to commence at the beginning of the Session to take a step which is usually taken after the Whitsuntide holidays. Therefore, Sir, we are obliged, in self-defence, with the small instinct of self-preservation that may be left to us, to contest such a Motion as this, and to incur the grave and weighty displeasure of both of the front Benches in our attempt to defend the privileges of private Members. I regret exceedingly that the great bulk of Members should yield so facilely to the orders and directions of the two front Benches. The time has nearly come when, if this sort of thing continues, the Government of the day will absorb all the time of the House, and when the facilities which private Members now enjoy for the ventilation of their grievances will have disappeared altogether. We shall then see the Leader of the Opposition humbly craving, not as a matter of right, but as a matter of favour, a day from the all-powerful Government of Her Majesty for the purpose of moving a Vote of Censure, and, perhaps, not getting it. Now, Sir, I am forbidden to touch—it would be out of Order to do so—on the question of the Motion of my hon. Friend; but if the debate had been allowed to continue, I should have suggested that the Government might have made some sort of promise that some time would be given, not necessarily during the course of this debate, but during the proceedings on the Redistribution Bill, for the purpose of considering that Motion — some time that might have been convenient to Her Majesty's Government, and which they might easily find upon some evening when the question of the Redistribution Bill might be adjourned at 11 or half-past 11, so that my hon. Friend might have an opportunity of proceeding with his Motion. However, as I have said, that question is disposed of. It only, therefore, remains for me to say that we will take a Division against the Motion of the Prime Minister, so that we may protest, in that way, as strongly as we can against what we must consider to be the most unreasonable and arbitrary conduct of the two front Benches and their followers on the present occasion.

Main Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 222; Noes 19: Majority 203.—(Div. List, No. 31.)

Ordered, That the Notices of Motions be postponed until after the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan.

The following is the entry in the Votes:—

Notices of Motions,—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Notices of Motions be postponed until after the Order of the

Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan:"—(*Mr. Gladstone*:)—

Mr. Speaker, having called the attention of the House to continued irrelevance on the part of Mr. William Redmond, Member for Wexford, directed the honourable Member to discontinue his speech:—

Amendment proposed, after the word "Motions," to insert the words "except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy:"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*:)—

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—

And it appearing to Mr. Speaker that the subject had been adequately discussed, and that it was the evident sense of the House that the Question should be put, he so informed the House.

Mr. O'Brien, Member for Mallow, having been Named by Mr. Speaker for abusing the Rules of the House, by disorderly interruption:—

Motion made, and Question put, "That Mr. O'Brien be suspended from the service of the House:"—(*Mr. Gladstone*:)—The House *divided;* Ayes 244, Noes 20.

Mr. Speaker then directed Mr. O'Brien to withdraw, and he withdrew accordingly.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Question be now put:"—(*Mr. Gladstone*:)—The House *divided;* Ayes 207, Noes 46.

Question put, "That the words 'except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy)' be there inserted:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 19, Noes 235.

Main Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 222, Noes 19.

Ordered, That the Notices of Motions be postponed until after the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

——o——

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.—RESOLUTION.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [23rd February],

"That an humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them to assure a good and stable Government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."—(*Sir Stafford Northcote.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the first word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words "this House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi,"—(*Mr. John Morley,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: Sir, while fully recognizing the extreme difficulty and complexity of the problems which confronted Her Majesty's Government; that they have had sources of information, and must have been influenced by considerations, which even now they cannot completely bring before us, I am anxious to place before the Prime Minister certain considerations, which I am sure he will accept in the spirit in which they are made. My right hon. Friend very justly observed that Khartoum stands in a separate position from the rest of the Soudan. It is a new city, the creation of commerce; it has not been under any Native Sultan; it stands in a peculiar position with reference to Egypt. For my own part, I cannot but feel that on many grounds Khartoum is of great importance to Egypt. That was the view of Thothmes III., whose proud boast it was that he placed the Frontier of Egypt where he pleased. It may be true that the Romans preferred the limit of Wady Halfa; but since then circumstances have changed; if they had had railways and telegraphs perhaps they would not have done so. If, then, Her Majesty's Government came before the House and said that while excluding the rest of the Soudan they considered that Khartoum and the country round should form part of Egypt, there might be much to be said for their resolve to retake it from the Mahdi. What I cannot understand, the policy against which I would venture to protest, is their intention to retake Khartoum and then give it up again. The right hon. Gentleman states that he is anxious to establish a strong Government in the Soudan. But we must remember the dictum of General Gordon himself, that—

> "The sacrifices necessary towards securing a good government would be far too onerous to admit of such an attempt being made. Indeed, one may say that it is impracticable at any cost."—[Egypt. No. 7 (1884), p. 3.]

No language could be stronger or more decisive. Any Government there must either be English, Egyptian, or Native. The Prime Minister has already told us that it is not to be English. As to a re-establishment of Egyptian authority over the Soudan, I need only remind the House of the admirable Report drawn by the late lamented Colonel Stewart, who was specially deputed by Her Majesty's Government to inquire into the question. Colonel Stewart said—

> "I am firmly convinced that the Egyptians are quite unfit in every way to undertake such a task as the Government of so vast a country with a view to its welfare, and that, both for their own sake and that of the people they tried to rule, it would be advisable to abandon large portions of it. The fact of their general incompetence to rule is so generally acknowledged that it is unnecessary to discuss the question."

Indeed, the Prime Minister implied on Thursday, if he did not say so in so many words, that no re-establishment of Egyptian authority was in contemplation, though, that being so, I confess I do not understand the nature or object of Prince Hassan's mission. A Native Government then alone remains. But a Native Government already exists. Are we to spend millions of money and sacrifice thousands of lives to replace one Native Ruler by another? The tribes of the Soudan are staunch adherents of the Mahdi. One strong proof of their devotion and their determination to support him has been the impossibility for months past of communicating with Khartoum. Suppose we go forward and occupy Khartoum? Our troops then will, as General Gordon was, be surrounded by a bitterly hostile population. Suppose we defeat the Mahdi and he retires? What then? Are we to follow him still further across the burning deserts of the heart of Africa? The right hon. Gentleman alluded to the desirability of putting down the Slave Trade. But this will not be effected merely by going to Khartoum. To do this you must not only go there, but stay there. I regretted to hear the Prime Minister state that, in his opinion, no negotiations could be opened with the Mahdi. Indeed, I have never been able to understand why that was not done long ago. This whole war has risen out of misunderstandings. But even if it is impossible or undesirable to negotiate with the Mahdi, surely a Proclamation might be issued stating our intentions. It is true that Lord Wolseley has issued one, but it does not bear on this point. He says his object is to restore peace, and that he will pay for all supplies. But that is no statement of policy. General Gordon proclaimed his object to be to smash the Mahdi; and the Prime Minister also has told us that the policy of the Government is to overthrow the power of the Mahdi. No doubt, in that case, negotiations are impossible; but how is that consistent with Lord Wolseley's statement that his object is to restore peace? A great deal has been said about the moral effect of a retreat. But what was the object of our Expedition? The relief of General Gordon and his garrison. The fall of Khartoum and the massacre of the garrison has, unfortunately, rendered that object unattainable. To proceed under such circumstances would show that the relief of General Gordon could not have been our real or main object. But we are told that to retreat would have a bad moral effect. Well, but that will be as true next year as it is now. If you do not mean to hold Khartoum it would be far better not to go there at all. Our advance on Khartoum is dictated by political, not by military, considerations. This seems clear, because Lord Wolseley telegraphed to know the political intentions of the Government with reference to Khartoum, in order that he might act accordingly. He did not decide himself to advance on Khartoum, but telegraphed home, as the right hon. Gentleman told us, to know whether the Government desired to attack the Mahdi or not, so that he might frame his plans accordingly. This shows that the decision has been made, not on military, but on political grounds. The present views of the Liberal Party astonish me. I can see no justification for attacking any districts which we do not intend to hold permanently. In doing so we not only lavish many of our best lives, and millions which we can ill spare, but inflict suffering and misery on a people who have risen against a Government which we ourselves admit to have been both corrupt and oppressive. Khartoum is, indeed, in many respects, in a different position from the Southern and Western Soudan. Her Majesty's Government have not told us how much of the Soudan they propose to take from the Mahdi. If, as I infer, Khartoum is not to form part of the Egyptian Dominion, they have not told us what form of Government they propose to establish there, or whom they intend to set up as a Ruler. After the announcement made by the Prime Minister, I do not see how the Mahdi can be expected to open negotiations, nor any end to the struggle on which we are entering. Is it the interest of the Mahdi to negotiate? Our presence in the Soudan unites all the Native tribes in his support. The right hon. Gentleman told us yesterday that, in Lord Wolseley's opinion, the fall of Khartoum on the very day before our arrival was no accident — that the treachery was planned long before, and postponed purposely. Now, why did the Mahdi defer the seizure of Khartoum until the last moment? May he not have wished to lead us on, knowing that the presence of Infidel enemies in the Soudan would induce all the tribes to sink their differences and rally round him against the common foe? My right hon. Friend condemned the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet, because he said, with great force and truth, that it—

> "Means committing your gallant Army to a struggle from year to year in a tropical climate with people who are courageous by birth and courageous by fanaticism. It means a despotic Government to be established and upheld by British hands against those who hate it."

But does not this description also apply to the policy of the Government? Are they not "committing our gallant Army to a struggle in a tropical country with a brave and fanatical people?" Are they not going "to put up a despotic Government to be upheld by British hands against those who hate it." This policy will involve us in a terrible loss of life and immense expenditure, without either any necessity or any possible advantage to this country; and I shall, therefore, take the earliest opportunity of moving—

> "That this House, while ready to support Her Majesty's Government in any steps which may be necessary to protect the dominions of Egypt from attack by the Mahdi, would regret the extension of offensive military operations beyond the limits which may be adopted as the permanent frontier of Egypt."

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: Sir, the Government, as it appears from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, have nothing to reply to the grave charges contained in the Motion of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote), except, first, that up to a certain time it was open to General Gordon to have escaped to the South by the Equatorial route; secondly, that the determination of the route by which he could best be rescued was a long and difficult process; thirdly, that the physical obstacles to the rescuers were great; fourthly, that the news of his being in danger took a long time to reach England; and, lastly, that the whole question was *res judicata*, having been practically disposed of by the House of Commons last May. All these excuses, except the last, were capable of being very summarily answered. When we are told that General Gordon could have escaped to the Equator we need only remember that from the first he declared that, in order to save himself, he would not desert the people who had trusted in him, and whom he had been sent to save. Let the House not forget his words of the 3rd of March—

> "How could I look the world in the face if I abandoned them and fled? As a gentleman, could you advise this course?"

The Government stand convicted of having made their Envoy's life depend upon his doing that which they knew was repugnant to his noblest instincts. This part of the Government defence seems to come nearer than anything else to that "climax of meanness" with which General Gordon, in the same despatch, refused to be a party. It is not possible to listen with much more patience to the right hon. Gentleman when he pleads that the choice between the Nile route and that from Suakin to Berber was a decision that required a long and difficult inquiry. Why was that inquiry not sooner begun? Why, indeed, was it not begun before the mission of General Gordon was decided upon? I was never much in love myself with the idea of sending an Envoy unarmed and practically alone. That was a step for which this House is in no way responsible. When Parliament first assembled in 1884 the despatch of General Gordon to Egypt was announced in Her Majesty's Speech as an accomplished fact. It may be that the Opposition did not expressly include that step in the Vote of Censure with which they were not last Session slow to attack the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister must, however, be a sufficient master of Constitutional doctrine and principles to know that even if the whole House, Opposition and all, had joined in an unanimous chorus of approval, that would in no way have lessened the responsibility of the Government for sending out General Gordon alone into the enemy's camp. We are now told, moreover, that all these accusations were disposed of by Parliament last May. Does the right hon. Gentleman seriously mean to make this plea? Does the Prime Minister think this a happy occasion for such an argument? It may be true that the Motion of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was voted down last May; but would that adverse majority, small as it was, be taken to now represent the opinion of the House of Commons, or of the public, on the question then and now in dispute? There was a great deal that was special in the circumstances of the time when that Motion was made last May. The Franchise Bill was not then out of danger, and faithful Liberals could indulge in the insinuation that the Soudan question and the Vote of Censure were being made use of to avert Reform. Since then, however, not only has that terror to Liberal consciences been removed — not only has the Opposition given the most substantial proof of its sincerity about Reform, but events of far graver importance have occurred, and throw upon this inquiry into the conduct of the Government a livid and ghastly light that did not exist before. So much for the defence which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has not been ashamed to put forward in answer to the Vote of Censure. There is, indeed, it must be confessed, little else that could be put forward in excuse for errors so gross. With respect, however, to the future, I believe that no Government will be able to successfully grapple with these difficulties that is not willing to run the risk of incurring unpopularity in order to act vigorously or fearlessly in whatever direction their duty may seem to point. We have had enough of this angling for popularity. There are far nobler objects for English Ministers than the union of a distracted Party. At this moment we are in doubt whether we are to regard the policy of the Government as expounded by the Prime Minister's warlike words of Thursday, or by his Machiavellian silence of Monday. Let him not hope to solve Egyptian questions by the same means by which he unites his Party in his support. He may win warlike Liberals on Thursday by breathing fire at the Mahdi, and he may secure hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway by hinting on Monday that his truculent words had no meaning. Sooner or later he will have to address his mind to the Egyptian Question itself, and to take his attention away from watching the motions of political sections here; otherwise he will once more, and for the ninety-ninth time, be making up his mind too late. I challenge the Government to say categorically, before the end of this debate, whether they adhere to their determination, failing accommodation with the Mahdi, to overthrow his power at Khartoum without remaining at Khartoum themselves — in other words, whether they seriously intend to give to the Soudan all the horrors of conquest without the palliatives of order and settled government; whether they mean the British Army to be remembered in the Soudan, not for any of the blessings by which British conquest is known to be tempered elsewhere, but only for blind and purposeless slaughter? I have said that, in such a crisis as this, the unpopular course may have to be faced. A British occupation of Khartoum would be rightly unpopular; but it may yet turn out to be necessary. Can any Government altogether reject the opinion that the master of Khartoum can make himself, if he chooses, also the master of Egypt? Is it so very sure that the holder of Berber has it not in his power, by the diversion of waters, to stop the fertilizing inundations of Egypt? Is it inconceivable that under a Government joining the Soudan to Egypt the warlike qualities of the Soudanese may be turned in some way to the advantage and defence of Egypt herself? Is there no solution of these questions save such as will leave Egypt in such daily fear of an Arab invasion from the south, that, as a consequence, she will require the indefinitely prolonged support of British troops? If an English occupation of Khartoum be, indeed, necessary, it can only be because it may tend to the solution of some of these questions? The hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) reminds us, in language with which I have much sympathy, that England is great enough to have no need to think of *prestige.* I have nothing but admiration for the love of the English people for peace; but, unfortunately, it is not as if we had to deal all over the world with the strong common sense of the British democracy. We have to consider in our actions the effect upon savage or fanatical races, who, all the world over, are living either as subjects or as neighbours of British Colonies. To these Colonies the question of *prestige* is one of very serious reality. The acceptance of the splendid offers by the Colonies of military assistance to the Mother Country has so far advanced the question of Colonial Confederation that soon the electors of these Islands will have lost the legal as well as the moral right to a sole voice in questions concerning the Empire as a whole. When that day comes, it will be no longer possible for the Imperial or Federal policy to disregard considerations of *prestige.* The Prime Minister appeals to the House not to present the spectacle in this crisis of a "disparaged Government." I believe that, so far from its being an evil, the best thing of all at the present crisis, with all the other tasks on our hands, of which the Mover of the Amendment speaks, would be the spectacle of a changed or reconstructed Ministry in England, following upon a vote of this House; for that would prove to the world that there are limits beyond which you cannot safely try the patience, even of the good-humoured and pacific democracy of England. The interest of England abroad will not be served by its appearing that England prefers a Minister like the Prime Minister, who is always at war without gaining his point, to such a Minister as his great Predecessor, who gained his point without making a war.

MR. BORLASE: I am sorry that the hon. Member who was the last to address the House (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) has left it, because I was desirous of congratulating him on the extremely moderate tone of his speech — a speech with many points in which I find little matter for difference. I am sorry, also, that my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) is not in his place, as I wished to assure him how truly I sympathize with him in the spirit which has dictated the Amendment which we are now considering. That Amendment, and the straightforward speech in which he proposed it, gives expression to a feeling in the country far more widespread and deep-rooted than is supposed by those who think they gather the views of the market-places in the country from those of the Jingo agitators of the London Press. In my own part of England, where the teachings of Wesley have indelibly impressed on the hearts and on the character of the people the duty of advocating peace, the feeling, as far as I can gauge it, is one of sincere sorrow—I might even say, in many cases, of silent humiliation—that, owing to the fact that Her Majesty's Government have followed on the lines of the Egyptian policy laid down for them by their Predecessors, they have been once and again entrapped into war. The public anxiety is, of course, to be rid of this war in the Soudan, and to have some assurance that the Forces now being sent out are not to be employed in any permanent retention of these Provinces. Aye, but it is something more than this. If the truth be known, it is to be rid also of that country in which, as a nation, we never should have set foot at all—to be rid of the responsibilities in Egypt itself—in that country where history repeats herself with fatal accuracy; that selfsame Egypt which contributed not a little to the decline and fall of the most firmly-established Empire that the world has ever seen or known—and which seems to hold out a like fate to those who, allowing themselves to be allured up the waters of the Nile, find themselves at last in a spot where the inanimate powers of Nature on the one hand, and the bravery and the patriotism of the inhabitants on the other, are arrayed against them; and where, oppressed with responsibilities whose origin is obscure, and weighted down with engagements, whose end is purposeless, they have, in the long run, sooner or later, either to fall victims to that valour which, in the British soldier, is something far more than the mere concomitant of despair, or to retreat without the accomplishment of one single object which can accrue to the good of mankind. It is an old proverb, the truth of which has often occurred to me, that "Egypt is a broken reed, on the which, if a man lean, it will go into his hand." I believe, then, that the expression of public feeling contained in the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, in favour of a new departure at this juncture in the direction of peace, rests not merely on a desire to leave Khartoum alone, but to take now the first step towards clearing out of Egypt altogether. For that new departure there are, doubtless, many special as well as general reasons. I listened, with the greatest attention, to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government yesterday; but—probably it was owing to my own stupidity—I failed to gather, in any one categorical statement, what is the precise object, intention, ultimate destination, and duty of the very large Expedition now leaving our shores. The old objects are gone. They have flown on before us, like the sand-storms in the Desert, until they have vanished from our view. The object of the Expedition of Lord Wolseley ceased with the death of him whom he was sent to rescue. The objects of General Gordon had well-nigh ceased before his death. With his death they all—save one of dubious utility, to which I will presently refer—ceased too. Instead of being a messenger of peace, as it was the primary object of the Government that he should be, circumstances over which he had no control transformed him into an instrument of war. And as to the particular objects. Where are the garrisons he was sent to relieve? Where are the wives and children and *employés*? Where that mass of people which were the real millstone, which, because of his great humanity, he allowed to be hung round his neck by the Cairo authorities in February, 1884;—that weight of responsibility, which was the real cause of his declining to accept the alternative of what he considered would have been a base and cowardly flight. It was a task of Hercules which he undertook; and, as it was one which never should have been imposed on him, I cannot, in this respect, hold the Government perfectly free from blame. I said—"Where are the garrisons?"—Tokar, Sinkat, Berber, and the rest? It is truly horrible to contemplate the destruction which, once again in the history of Egypt, a race of utter barbarians, actuated by fanaticism, has inflicted on the half-civilized and effeminate people of the Lower Nile! All these objects, then, are gone; and, as to the Slave Trade, it is as flourishing as ever; and never can be repressed in the Soudan, except by the presence of garrisons and cruisers on the Red Sea. I said—"These objects are all gone, save one." That one is the establishment of some control at Khartoum. In a strange sense, that object has been gained by the death of General Gordon. Looking at the matter for a moment in this light, I wish, Sir, to call the attention of the House to a telegraphic despatch, dated February 18, 1884, in which Consul Power wires to Sir Evelyn Baring, from Khartoum—

> "To-day Proclamations up everywhere from Gordon, acknowledging Mohammed Ahmed (that is, the Mahdi) as Sultan of Kordofan, remitting half taxes, and saying buying and selling of slaves will not be interfered with. This," he adds, "has had the best possible effect among the Arabs."—[Egypt. No 12 (1884), p. 68.]

It is true that this appointment of the Mahdi may have been nothing but a passing thought in General Gordon's mind; that it was soon found that another course was preferable; that the Mahdi cared to receive nothing from us; but it proves to us that the idea crossed General Gordon's mind, when he was canvassing the various methods by which a secure Government could be formed, that the Mahdi might be a man capable of bearing rule. Now, this is the same man who has now gained for himself the possession of supreme power at Khartoum. Is it, then, quite beyond belief that in him we may see some glimmering of a hope for a peaceful solution of the difficulty? It is one of the extraordinary circumstances of our position that we absolutely know nothing of him against whom we have turned our arms—nothing of his capacities; indeed, I am not even aware that we know anything authentic even about his personal appearance at all. But this is by the way. The question is, what is the object of our present Expedition to Egypt? Is it to take Khartoum, with the object of remaining there, and bolstering up a Government in contradiction to the wishes of the people? If so, I, for one, am against it. Is it to retire? If so, we had better not go; for we shall only be upsetting an existing form of Government, which may right itself, in order to produce absolute anarchy. There is, on this point, a true saying of General Gordon's, which, in one sentence, hits off exactly what the situation was with regard to himself, and which would be equally applicable to us if we try to organize a temporary Government with the intention of retreating. On March 10 he says—"It is evident that no one will throw in his fortunes with a departing Government." In saying this he admits also what he distinctly states in another place, that "perhaps it was a mistake to send him." But, although I have said all this in favour of my hon. Friend's Amendment, there is an object which occurs to me for placing a large Force in Egypt just now. The function of power is to protect; and the protection of our Forces, already out there, is our first duty. We hear to-day, in the papers, that it is probable that the Force under General Brackenbury will spend the summer at Abou Hamed, and that that of Lord Wolseley will do so at Korti. They cannot descend the river. They are too late for that. Now, neither of these positions is enviable, especially the former. There are no hills to go to to escape the heat. The flat, boundless, burning Desert is around them. The climate is against them; the river is against them; the ammunition and guns captured in Khartoum are turned against them; even the friendly tribes must bend to the storm which is upon them. The Mahdi's position is that of Cæsar when he crossed the Rubicon. He has only to stamp his foot on the ground, and men for the Army will spring up from the earth. Now, Sir, if we place ourselves in force at Suakin, I contend that we shall be, at all events, within reach of our men by that route. Our very presence there—no matter what we may be able to effect—would have, at least, a good moral influence in checking any attack or blockade which might be attempted; and, as the summer goes on, the Mahdi will have time to consider whether he will elect to possess the Soudan, and govern, as best he can, on terms which secure the safety of Egypt, or to confront the British Forces, with the certainty of ultimate failure and annihilation. It is because, then, I believe that the sending of this Force—which, indeed, now we cannot stay—may rather operate in the direction of peace than in that of war, that I cannot—though I regret it, for in the abstract he has my grateful sympathy—go into the Lobby with my hon. Friend. I know that there is much force in the question which is perpetually asked—which he, indeed, asked in his speech—Is it safe to tie our right arm behind our back? Is it safe to lock away so large a Force of our best men in the Lybian Desert? Are things so smooth at home? Does not the bravado of the insurrectionist intrude itself on us even here in this House? Are our foreign relations so extremely pacific? Is it not an open secret that a very near neighbour of ours indeed, and one who should ever be our best friend, was prepared to take a very strong step indeed the other day, if the Egyptian financial question had not passed a particular turnstile in its course? Are there not those opposite us in this House, who, by their importunity, may succeed in disturbing our relations with Russia? Well, Sir, supposing all this is so, and suppose a large Force to be on the shore of the Red Sea. My contention is, that it would be so much nearer to those vital centres where disturbance might arise—so much nearer, for instance, to the Suez Canal—and therefore so much the more capable of preventing a hostile intention, should there be one on the part of any nation, from being carried out. Now, I wish to make a few remarks on a point or two in the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard). He twitted us, as we are so often twitted, with not carrying out General Gordon's wishes; and he especially referred to three things. That we did not send Zebehr; that we did not advance Graham's Force from Suakin to Berber; and that we did not send 200 Indian troops to Berber, and a like number of English ones to Wady Halfa. Now, with respect to Zebehr, I do not want to go over all the ground again. I merely wish to prove the wisdom of the Government in not sending him, by reminding the House of what has happened since. Who was it that betrayed Gordon? Who was Ferhat Pasha? The same man of whom we read in a despatch from Gordon, dated Berber, February 12, as follows:—

> "The number of applications for appointments, some 400, show that the people evidently contemplate nothing but peace. Ferhat Bey, late Mudir here, kept up his nefarious doings even after Hicks's defeat. One can scarcely understand such madness."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 89.]

Well, Sir, Gordon forgave him, as he had forgiven Zebehr; but he betrayed him for all that. He and Zebehr stood, in this respect, in the same relation to Gordon. But there was this difference in the cases—Ferhat had no grudge against Gordon, except that he had been found out. Zebehr had a grudge against Gordon, the greatest a man can have, since Gordon had caused his son's death for an act of treachery. Here, then, was the result of forgiveness. Would the Government have been justified in placing Gordon in the hands of such a man? Now, the next ground of complaint is as to the Suakin-Berber advance. Let me read to the House a despatch, which I have not yet seen quoted in the debate, from one whose advice, above all others, the War Office was bound to listen to, especially when, as we know, it was supported by Military Authorities at home—I mean that of General Stephenson. Writing to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), from Cairo, on March 5, he says—

> "Graham telegraphs suggesting that Gordon Pasha be asked if he would recommend force under Graham operating on line Suakin Berber; if so, how far he would be prepared to co-operate? . . . . Baring tells me that Gordon attaches importance to this route being opened. I am not prepared to recommend Graham's force marching to Berber, owing to scarcity of water on road."—[*Ibid.*, p. 141.]

Now, I appeal to right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who may have occupied, or might have been occupying at that date, the post which is now filled by my noble Friend. Would they, could they, have taken any other course, considering the source of the advice and that it was backed up by Sir Evelyn Baring, than that taken by the noble Marquess, when he telegraphed at once as follows to General Graham:—

> "Yours 5th forwarded by General Stephenson. Operations at considerable distance from Suakin not to be undertaken."—[*Ibid.*]

Well, I know that I shall be told "Yes; but General Stephenson changed his opinion." Did he; and to what extent? I know the despatch. It is one from Sir Evelyn Baring to Earl Granville on March 24. He says—

> "An effort should be made to help General Gordon from Suakin, if it is at all a possible military operation. General Stephenson and Sir Evelyn Wood, whilst admitting the very great risk to the health of the troops, besides the extraordinary military risks, are of opinion that the undertaking is possible."—[*Ibid.*, p. 186.]

Possible! A blank possibility of getting through; with an overwhelming probability of disaster. Again, I say, if right hon. Gentlemen opposite had had to deal with this matter, I give them the credit of thinking that the wise course adopted by Earl Granville would have been that which would have commended itself to them. He writes—

> "Having regard to the dangers of the climate of the Soudan at this time of the year, as well as to the extraordinary risk from a military point of view, Her Majesty's Government do not think it justifiable to send a British expedition to Berber."—[Egypt. No. 13 (1884), p. 1.]

Later on, when asked his opinion, Mr. Egerton, on the 23rd of April, telegraphs to Earl Granville—

> "It would be almost madness to run the risk of sending an English or Egyptian force now to Berber by the route suggested."—[*Ibid.*, p. 15.]

In the face of such evidence on the spot, what course was open but refusal? Now, the third complaint is that, when subsequently General Gordon asked that a Force of 200 Indian Cavalry should be sent to Berber, and a similar Force of British Cavalry to Wady Halfa—["Hear, hear!"]—this request was also refused. The hon. Member opposite me (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) thinks they ought. What! Send away into the Desert two squadrons to form fresh centres of attack! Has it not been bad enough to lose the garrisons we have lost, without incurring the danger of setting up fresh ones? From a military point of view, it was impossible. On the 10th of April, Sir Evelyn Baring telegraphed to Gordon as follows:—

> "General Stephenson thinks the proposed step of sending English troops to Wady Halfa (as he—Gordon—suggests) is open to strong objections on account of the climate during the summer months; and he also considers it unwise to leave a detachment at so great a distance from its base."—[*Ibid.*, p. 10.]

Here is the full justification of the Government. Enough, then, has been said on these points. The fact remains that Gordon's rescue was impossible. Once more in the history of the world one man has died for the people. He has laid down his life, not even for his friends, but because of his sacred engagement to protect the wives and families of those who were strangers in race and religion to himself. If any man ever did so, he has died a Christian hero's death. It was unwise; it was an act, indeed, of inconceivable temerity ever to have allowed him to take over those Cairo instructions at all. But we must remember that the truth of the situation was not known at that time. His first duty was to report. Much less could the sequel have been foreseen. If it could have been, the action of Her Majesty's Government would indeed have been criminal. As it is, the Government, in my opinion, deserves our sympathy rather than our blame. They sowed the wind unwittingly. They have reaped the whirlwind, and on none has it fallen, you may depend, half so heavily as on themselves. It is useless for my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, in his Amendment, to say in effect—"We will say nothing about the seed-sowing, but we object to the harvest coming up." It was in that seed-sowing that the origin and source of all our subsequent complications are to be found—complications from which it was impossible to extricate either Gordon or ourselves. The Government have not altered their policy; and for the attitude they are taking, now that the storm has fallen on them, they seem to me to deserve—rather than a Vote of Censure, no matter how mild may be its terms—thanks similar to those which, on a memorable occasion, were accorded by the people of Rome to one who, desperate though the situation was, would not and did not "despair of the Republic."

MR. LONG said, that he entirely sympathized with the feelings to which the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) gave expression. All on that side of the House would agree with hon. Members opposite that it was very desirable to get rid of the war in the Soudan; but few would be ready to do so, unless our troops could be withdrawn in a manner honourable to the nation, and upon the lines distinctly laid down by the distinguished man who had sacrificed his life in the service of his country; nothing could be more unsatisfactory than for this country now to desert people who had been favourable to us during this trying time. It was clear that there was one idea with General Gordon from the beginning to the end, and that was to do nothing that would appear, in the slightest manner, to be a desertion of those who were loyal to him during his difficulties. Hon. Members opposite declared that it would now be easy for us to withdraw from the Soudan; but he (Mr. Long) did not hear one word of sympathy for the people who had suffered for their friendship to us, and who, if we were to withdraw from the Soudan hastily, would suffer still more heavily. As regarded what we had done in the past, no one could more strongly condemn the Government than the hon. Member who had last spoken (Mr. Borlase). He said that if anyone could have foreseen the result of the policy of the Government, then the Government would indeed have been criminal. But Her Majesty's Government were warned from time to time in the strongest manner possible, by speakers in the House and out of the House, that unless they adopted a more vigorous and determined policy in the Soudan, the consequences would be such as had now happened. On that side of the House they told the Government this so often, that they brought down rebukes on the Leader of the Opposition. They lost no opportunity of impressing the Government with their conviction that the want of a more vigorous and determined policy in the Soudan would produce trouble there and disgrace to this country. The Members of the Opposition were justified now in claiming that the prediction they made had now been literally fulfilled. They now charged Her Majesty's Government with having been guilty of the worst possible offence that any Government could commit—with having taken no precautions and neglected every word of advice and warning given to them, and thus having deliberately brought upon the country the shame it now had to endure. Notwithstanding that hon. Members opposite said that they regarded everything that had been done in Egypt since our interference there, and since General Gordon was sent out, as wrong, yet these Liberal Members were prepared to go into the Lobby in support of the Government, because of their fear of others whom they liked less than they did the present Government — a Government which, notwithstanding the state of affairs, had not yet indicated what their future policy would be. The time, however, was one when hon. Members ought not to think of the welfare of a Party, but of the welfare of the country. The whole history of the Soudan business was melancholy in the extreme and greatly to be deplored; but there was no more unhappy portion of it than the speech they heard last night from the Prime Minister. They would have been glad if the policy of the Government had been consistent, and if they had heard who it was they were fighting, and for what they were going to fight. Those who were called upon to part from their nearest and dearest, who were going out to the Soudan, might feel that they grudged the lives of our gallant soldiers when they were sent in this causeless war, brought about by a Government which declined to say what they were fighting for. It might be that the Government had a clear policy, and knew what they were about; but, if that were so, they had not thought fit to make the House a party to it, and he thought that the Opposition, and the country, which was behind the Opposition, were justified in asking Her Majesty's Government to tell them rather more clearly what their policy was going to be. It seemed to him that, from beginning to end, the despatches of General Gordon pointed to one line of action. They had been told by the Prime Minister that Gordon could have escaped from Khartoum if he had liked, but that his patriotism and devotion to his country prevented him from exercising that power. But on March 3 he had asked—

> "As a gentleman, could you advise this course? It may have been a mistake to send me up; but having been done, I have no option but to see evacuation through; for even if I was mean enough to escape I have no power to do so."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 156.]

That was a plain answer to the statement of Her Majesty's Government. When the Government had found themselves in a position of difficulty, on account of their weakness and vacillation, they had turned to the one man who might save them from the consequences, and, having sent him out, as a scapegoat into the Desert, laden with all their sins upon his head, they had deserted him. That was a charge which could not be brought too often against Her Majesty's Government; and, with all the rhetoric that the Government could bring to bear on the matter, they could never acquit themselves of that charge. They might be told that on that side of the House they welcomed this as an opportunity for a Party triumph; but, for himself, he disclaimed any such feeling, and there was nobody on the Conservative Benches who would more gladly see a Conservative Government replace the present incompetent Administration than he would; but he, and he believed all other Conservatives, would gladly have foregone that triumph, if he could have foregone the present national disgrace and the national shame. Representing as he did an agricultural constituency, he would much have preferred the Government should have been strong enough to preserve the national honour, for there was nothing which men of all classes felt more deeply than the national and individual disgrace of this desertion of our gallant hero through the want of policy and vacillation of a Government which even now declined to realize the position.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that he was inclined to express a hope—which he trusted was not too late—that this debate would have a practical character; that they would remember that it was their duty not to mourn over the circumstances of the past, but rather to turn to the future, and endeavour, as far as they could in the light of the Papers before them, to give their best counsel and aid to the Government in the difficult position in which the affairs of Egypt were now placed. They all knew the historical part of the case. Even if it were true—

> "That the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result,"

he could only say that he was not disposed to add to that sacrifice any waste of the time of Parliament. They were rather concerned, he thought, with the latter part of the Motion; but that was so queerly composed that its meaning could only be guessed at. Literally, the Motion bound those who supported it to undertake the security of the whole of the Soudan, which he was sure was contrary to the wish of the House. But that was not the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). It was only the fault of his draftsman. The right hon. Gentleman meant, he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) took it, that they were to do, in the Soudan, what might be necessary for the security of Egypt. He did not gather, however, that the right hon. Gentleman, by his policy, would do more in that way than the Prime Minister proposed to accomplish; and, that being so, there was nothing left of the Resolution except the retrospective censure—a most vain and useless proceeding, even if it were just. It seemed to him (Mr. Arthur Arnold) that there had been a series of mistakes made in regard to Egypt; but they had not been those of the Government only. A year ago they had heard the Prime Minister speak of General Gordon as "the highest authority on the subject," yet everyone now knew that Gordon made a terrible mistake when he set out alone upon that dangerous and perilous journey to Khartoum. If they were to adopt the spirit of Gordon, he could understand that one, who had his implicit faith in the great purposes of an all-governing and beneficent Power, might well believe that such a life and death were designed for our instruction; that they might be set up before our eyes as a model of courage and endurance, of piety and virtue, such as made the human race illustrious, and such as elevated mankind. He could not find it in his heart to do nothing but mourn over a death so enviable and glorious, nor could he consent to say that that death was attributable to the fault or neglect of those who had not earlier sent relief when he read the messages which had come from Gordon, and especially those of the latest date, and when he remembered that treachery was never at any time absent from his dwelling in Khartoum. It was evident that the Government had been slow to enter the Soudan, and eager to leave it. Remembering Gordon's words, that "the Soudan is a useless possession, ever was so, and ever will be so," who could wonder at their avoidance of what Gordon called "its fearful monotony and deadly climate?" It was said that General Gordon was neglected, because his requirements were not carried out; but, before the House agreed to that view of the subject, they must go through all the suggestions which came from General Gordon, and they must apply to those suggestions the test of experience. For example, General Gordon suggested that 400 or 500 English Cavalry should be taken to Berber; but, as a matter of fact, no more than 400 men could, under any circumstances, have crossed at any time from Suakin to Berber, and at each stage of the Wells they must have had two and a-half days' travelling without any water at all. Then General Gordon asked for 200 troops to be sent to Wady Halfa; but did anyone believe, from recent events, that the Cavalry would have been safe at Berber, or that such a demonstration would have stayed the progress of the Mahdi? He honoured the memory of General Gordon as a possession precious to all Englishmen; but he thought he saw now that Gordon's estimate of the Mahdi movement had been throughout erroneous. When the Mahdi was at El Obeid, in February, Gordon was for destroying or smashing him; and, for the work, asked for £100,000 and 200 English troops at Wady Halfa. Was there anyone who now believed that an advance to El Obeid, for the purpose of smashing the Mahdi a year ago, with such a force as General Gordon possessed or suggested would have been effective? It was said that whereas the Government then refused to send 200, they had now to send 20,000. It was taken for granted that the 200 would have smashed the Mahdi. He could only say that, after reading the Papers just issued, he was most thankful the Government of the country had not been in the hands of those who were so credulous. He had said in May last that he wished Gordon had never left Jerusalem, and the wish had only been strengthened in the anxious months that had since elapsed. When General Gordon entered Khartoum, he entered into a trap from which it was almost impossible for him to escape alive. His presence in Khartoum seemed to have increased the power of the Mahdi's movement. His presence there seemed to have acted very much as a foreign body did in a wound, by increasing the inflammation. With reference to the Proclamations issued by General Gordon, and particularly that one in which he denounced the person styling himself the Mahdi, he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had, he thought, visited most of the Mahommedan States of the world, and he had often heard the word "Mahdi" on the lips of the people. There were millions of Mahommedans who, in their daily prayers, never forgot to pray for the coming of the Mahdi, and with whom it was their principal tenet to accept the advent of such a person. The title of Mahdi was one of wonderful power; but its power when associated with success became enormous and overwhelming. The civilization of Egypt was such as the followers of the Mahdi had no idea of, and was infinitely greater than anything they had ever known or seen. He thought it was as certain as sunrise that but for the presence of English troops such civilization—and it was not inconsiderable—as existed in that country would be at the mercy of those ignorant and fanatical hill tribes. If they saw but the Suez Canal, it was his belief, as well as his fear, that they would destroy it, because they would regard it as a means for the introduction into their country of the infidel whom it was their great desire to keep out. With regard to a people so helpless as the Egyptians, he considered the intervention of some Foreign Power useful, and, indeed, inevitable. The Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) he regarded as insufficient and inaccurate. He thought that not the Government only, but the independent Members of the House would deserve a Vote of Censure if, in the circumstances in which the country was placed, they refrained from expressing an opinion upon the policy of the Government, and did not conceive it to be their duty to form the best judgment the opportunity afforded. They need not be historical; but they were bound to express their opinion upon that policy, so far as it was concerned with the present position of affairs. For example, their troops were going to clear the way to Suakin from Berber. It was plain, he thought, from the Papers lately distributed, that they had not before them all the communications from Lord Wolseley to the Government. They gathered from the Prime Minister that the movement from Suakin, in order to open up the road to Berber, was needed for the security of our troops. That was in accordance with general belief. He thought they were compelled to give some opinion upon it. If it was needed for the security of Lord Wolseley's Force, then, and then only, he thought it deserved the approval of the House of Commons. It seemed to be imprudent and unnecessary on the part of the Government to announce their determination to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. It might be needful for the protection of Egypt to overthrow the power of the Mahdi; but it might not be necessary to do it at Khartoum. On the contrary, the time might not be distant when it would be both expedient and desirable for the Government to make an accommodation with the Mahdi at Khartoum. The Amendment of his hon. Friend imputed to the Government that which they had never announced. The Amendment charged the Government with a general intention to overthrow the power of the Mahdi. The Government, as he understood, declared no such intention. They would, indeed, be a Government of imbeciles if they had made such a decision; and he should not then hesitate to join in his hon. Friend (Mr. John Morley's) Vote of Censure. If the Mahdi were to return to Darfour or Kordofan, the Government would not, he was sure, propose to use the Forces of the Crown for the overthrow of his power. Therefore, if he were to vote for the Amendment of his hon. Friend, he should be regretting a decision of the Government which the Government had never formed. But the fault of his hon. Friend's Amendment was two-fold. It imputed to the Government that which the Government had never asserted—an intention to overthrow the Mahdi wherever he might be. He should certainly support an Amendment in the sense of that of his hon. Friend, if the Government had decided to follow the Mahdi anywhere, even to the Equator. But they had done nothing of the sort; indeed, if they had done so, they would not have received the support of any intelligent Member of the House; they had expressly limited their operations against the Mahdi. It was unfortunate that they had mentioned Khartoum, where they might hereafter be ready to recognize the Mahdi's power. If his hon. Friend had placed the words "at Khartoum" at the end of his Amendment, then they should have known what they were voting for. The Amendment had another fault, and this fault was equally grave. Suppose that in three months the Mahdi was at Dongola or at Wady Halfa, in what position should he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) be if he had supported the Amendment of his hon. Friend? He should have consented to the entry of the Mahdi and the tribes which followed him into Egypt. To that he was not prepared to consent. Suppose the power of the Mahdi had reached Cairo, as it most surely would were there no British troops in Egypt, the hand of the Government would be stayed were the Amendment of his hon. Friend adopted. He was convinced that the power of the Mahdi would be ruinous to Egypt; and he was quite willing to use the Forces of the Crown to protect the feeble yet industrious people of the Delta against invasion by these Desert hordes. Such civilization as existed in the Delta could not be saved by the Egyptian people themselves. All the evidence went to show the truth of Lord Northbrook's Report that—

> "The Natives of Egypt do not appear to possess the qualities which are required to form really reliable troops."

Much as they admired General Gordon, they must not blindly accept his statements. Experience had proved this. He had told them that as soon as troops were sent, or even with the mere rumour of troops, the movement would end. The Mahdi's siege of Obeid in 1883 was as difficult as his siege of Khartoum. They saw that Gordon was mistaken. Our troops, unconquered and unconquerable, reached the Nile far above Berber, yet the Mahdi's movement was a long way from being ended. Neither the Motion nor the Amendment touched upon that most important decision of the Government—namely, the construction of a railway from Suakin to Berber. He regarded that as of equal, if not of greater, importance than any other decision. He agreed with Lord Dufferin—

> "That the completion of this enterprize would at once change all the elements of the problem."

He supposed they were committed to the execution of this railway; he supposed the contract had been concluded, and that the nation was bound by its terms; he supposed that nothing would have induced the Government to give their consent to its construction otherwise than that it was essential for the safety of our Army, and that there was no escape from this costly work. The construction of this railway was one of the most important factors in the case with which they had to deal; and, if constructed with English money, he would not willingly be a party to handing it over to possible destruction. Instead of the point of command being from Egypt or the Nile, the point of command of the Eastern Soudan would be entirely changed; the base—the power of command—would be changed to the Red Sea. If they tapped the Nile by this railway, the Government would certainly be wrong if they did not establish a Government in the Soudan which would endeavour to protect so enormous and costly a work; for possibly in the future it might be that this railway would bring such prosperity and civilization to the Soudan as to illustrate once more that war, which was mischief on the largest scale, sometimes carried advantages in its train.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that he had pleasure in congratulating the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) upon his statesmanlike speech. It was, however, a pity the hon. Member did not deliver his speech six months ago, and then give his support to the Opposition. At that period the Conservative Party gave in good time the warnings which the hon. Member advanced now, though too late to be of effect. He regretted, however, that the hon. Member should have put words in the mouth of General Gordon which he had never uttered. General Gordon had never said he could overthrow the Mahdi with 500 men. What he had said last

March was this—that if he had 500 determined men he could nip in the bud and destroy the incipient revolt around and North of Khartoum, which soon developed to such a terrible extent, owing to the neglect of General Gordon's warnings by Her Majesty's Ministers. The hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) had said that we were face to face in Egypt with a greater crisis than ever before. About that he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) thought there could be no doubt. Never since the Forces of England overcame the French tyrant 70 years ago had England been confronted with so serious a state of affairs. While our Forces in the Soudan were struggling against the savage fanaticism which the neglect of the Government had allowed to reach its present dimensions, the traditional perfidy and aggression of our great rival in Asia was unmasking itself, and threatening the very existence of our Indian Empire. The French "Ally" of the Government was counter-working them in every quarter of the globe, sapping up to Hindostan on the East, paralyzing our valuable trade with China, and unscrupulously intriguing against British interests in Egypt. In vain did the Ministers of the Crown shovel loadfuls of sacrifices down the throat of the French Republic. The cry was ever "more!" At a moment when the friendship of the Head of the Mahommedan faith would be invaluable to England, as the largest Mahommedan Power in the world, the British Ministry were driving the Ottoman Government and its 300,000 valiant warriors into the arms of our foes by the absurd injustice and persecution which had its origin in the factious ravings of 1877. And, worst and most monstrous and fatal blunder of all, the Prime Minister and his Colleagues had deliberately alienated the splendid and invincible support of the German Powers, the natural Allies of England. Austria, Germany, and England could have stood against the world. All the machinations of those perpetual disturbers of European peace — the restless and anarchic Republic of Paris and the dark and treacherous despotism of St. Petersburg—would have been futile against such a peace union. Still he did not think the situation hopeless. It was very far from it; but in order that it should not be rendered hopeless it was absolutely necessary, if the country was to be rescued from despair, that the Government should display those qualities of vigour and statesmanship in which they had thus far been so singularly and absolutely lacking. They must show that they had the head to conceive, the heart to carry through, and the hand to strike, in place of the aimless, divided, and disastrous counsels that had up to now paralyzed the arm of England. It was necessary to have statesmen who could govern, and Ministers who could rule. The retrospect of the past three years in Egypt was dreary enough; but it became appalling when it was remembered that all this frightful sacrifice of blood and treasure, all this accumulated slaughter, enslavement, outrage, misery, and black ruin, had been absolutely without fruit, devoid of all beneficial result. £10,000,000 of extra burdens had the blundering and shuffling of the British Cabinet laid upon those harmless and docile Fellaheen, whose claims they had trampled under foot. £10,000,000 more of our Imperial resources had they flung away into the abyss of their purposeless ineptitude. Heaven alone knew how many millions further would be sunk in the tardy and panic-stricken attempt to retrieve the disasters caused by their delay, feebleness, and shirking of bounden responsibilities. Most horrible of all was the tale of the needless butchery and wholesale massacre, the hecatombs of human victims that had been offered up to this Moloch of blindness and cowardice. Never since the days of Tamerlane had such a mass of human agony been known as that which the Mahdi of Kordofan and the Mahdis of the Treasury Bench had piled up throughout the Soudan. Yet once again the apostles of sham philanthropy and retreat were trying to make capital out of all that had happened, and once more urging their craven and sanguinary policy of surrender upon the nation. Those men who had done their best to bring about "red ruin and the breaking up of laws" in Asia, South Africa, Ireland, and Egypt were once more at their disintegrating work. Those so-called friends of peace, who had caused more bloody wars than all the Jingoes and Imperialists that ever lived, were again preaching their base and craven gospel of "scuttle" and anarchy. But the nation had had enough and too much of them. It was weary of that mock morality which meant devastation, slavery, and woe; it was weary of that sickly sentimentalism which carried ruin and disgrace in its wake. It was sick to death of that sham humanity, which meant wanton bloodshed and fruitless massacre. It would have no more of that fatal policy of war without honour and peace with shame. The Prime Minister had based his defence—if defence it could be called—upon two grounds, the first that General Gordon could have escaped when he pleased; the second, that the Government had no reason to believe that he was in danger in Khartoum. But if it were true that Gordon could have escaped, how could it be supposed for one moment that a British officer, much less a Christian hero, would have been guilty of such cowardice and baseness as to be willing, in order to save his own life, to abandon the mission upon which he had been sent, and to desert the people whom he had gone out to rescue? Gordon had not only stated that he would not be so mean as to leave those people, but that he could not if he would. General Gordon said—

> "I stay in Khartoum, because the Arabs have shut us in and will not let us out. The people, also, would not let me go unless I gave them some Government or took them with me, which I could not do."

The Prime Minister had frequently told the House that Khartoum was in no danger; but he thought the country was already convinced of the extraordinary perversity of the Prime Minister's views on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) had said that the Prime Minister could persuade most people of most things, and himself of anything; but he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was perfectly sure that even the Prime Minister could not convince the people of England that Khartoum had not been long in imminent danger. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Arthur Arnold) thought, with the Prime Minister, that there was no effusion of blood at Khartoum. But upon what evidence was such an opinion founded, for all the evidence had pointed to the contrary? Dismissing, for the sake of argument, the circumstantial accounts of barbarous slaughter, which correspondents at Gubat had gathered from the lips of the refugees that came back with Sir Charles Wilson, there was ample other evidence. There was the testimony of Gordon's trusted messenger, George, who stated that all the notables and inhabitants that had been so long faithful were, with their families, cruelly butchered, and their bodies thrown into the Nile. The families of the soldiers on Gordon's steamers were also killed; and piteous accounts of the intensity of the soldiers' grief had come home to us. He never could understand how, with the knowledge of what was going on in Khartoum, the Prime Minister could at any moment say that Gordon was not in deadly peril. Gordon informed them of the dangers of his position by implication in his despatches. They knew that he stood alone in a city surrounded by savage fanatics; that he had no reliable troops with him. The great city, that his courage and genius alone guarded, was poorly fortified. Gordon had no money, no officers, consolers, friends, save only the gallant Stewart. Within seven weeks of his arrival he was attacked and surrounded. His wretched troops were badly defeated in March, and Khartoum was at once closely beleaguered by savage foes. Yet Ministers had the head and the heart to say he was in no danger. Gordon in no danger! He was alone in that far-distant land, threatened by savage and triumphant fanatics, surrounded by an ignorant and largely hostile population. The story of General Gordon's long desertion is too well known, too indelibly branded on the mind of the English people to need repetition now. Every suggestion he made, every advice he offered, every help he asked for was neglected, contemned, and refused. Zebehr, the five officers, the 200 British soldiers at Wady Halfa, the Indian troops at Berber, the opening of the Berber road by Graham, the £200,000, and 2,000 Turkish volunteers, for which, in despair of British help, he prayed, were all deliberately and heartlessly refused to him. Insolent and idiotic messages about his pacific mission, and denying him military aid, were sent by the Cabinet to their devoted officer at Khartoum. He had exhausted every effort to bring about a peaceful settlement; he was in deadly peril, attacked and beleaguered by savage fanatics. Yet Ministers could say that he was in no danger and under no constraint to remain at Khartoum. Mr. Power's able and pathetic despatches were also treated with cold contempt. The Prime Minister spoke of the reference to them by the Leader of the Opposition as "a farce." Just so he derided the references to the gallant but ill-starred General Hicks in these words—"I thought we had had enough of General Hicks." Yet, in face of this knowledge, the Prime Minister had distinctly asserted that neither Khartoum nor Gordon was in any danger. The result was well known. The Government said that Gordon could escape; and yet Colonel Stewart, the only man who tried to escape, or rather who was forced by Gordon to make the attempt, came to an untimely death on his way down the Nile. Then the Prime Minister said that Gordon could escape by the Equator, as if that were an easy thing to do. Had the Prime Minister any idea of the dangers of that route? Had he thought of the difficulties of the hundreds of miles of desert, of the immense difficulties of the rivers, of the savage tribes that would have to be traversed? Gordon himself never spoke of the retreat to the Equator as an easy matter; but, on the contrary, he spoke of it as a last resource in that memorable telegram in which he declared that indelible disgrace would attach to the Government if they deserted the garrisons. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) would not do more than refer to the interesting telegrams of Mr. Power. One extract he would make. Thus, on April 7, Mr. Power telegraphed—

> "Khartoum is at present the centre of an enormous rebel camp. Our store of Krupp ammunition is rather short. The situation is now very critical. We are trying to run a steamer through the rebel lines to Berber. Today arrived an unciphered telegram sent from Sir Evelyn Baring to Berber, saying that no English troops would be sent to that place—in a word, clearly indicating that General Gordon and the others who have been faithful to the Government are thrown over. To retreat on Berber is impossible. Sir Evelyn Baring's unciphered telegram to that place will quickly be spread abroad, and the Arabs will learn that the members of the English Government have turned down their thumbs while General Gordon is struggling here. A retreat on the Congo will entail great hardships."

Mr. Power's messages were full of information as to the dangers at Khartoum; they told Gordon's mind more clearly than Gordon himself would have told it; and they showed how impossible it was, in the face of the abandonment by England, that the garrison, or the people, or any portion of them could escape. That was a point with regard to the action of the Government which was worth the attention of the House. The Prime Minister had dwelt on the fact that there was no delay on the part of the Ministry; but he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) would like to have the delay that took place between August 3 and August 23 explained a little better. He asked for a Vote of Credit on August 3; and yet, down to August 23, the Prime Minister prevented all action being taken in spite of the urgent remonstrances of his Colleagues. He had caused the Vote to be practically worthless until August 23; and, if that were so, then those three weeks were responsible for the death of General Gordon; for those three weeks would have saved him, and halved the cost of Lord Wolseley's Expedition. Lord Wolseley himself had repeatedly said that his Expedition was started from England a month too late. It was quite true that the Prime Minister tried to make out that the cause of Gordon's loss was treachery alone on the part of the Soudanese troops, and that treachery was inevitable under any circumstances; but that supposed that the Mahdi and his accomplices in the garrison were the greatest idiots that ever breathed. If Khartoum was in their hand, would they have deliberately put off its conveyance till the last and most dangerous moment? A more extraordinary and puerile argument was never addressed to the intelligence of the House of Commons. Did the Prime Minister mean to say that the Mahdi and the traitors were such absolute fools as to run the enormous risks they ran by delaying their treachery; that they would have deliberately incurred the enormous loss that took place in the assaults on Khartoum in December; and that they would have run the risk of the sudden advance of the British troops? The idea was preposterous and absurd. Lord Wolseley himself had stated repeatedly that the Expedition started a month too late, and the House knew whose fault it was that this precious month was lost. What was more astonishing than all was the Prime Minister's attempt to prove, in the face of the Blue Books he had issued, that Khartoum was not suffering privation, and was well-provisioned. Never was there so transparent a misrepresentation, for there was the clearest and most direct evidence to show that Khartoum was in dire distress. On December 14 came Gordon's important and mournful message, which was sent to Lord Wolseley—

> "Our troops in Khartoum are suffering from lack of provisions. Food we still have is little; some grain and biscuit. We want you to come quickly. . . . . In Khartoum there are no butter nor dates, and little meat. All food is very dear."—[Egypt, No. 1 (1885), p. 132.]

"All food is dear; come quickly." From the lips of a hero like Gordon that message meant that the garrison was starving; that the hearts of the troops were failing them at the long and inexplicable delay; that a state of suffering and despair was being engendered, in which treachery would find its fertile opportunity. As against that solemn and pathetic message of General Gordon himself, the Prime Minister quoted the verbal report of a messenger who left Khartoum on December 28, having been only one day there. He said Gordon was in perfect health, and the soldiers on the five steamers he saw were well and happy; that the steamers had seized cattle and grain and were taking them up the river to Khartoum. What on earth does this prove—that Khartoum was provisioned, that food was plenty? Nothing of the kind, but only that five steamers picked up a certain amount of provisions. How far would that go among 20,000 people? By this message of Dec. 28, Gordon repeated the starvation message of Dec. 14. Yet this all important fact the Prime Minister suppressed till an intimation compelled him to refer to it. "Oh, no;" said the Prime Minister, "the idea that Khartoum was starving is utterly absurd." It was his own statement that was purely and utterly unserving of serious notice. Then came what he thought was the worst feature in the Prime Minister's speech — his use of Gordon's slip of December 29—"Khartoum all right. Can hold out for years." Why did he not tell the House, what was well known, that Gordon had informed Lord Wolseley that certain of these written messages of his, which the Mahdi almost always intercepted, were to be taken in the exact reverse sense to which they read? The moving cause of the betrayal of Khartoum was the announcement by Her Majesty's Ministers that Khartoum and the Soudan were to be abandoned. Those who betrayed Gordon felt it to be their only chance to make terms with the Mahdi before the British troops appeared to take Gordon away. So the hero of Khartoum perished. There was "little effusion of blood at Khartoum," said the Prime Minister. All the evidence was against him. Those troops who were faithful to Gordon were slain. All the notables and their families were butchered. What right had Ministers to assume that the savage destroyer who massacred the defenders of El Obeid and Hicks's 10,000 men; that the butchers of Sinkat and Berber would spare the loyal people of Khartoum? He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was astonished at the indifference which hon. Members opposite, who were such professed humanitarians, showed towards those horrible and unparalleled scenes of carnage and ruin which that human butcher, the Mahdi, was producing throughout the Soudan. The country now realized the hollowness and hypocrisy of the crocodile tears which were shed over the Bulgarian atrocities. Last night the right hon. Gentleman had affected to display an interest in putting down the Slave Trade; but that interest came very ill indeed from the right hon. Gentleman, in view of the policy of abandonment which he had been endeavouring to carry out in the Soudan. The Government knew perfectly well that the policy of abandonment they had been forcing upon Egypt, and preaching throughout the country, was a direct encouragement to the Slave Trade. What did General Gordon write on February 21? He wrote to Sir Evelyn Baring—

> "I answered (questions regarding the liberation of slaves) that the Treaty of 1877 would not be enforced in 1889 by me, which, considering the determination of Her Majesty's Government respecting the Soudan, was a self-evident fact."

And Sir Evelyn Baring himself wrote to Lord Granville—

> "It was obvious from the first that a revival of slavery in the Soudan would result from the policy of abandonment."

So that, in addition to all the other human misery which the Government policy had caused, "a revival of slavery" was its clear and proclaimed result. Yet, with these words before them, the Government had persistently followed a policy which they knew was a revival of the Slave Trade. Now we were told that Egypt and the Soudan were not worth the trouble and expense they were costing us. The apostles of sham philanthropy and retreat were trying to make capital out of all that had happened. "Why all this cost and trouble?" they cried; "let us have done with the Soudan and Egypt. Let us scuttle and run, and leave these peoples to stew in their own juice." Apart from the utter baseness, the un-English cowardice of such a policy, it was impracticable and impossible. They might wish to leave the Mahdi alone; but that savage conqueror would not leave them, or Egypt alone. He would follow our retreat and harass our Armies in Egypt. The bloody sponge which Ministers had allowed him to pass over the Soudan would inflict like horrors upon Egypt, upon Arabia, and North Africa. A world-wide conflagration might easily be kindled. The echoes of Mahommedan revival were already reverberating throughout the East, and we should have to pay in India for abnegation of duty in Egypt. But it was not Egypt or the Soudan; it was not Arabi or the Mahdi that had cost England, no less than the suffering peoples of those distant countries, so bitter a penalty. It was the present Ministers of the Crown and their policy that were responsible for this waste of blood and treasure. It was their persistent inaction, their ingrained indecision, their rooted resolve to shirk responsibility, their shuffling, their absolute lack of courage that had brought all these calamities upon Egypt and England. Their policy and their action alone were responsible for all this misery and trouble; and until that policy was reversed the country could not hope for a discontinuance of it. Hon. Members might ask what policy would be advocated by the Opposition. Well, the policy which he advocated was that from which he had never varied. It was simply this—that Egypt should be taken in hand clearly and consistently, and administered by British officials for a certain number of years; but only on this condition—that it was done by arrangement with the Sultan of Turkey, the Sovereign of Egypt. Thus alone, too, could a permanent settlement of Egyptian finance be achieved. The Sultan was the legitimate and recognized Sovereign of Egypt. With his countenance and support our position in Egypt would be legally and materially unassailable. The Sultan and the Ottoman people were most anxious for the friendship of England. If only the British Cabinet would treat them in a just, honest, and cordial spirit, all could readily be arranged. Then, if Turkey broke up, England was in possession, and would become her natural legatee in Egypt. To secure our position there and throughout the world we must regain the alliance of the German Powers, which so recklessly we had thrown away. As to the Soudan, we were bound to establish a stable and honest Government over, at all events, that portion of the country lying between the White Nile and the Red Sea, under a capable European Governor. Of such men our Indian Service possessed scores. He protested against this cruel and shameful policy of "massacre and retreat" propounded by this Government. They owed it even to these gallant Arabs to show them that England had something to offer them besides the withering blast of her rifles and the fierce thrust of her bayonets. This fatal policy of abandonment had already cost us a bloody penalty. It paralyzed Baker last February at Suakin. It ruined Gordon at Khartoum; it deprived Lord Wolseley of all Native help. It would hurl every friendly and wavering tribe against our hard-pressed Army. Khartoum must be retaken; and, retaken, it must be held for civilization and for the safety of Egypt. They owed it to their national honour, to the cause of humanity; above all, to the memory of their martyr hero, who gave up his life for the cause, to secure to the suffering peoples of the Soudan the blessings of a civilized, free, and beneficent rule. If the policy he recommended were carried out, supported by the alliance of the German Powers, the difficulties in which Her Majesty's Government were now placed would disappear; we should find the Mahdi's movement, which now appeared so formidable, could easily be put down; and we should regain the strong position abroad which England held under the late Administration, and which the present Government had lost.

MR. TREVELYAN: I certainly do not intend, in the few words I am about to address to the House, to turn my attention to Party topics, and the example of the hon. Member who has just sat down is not likely to attract me in that direction. This is the first occasion on which I have had an opportunity of addressing the House on the Egyptian Question; and I do not think it is necessary for me to inquire whether the words of the gallant and Christian hero who has died for the whole of his country can be so interpreted and twisted as to elicit cheers from this or from that side of the House. I have also very little inclination to enter seriously into an argument against the hon. Member's contention that the Government, who are in great difficulties—which is of far less importance than that the country should be in difficulties — in consequence of having sent a great Expedition into the centre of Africa, have deserted General Gordon. I may, however, be permitted to reply to the argumentative assertion of the hon. Member that desertion, or, in other words, abandonment, implies intention. I have further yet to discover the authority which supports the hon. Member's contention that the words of General Gordon to Lord Wolseley should be taken in an inverse sense from that in which they were written. There are graver cares upon us at this moment, and it is to those that I shall address myself during the short time that I shall occupy the attention of the House. But before I do so let me say one word upon Party politics in reference to the capital speech which was delivered from the back Benches opposite by the hon. Member for North Wilts (Mr. Long) who shows very considerable sympathy with the views of hon. Members who sit below the Gangway on our side of the House, and appears to understand those views very well. The hon. Member appeared to find some inconsistency in the fact that those hon. Members who profess to disapprove of every step which the Government have taken have expressed their intention of supporting us on the present occasion against the Motion which has been moved by the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote). I must confess that I do not see any inconsistency in the conduct of hon. Members below the Gangway; because every step which the Government have taken in Egypt has been taken, I do not say under the pressure, but, at all events, with the encouragement of hon. Members opposite. The support of the Khedive, which was the natural outcome of the Dual Control set up by our Predecessors; the bombardment of Alexandria; the attempt to relieve the garrisons in the Soudan; the sending out of General Gordon—[“No!”]—I am going to qualify my statement in a manner which I think will make hon. Members opposite agree with its drift—and the sending out of an Expedition to relieve General Gordon, were all approved in principle — I am not speaking of the steps by which that principle was attempted to be carried out—by hon. Members opposite. But those are exactly the steps which are disapproved of by hon. Members below the Gangway on our side of the House. I can, therefore, easily understand that those hon. Members below the Gangway are unwilling to place in Office those who have consistently advocated the taking of those steps, and those steps only, of which they disapprove in the action of the Government, to which on other points they are ready to give their support. There are some words which were used by the hon. Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Borlase), in the very eloquent and finished speech with which he delighted the House—which was too thin at the time to deserve it—to which I feel bound to refer. The hon. Member said that although he was not inclined altogether to approve of the past—while, at the same time, he was equally disinclined altogether to blame it—he was more inclined to look to the future; and in saying that the hon. Member was evidently in sympathy with the majority of those who have as yet taken an active part in this debate. At the present moment, there are before the House one Resolution and two Amendments—if I am in Order in saying so; because the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) has referred to, and has advocated, a second Amendment, which must, therefore, be taken to be under the consideration of the House. In that Resolution, and in those Amendments, there is only one line and a-half which refers to the past; and it is that which states that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government has involved great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result. Every word of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle

(Mr. John Morley) refers to the future, and so does the Motion of the right hon. Baronet opposite. In these circumstances, I shall confine myself to the future, and to one single point in the future, but that all important—it being one with regard to which, if I were a private Member, I should require to have the most complete elucidation and the most perfect satisfaction in order to guide my course in the vote I should have to give on Thursday or on Friday next; and that point is this—were the Government right or wrong in the decision to which they came when they received the news of the fall of Khartoum? That news reached the Government late on the night of the 4th or 5th of February, and the effect of that news was to determine the Cabinet to pursue the war. What were the grounds for that determination? Were they such as to commend themselves to the mind of the House, and to the mind of the country, and, what is much more serious, were they such as to justify the Government in being influenced by them? I can well understand that this is a question which greatly troubles the minds of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and troubles the minds of the people of the country; because I never took part in any decision which more greatly troubled my own mind. That trouble did not arise from any doubt or hesitation as to the propriety of that decision, but because that decision involved a departure from those general views of policy which we believed to be of advantage to the country, and because it might lead those who hold those views with us to believe that we hold them no longer. Those views were most eloquently expressed by the hon. Member for Newcastle in the one ornate passage of his speech, in which he stated that it would be detrimental, in the highest degree, to the welfare of the nation if we were to extend our Possessions or our responsibilities beyond our fighting power. If that is adopted as a general principle of action, if we did increase our responsibilities beyond what increased our fighting power, if we looked for the appearance of strength and not for the reality of it, then the nation is going in a downward direction, and has embarked on a course which will imperil her. Is the decision to continue and push on the war in the Soudan a justifiable decision by persons who hold these views? In order to vindicate that decision it is necessary to ask the House to put itself in the position in which we were when we made it, with the facts which we had then before us, and candidly and frankly I will expose the grounds of that decision. When the news of the fall of Khartoum reached us, what were the facts before us? Six thousand fighting British soldiers were in the heart of Africa. The distance they had traversed, which, if they had done nothing else—and they had done a great deal else—would alone entitle them to the fame of having completed a great undertaking. They were 1,400 miles from the city whence they originally started. They were divided into three bodies, small in number, however heroically valiant, one at a distance of 160 miles from the central body, the other half that distance away. They were in the face of a powerful enemy, flushed with a recent success—an enemy of that nature whom success rendered much more powerful, not only by means of the material advantages in the way of ammunition, and weapons, and food, and military positions, but in the immense effect which success made on the question whether he was to be joined by great multitudes of people who were half soldiers already. In this strait, and with all these real enemies around them, and with 1,400 miles already behind them, there still was what I should call the certainty that such troops under such leaders should make head even against this situation, but only on one condition, and that was that they should know promptly and even instantly that their countrymen at home would spare nothing to make their position secure, and, if it were needed, doubly secure; that they should not be allowed to ride at single anchor, but should have another line of retreat if the existing line should possibly fail; and that, above all, their General should not be tied down to this species of retreat or retirement; but that he should be allowed full discretion to take what is the only means of extricating an army from a dangerous position, and especially a dangerous position in the face of an uncivilized foe—that is to say, to resort to vigorous offensive tactics. Now, I have a right to ask hon. Members to put themselves in our position then, and to look at this matter with our eyes; and I have especially a right to ask my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) to do so, because he has taken a leading part in protesting against the action of the Government. The difficulty in which our Army was placed arose, to a great extent, from the march across the Bayuda Desert that was led so gallantly by my dear personal friend, Sir Herbert Stewart. This march, as long as General Gordon held Khartoum, was, if a civilian may be permitted to express an opinion on a military subject, a most bold, but a most judicious proceeding; and I am certain, from what Sir Herbert Stewart told me of Soudanese warfare, that it was the sort of proceeding in which he would be very glad to be engaged. But it was quite another thing when Khartoum fell. As soon as Khartoum fell the Army was in a position not adapted to its then circumstances. That position was the result of the undertaking which was set on foot by the Government to which my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard belonged. There is no question so difficult as to settle what difference of judgment it is which constitutes an obligation on a Member of a Government to leave that Government. But on one question there is no doubt whatever, in my opinion—namely, that we must accept the necessary consequences of the action taken by a Government at the time that you were in it. Now, the hon. Member said that the particular things which were most obnoxious to himself, and to at least one of his Colleagues—and I believe when he said that he referred to the late lamented Mr. Fawcett, though I am bound to say I object altogether to any deduction being drawn as to what opinion Mr. Fawcett would have held at this crisis—were done, as he said, completely before they knew anything about them. But that cannot be said about the Expedition for the relief of General Gordon. That was a thing which was not done in a corner. The Government to which my hon. Friend, exactly as much as I, then belonged, placed these 6,000 men in the heart of Africa; and it seems to me that if the Government, with the facts before them, and with the best military advice they could get under their eyes, thought that, in order to place these men in a position of safety, measures stronger and more energetic than my hon. Friend quite approves ought to be taken, I must say, I think my hon. Friend ought to be slow and very chary indeed to blame the Government for taking those steps. Well, Sir, it was the bounden duty of the Government to take a decided course; and what was that course to be? I understand there is a widespread wish, which the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) put into a very short and effective speech, that we should have instructed General Wolseley to withdraw down the Valley of the Nile to Wady Halfa, or Korosko, or Assouan, or to some other point which is imagined to be a point of military safety. Now, I do not hesitate to say that, from a military point of view, no Government would have been justified in giving such an order to a General of an army. A retreat, and especially a retreat before an uncivilized foe, who is so very easily moved, and in case of disaster becomes ubiquitous and covers the whole country, is the most hazardous of all operations; and it is safe only on one condition—namely, if you are retreating to a point so secure that when you get to it you are certain you are in safety. There was the retreat of Wellington to the lines of Torres Vedras, a point where he was in safety. Then there was the retreat of General Moore upon Corunna; but at Corunna he found the sea and ships, and consequently safety. But these places which people name down the Valley of the Nile are not places of safety at all. They are not at all stronger than the position our Army at present occupies. I do not like to speak in detail of the difficulties of transport; but this is a matter of immense importance. The position our troops occupy at this moment they can defend, and they have food; but if they retreated, how could they carry their food with them? The river is absolutely impassable, and there are 240 miles along which boats cannot pass at all. This constitutes a formidable obstacle indeed. Then there are all the Arab tribes which, if we left the country as fugitives, would very soon be upon us. These tribes lie all along our line of retreat. My hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) talked about the retreat from Moscow, and asked what destroyed the Grand Army of Napoleon. It is not the Mahdi and his forces that we have to fear; but the rainless deserts and illimitable distances. As long as our Army stay where they are—they cannot stay there always, and that is the strength of the position of the Government—holding their position towards the front, we are afraid neither of the rainless deserts nor of the illimitable distances; but the place to which it is said our Army should retreat is more than 500 miles from our front. If we were to give from Downing Street an absolute order to a General to commence such a retreat in that climate and under these circumstances, we should take a step which no Government has any right to take. But it is said that there is another course, and that the Government might have telegraphed to Lord Wolseley to take such measures as would enable him to retreat with security and with dignity—I think the words which my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) used were "quietly and calmly"—and that we should assure him of our support, whatever those measures might be. Now, Sir, that is a proposal which reads very well as a peroration to an extremely effective speech; but it would read much less well if it were read by a General in an African desert. Just think what it means. It means that the Government, who with such military light as they can obtain at home are satisfied that the safety of our Army lies in a vigorous defensive, is to telegraph—"Our object is to get away. If you can only get away by hard forward fighting then you must do it on your own responsibility; but do not put it upon us. Let the suggestion come from you if you think it is necessary to open up the Suakin-Berber route and to break up the Mahdi's power. Take the whole responsibility and the unpopularity, and let us be able to say—'All we did was to order you to retreat.'" Hon. Members may read such a message otherwise; but that is the only interpretation I can put upon it. We took the right course. Without dictating military details, we laid down our main policy—namely, that the war shall be conducted as a war shall always be conducted—that is to say, with a broad, vigorous, and energetic offensive. That means keeping back the Mahdi on his line of advance, and opening up the Berber-Suakin route, with the military operations necessary for that purpose. As for the construction of the railway, it is a military operation of an absolutely necessary order. It is for military reasons that the railway is to be made a broad-gauge railway; and for the present I refuse to be bound to any future policy by the existence of that railway, just as much as I should refuse to be bound by the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote). And here I come to what is almost my last point; but it is one which weighed very much with us in coming to a decision. Some hon. Members are desirous of entering into negotiations with the Mahdi. Now, that point of view was not out of our minds. We respect the Mahdi as an enemy; and we think it possible—we hope it may be possible—that it may lead to a pacification of the Soudan. [*Ironical cheers.*] I hear a right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen), who is going to give us an extremely authentic discourse on the Soudan, laugh at that proposal. Sir, I am proud to say that I enjoyed the intimate acquaintance of the late Colonel Stewart, who accompanied General Gordon to the Soudan, and who was murdered on the Nile. He used to tell me that, in his opinion, the only means of pacifying the Soudan was to take the Mahdi into our counsels, and while placing Khartoum under a settled Government to give him great authority in other parts of the Soudan, for which his rule was better fitted. That was the policy, not only of Colonel Stewart—it was the policy also of General Gordon himself. Well, then, if you want to negotiate in time of war the only way to do so is to negotiate while you are fighting, to advance boldly in the direction in which you are advancing militarily, and then to accept overtures which will go on more quickly and effectually than if you checked your course. I would ask the House to consider the grave calamities which befell the British Army in another war. I do hope we are not going to repeat the story of Sir William Macnaghten and the calamity of Cabul, which, if we remain in military inaction during negotiation, will too likely fall upon us. That policy certainly the Government cannot adopt. I lay most stress upon the arguments which affect us most strongly. But I cannot forget likewise that in leaving the Soudan we shall leave those whom the Mahdi suspects of being our allies to a fate which I do not like to contemplate; and then if we do get safely away it is only a question of time—and no very long time—before we shall have another invasion. It is not four years since the Mahdi first announced his intention of gaining the whole of the Soudan to his cause, and then in the same Proclamation of conquering the whole of Egypt, overthrowing the unbelieving Turk, and converting the world, the unbelieving Turks being the Mahommedans who do not believe in his supremacy. During those four years he has upset the power of Egypt in the Soudan. He has caused a great deal of slaughter. He has pretty well destroyed the agriculture and entirely ruined the commerce of the Soudan. He has taken several great towns, including Khartoum and Berber. What do hon. Members think will stand in the way of his taking Dongola, Korosko, and Assouan when they have no defenders whatever? We know very well what in an Oriental mouth this talk means of converting the world. It means a good deal, even in a country like the Soudan; but in the fertile Valley of the Nile it means dreadful cruelty, the ruin of all prosperity, the destruction of all organized society. My hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) compares the fanaticism of the Mahdi with the fanaticism of Christianity, and says there is a good deal to say for both. But in truth there is no analogy between the mild and mitigating effects of Christian enthusiasm and the stern and grim effects of Mahommedan fanaticism. I am surprised that a well-known historian like the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) should talk of such an Oriental Government as one under which the people could enjoy a great deal of quiet and prosperity. My hon. Friend cannot have so read history as to expect such results from an Oriental Government of warriors and shepherds, or think that Egypt could safely be entrusted to it. I know my hon. Friend has adopted such an argument from motives which I honour—motives of indignation at what he conceives to have been a national misdemeanour. My hon. Friend is actuated by feelings which I think I understand, and which, if I understand them, I heartily share; but I do not think he has gone the right way to carry them into effect. I believe if the course he recommends be adopted by the Government we shall in the long run have more bloodshed, and undertake more permanent and extensive responsibilities, than we shall if we take the course recommended by the Government. My hon. Friend stated that if the questions raised in this debate were questions merely of the military situation there would be no difference of opinion on either side of the House. I have endeavoured to answer his appeal. I have concealed nothing. I have magnified nothing. I may not have persuaded his judgment or those of my hon. Friends who sit round him; but I am sure I have convinced him that I have straightforwardly attempted to deal with the arguments which he has urged.

MR. GIBSON: Mr. Speaker—Sir, there is a very wide contrast between the way in which the opposition to the Motion of my right hon. Friend has been presented by the Prime Minister, and by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), having been but a very short time a Member of the Cabinet, has thought it only necessary to deal with such portions of the action of the Government as were covered by his own connection with that august Body, and he limited himself to a rather narrow statement of the military decision arrived at in the crisis which presented itself after the fall of Khartoum. But I am not aware that from beginning to end of his interesting speech the right hon. Gentleman indicated by one syllable anything to show what, in his view, was not only the military exigency, but the policy which in future is to sway the Government. The only indication that I could see or gather in the speech we have just listened to was presented obscurely, that in the not remote future the Mahdi would become an element in the pacification of the Soudan. I do not press that topic. It is a curious topic, curiously presented, and it struck upon our ears with a strange sound. It possibly meant something that cannot be immediately grasped. The Prime Minister was not in the happy position of having been in the Cabinet for only a few months. The responsibility of the Prime Minister is covered by a duration that commands respect, and carries with it vast responsibility, and he was therefore unable to confine himself either to the future or the present. He had to deal with the past as well; and I venture to think there never was a performance of his which was more characterized by the remarkable versatility of his genius. He showed a bold courage which in others might possibly be called audacity. He occasionally showed also much gracious humility in the way in which he presented his topics. We have had the pleasure, on Thursday, of hearing his views from what we learn to-night was a written memorandum prepared in connection with his Colleagues — a strange fetter on the Prime Minister's power of speech. We then heard with fulness, but not with more amplitude of definition, an explanation of the meaning of "abandonment." We have heard to-night, in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), what kind of abandonment was meant. [Mr. GLADSTONE: A re-statement.] Yes; a re-statement, which presented to some people in this House a meaning different from that of the earlier statement. Well, the position taken by the Prime Minister last night, in the course of the debate, was very clever, and, if it could succeed, would be very successful. The whole matter, he assumes, is decided; it was decided last May in the Division which took place in this House on the Vote of Want of Confidence; it is not possible to re-open the matter again; we are estopped by the then vote of the House, and we have no business to go behind it. Surely it is rather a strong assertion, even for a Prime Minister to make, that, notwithstanding all that has happened since, that vote of this House, carried by a small majority of 28 last May, is to bind us now. Last night he used words about a covenant being then entered into between the Government on the one side and the Parliament and the nation on the other. Our contention is that that covenant has been broken; and in the immense fact that Khartoum has fallen, and that Gordon has lost his life, we have, at all events, overwhelming proof that the covenant has not been fulfilled. The contention of the Prime Minister, which, as I have said, was marked by a bold courage, is that there was no danger to Gordon that the Government knew of. How is one to apply himself to argue against a proposition so plainly disproved that if put forward by anyone else it would not have obtained audience in this House? If the House was so satisfied of the gravity of the crisis and of the imminence of the danger last May that the Prime Minister, using all the weight of his personal influence and all the pressure which Party ties could give him, was only able to get a small majority of 28, to give the Government a further chance of showing that they were in earnest, it is impossible to follow the Prime Minister in this suggestion of the absence of danger. Take Gordon's own words on the 1st of March—"I feel certain I shall be caught at Khartoum." You are asked in one part of the Prime Minister's speech to remember that this was a hero of heroes, whose word was to be accepted as that of a truthful, experienced, and able man; and in another you are asked to disregard this statement, and to take it as that of a man who, if he knew the gravity of his danger, did not know what he was saying. On the 19th of April, in the last telegram that was received from General Gordon before the interruption of communications with him—that which was sent, not to the Government, but to Sir Samuel Baker, and published in the newspapers, he said—"We are hemmed in." This is the language of an Engineer officer of whom the Prime Minister stated in an earlier speech that he knew better than anyone else how to indicate the way in which he could be helped. Gordon said—"We are hemmed in." Notwithstanding this the Prime Minister asks the House, after Gordon has fallen a victim to the danger which threatened him for so many months, to believe that he was in no danger at all, and that we had no business to know it. This extraordinary power of the Prime Minister not to see what everybody else sees is not confined to Khartoum. We have the case of Berber to illustrate his action about Khartoum On the 15th of April the Prime Minister's attention was called to Berber by General Gordon, and by a Memorial from all the inhabitants of Berber, which was of the strongest, the most pathetic, and the gravest character. On the 24th of April the Prime Minister said he had no reason to believe that there was any risk of Berber sustaining the fate of

Sinkat. In two or three weeks it fell, and 5,000 then were massacred. Like case again—Khartoum and Berber. It did not suit the Prime Minister to recognize the looming danger in the case of Berber. He did not see it, and he would not see it. He disregarded the wail—the melancholy, despairing wail—which proceeded from the merchants and inhabitants of Berber. He said he knew Berber better than they, and on the 1st of June, according to Gordon's own subsequent statement, 5,000 were murdered on the capture of Berber.

MR. GLADSTONE: Where do you find that statement?

MR. GIBSON: The Prime Minister asks me for a statement about these 5,000. Well, I say it is to be found, and I pledge myself to give the Prime Minister the reference to-morrow, which shows that Gordon stated that on the 1st of June 5,000 lost their lives after the capture of Berber.

An hon. MEMBER: He never was there.

MR. GIBSON: Whoever interrupts me has not, at all events, the same knowledge of the matter as General Gordon had. Still, taking his stand on the assumed *res judicata* of the decision of May, the Prime Minister asks—What is your new fact since May to show that the Government has been remiss? There is the lapse of time. By that lapse of time you have been too late. The Government make the defence, through the Prime Minister, that there was no delay between May, which was the time they entered into the covenant with the House for the safety of Gordon, and the time they moved in August. How does the Prime Minister attempt to bridge over that interval of three months? If these excuses did not come from the Prime Minister they would not obtain audience from anyone else. It is said there was no delay because this period—not of weeks but of months—was taken up by an anxious examination of the comparative merits of different routes, that by the Nile, and that from Suakin to Berber. Remember, these are not my words, but those of the Prime Minister, and there was an examination so anxious and critical that it took months. Any Intelligence Department that took months to present a Paper containing a clear decision on the matter ought to be swept off the face of the earth. I venture to say, however, that if any officer of our Intelligence Department, with a right of audience in this House, had liberty to dispose of this statement, he would have dealt with it in the most clear and concise manner. I notice that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), who spoke this evening, confined himself to the period of the last few months or weeks, and that he did not attempt—he was far too wise—to give a particle of explanation of that fatal lapse of time which made the subsequent Expedition of Lord Wolseley a death march against time. The Prime Minister says there was nothing to indicate that there was urgency in this matter. I point again to the lapse of time. The vote, on which he relies as stopping us almost from the right of debating the matter at all—that vote took place in the month of May. At that time General Gordon had been "hemmed in," to use his own words, for a considerable time. The Government had failed for over a month to get their despatches into Khartoum, and Gordon, during the same period, was unable to pass any despatches out to the Government. Does not this damning fact increase the urgency of the case against the Government? This cutting-off of communication between General Gordon and the outer world that in May had existed for a month lasted for months after that, and during those months the only explanation given by Her Majesty's Ministers for their deadly torpor and fatal apathy is this—that they were not able to make up their minds. [MR. GLADSTONE: Not at all!] If I can demonstrate anything in the world to my own mind, I can demonstrate that. The Prime Minister said distinctly and plainly that the examination of the contending merits of the routes by Suakin and by the Nile occupied months. These months must have preceded the 5th of August, when the money Vote for £300,000 was taken; because, after Lord Wolseley's instructions were sent—on the 23rd of the same month—there was not time for months of examination; therefore, the examination must have preceded, and the sole explanation is that the Government had not made up their minds. ["Oh!"] Well, if you have not that excuse, you have none. The Prime Minister yesterday paid Gordon a tribute in very eloquent words; but the substance of some of his statements was not so complimentary. He conveyed by innuendo that Gordon partly brought his own fate upon himself by his own rashness. It is plain to me, on reading the Papers that have been presented, and it must be plain to anyone else who reads them fairly, that Gordon could not have escaped and retained the character which the Prime Minister gave him at any time after the 13th of March. On the 9th of March General Gordon, according to the Papers with which we are now familiar, preferred a request that he might be allowed—he saw the difficulties increasing, and he was beginning to understand the Government—to send Stewart and part of the *employés* to Berber, to surrender his commission, and go to the Equator. That request was refused by Sir Evelyn Baring, who told him to stay at Khartoum, and not go to the Equator. Two days after the route was blocked, and then, for the first time, on the 13th of March, Earl Granville, in one of his interesting despatches, tells Gordon that he is at liberty to escape if he can. At no time, however, after the 13th of March, was it possible for Gordon to have effected his escape. Sir, these are painful things in this matter for anyone to have to realize. It is appalling for a Government who are directly and primarily responsible to reflect upon what has occurred in consequence of their action and non-action; and I know not of one single alleviation for their feelings. It is an alleviation when sorrow and trouble come if one can say that he has done all that human power can do in the way of what is right and proper. But in all these anxious 12 months, during which Gordon was at Khartoum, the Government are unable to point to one single thing that they have done to support him. Literally, until Gordon died, or until his fate had reached its most supreme point, they hardly appear to have stirred at all. I repeat, that the Government are unable to point, in all the 12 months that Gordon was alive in Khartoum, to one solitary request of his that they complied with. They are unable to point to one single expedient that General Gordon indicated that they did not oppose; and Gordon has died never obtaining at their hands while he lived, and while concessions might have kept him alive, the tribute of having, in any particular, acted upon his advice. Her Majesty's Government adopted the humble, but comtemptible, *rôle* of opposing everything and proposing nothing. They refused everything at a time when each refusal increased their responsibility, and unfulfilled responsibility involves criminal disgrace. And now as to the Prime Minister's "no danger"—the great fallacy he put forward yesterday—I will just make one quotation, the only one I shall make from any of these Blue Books. Sir Evelyn Baring, in a despatch of March 24, 1884, says—

> "There are only two possible solutions. The first is to trust Gordon's being able to maintain himself at Khartoum till the autumn. . . . This he might, perhaps, be able to do; but it, of course, involves running a great risk. The only other plan is to send a portion of General Graham's Army to Berber with instructions to open up communication with Khartoum."—[Egypt. No. 12 (1884), p. 186.]

Well, Sir, Her Majesty's Ministers deliberately elected to run what their own Agent pointed out to them was a great risk, and we are asked now to hold indemnified, blameless, and spotless, a Government which deliberately gambled with the life of "a hero of heroes." The Government acted in that way throughout, deliberately, notwithstanding the increased and fearful pressure of their obligations. They were warned in Parliament, they were warned in the Press, and every single thing that has occurred was a matter that must have been present to their minds, because they were told of it in this House, in the Press, and by Gordon himself. The Prime Minister has relied upon the treachery which apparently waited on the final scene of the unfortunate Gordon's life almost as matter for the exoneration and justification of the Government. Why, dealing with an Eastern people, treachery is one of the every-day risks against which any position is to be guarded. Gordon himself told you of it in March. You were told of it in this House by my right hon. Friend who moved the Motion on the 12th of May. It was obviously one of the risks which Sir Evelyn Baring told you you were deliberately running when you refused to adopt the Berber-Suakin route. The Prime Minister, in the course of his interesting speech yesterday, referred to a telegram—an opportune telegram—that came on Saturday last from Lord Wolseley, and which referred to the extraordinary theory that, maybe, the Relief Expedition, after all, was the cause of Gordon's death. Really that is the argument. That is to say, that if there had been no Relief Expedition, there would have been no treachery. But Gordon was killed by treachery, and therefore the Relief Expedition killed Gordon. In the name of common sense, what did the telegram mean? General Lord Wolseley concluded that despatch by words on which I rely, in which he said that he bewailed the loss of Gordon, and bitterly regretted that he had not been in the Soudan a month before. On that I rely, because we know Lord Wolseley. We know he is a man who understands the exigencies of his position, and when he said that, he must have believed that if he had been given a month's start in the death race to Khartoum he would have saved Gordon. But that is not what the Prime Minister relies on. He relies on the statement of the anonymous Colonels of Gordon. Who are they? These men either must have left Khartoum before Gordon was murdered, and therefore it is from the richness of Oriental imagination that this theory of theirs, which is a peculiar one, must have proceeded, or else they must have known who were the traitors before they came away, and what they intended to do, and they must have come away leaving Gordon to his fate. The Government may take their choice in that dilemma. Either these men are the victims of an illusion—to put a mild construction upon it—or else they are guilty of something far worse. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] The Prime Minister is good enough to cheer that statement, but I do not know whether he cheers the dilemma generally or only a particular part of it. The Prime Minister appears also to labour under an extraordinary delusion with reference to the food supply at Khartoum. I throw out this challenge. I say that whoever is going to reply for the Government later in the debate will be unable to adduce any trustworthy evidence, under Gordon's hand or otherwise, to show that he had food to last up to a month before the time he met his death. In one of his letters he alludes to five months' supply, in another to four months'—periods which would end weeks before the fall. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No.] I may be contradicted, but again I say that I am giving my own statement of this matter. I again say that not one single piece of trustworthy evidence can be pointed out to show that Gordon had a food supply that would last up to within a month of the time at which he met his death. ["No!"] Hon. Members opposite can speak after me, and may deny it, but that is my proposition. There is a period at which he speaks of five months' supply, another at which he speaks of four months' supply, then of 40 days'; and then come the extraordinary communications of the 14th and 18th of December, which the Prime Minister dealt with in a peculiar way. What is the meaning of those despatches? One of them, which Lord Wolseley calls a "tiny despatch," contains the words, "Khartoum is all right." That was sent by a confidential agent, who carried with him confidential instructions to Lord Wolseley, and who knew what was confidential and secret, and what was not. He appears to have carried two sets of instructions—one of which was not covered by the seal of secrecy and confidence, while the other was covered both by the seal of secrecy and confidence. This trusted messenger conveyed a tiny written message saying "Khartoum is all right," and then the confidential messenger gave a secret oral message of the gravest purport. What was that message? It was—

> "Our troops are suffering from want of food.—Secret and confidential."

These are Gordon's words in December last, and he proceeds to emphasize that by saying—"We want you to come quickly." The "hero of heroes" does not ask for aid until it is very necessary, and yet the Prime Minister asks us to forget this despatch—this grave and secret message from Gordon on the 14th of December—and asks us to believe that it was overridden by the message of the 18th. [Mr. GLADSTONE: The 28th.] Well, of the 28th; but nothing turns upon that. The governing date is the 14th, when there was certainly a message from Gordon, showing what his position actually was. Was there any message after the 14th to override the statement that General Gordon and the troops shut up in Khartoum were in perilous straits? Nothing of the kind, and the inference deduced by the Prime

Minister appears to have been arrived at from a casual statement of some anonymous messenger who brought the message of the 28th. When the Prime Minister says that the statement of the 28th should override the despatch of the 14th, he asks us to prefer the loose statement of an anonymous messenger, of whom nothing is known, to a despatch sent by an accredited agent. The conduct of the Government appears to be entirely without either justification, excuse, or palliation. Gordon did his best, and the Cabinet did their worst. If it were simply a question of the Government and its fate, it would be one of comparative smallness; but the loss which the country has sustained materially and in repute is grave and very serious. I know of no question that calls more for grave and anxious consideration at the hands of the Representatives of the people than the crisis in which we are involved, the way in which it has been forced upon us, and what may be the best mode of escaping from it. The Government ask once again to be trusted because they have broken covenants in the past. They ask us to believe that they will keep this new covenant better in the future, because they have broken every promise they made to Gordon and the House of Commons. They ask us now to believe that we can trust their lightest promises as covenants. It is not my word; it is the Prime Minister's. We might trust a fresh, untried Government; we might trust a Government that had not broken covenants and outraged promises; but a Government that is disparaged and discredited cannot be trusted. What is now your policy? We have listened, on more than one occasion, to discussions upon this subject, and still the question awaits something like a clear answer. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) said that the question which presented itself was this—"Was the Government right in what it did on hearing of the fall of Khartoum?" That is not the question; but it is the narrow way in which a man who wants to minimize his own responsibility presents the question. The right hon. Gentleman speaks almost like a Field Marshal when he takes credit for the military operations that have taken place and may take place. But the policy which the Government have let out is due somewhat to the action of Lord Wolseley, and not to the initiative of the Government. It is perfectly plain and manifest that the action which took place was this. The Government, for those high reasons of State which are sometimes so convenient, have not printed a most important message to Lord Wolseley, nor his reply. But enough has come out to show this—that the Government first heaped upon Lord Wolseley's devoted shoulders a discretion of an overwhelming character, wishing that he might find out not only what military exigency, but also what political exigency required. I am giving my own impression of documents which some day we shall all be able to read. It is plain that Lord Wolseley would not accept the discretion that you gave him, that he asked what you meant, and what your policy was, and it was not until you were subjected to the pressure of the insistence of Lord Wolseley that, at last, you were compelled to arrive at something in the shape of a decision. Let me again refer to the fact that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) has not, from the beginning to the end of his speech, indicated, by suggestion or hint, what he believes or understands the policy of the Government to be. Again, I ask, what is the policy of the Government? The statement of the Prime Minister on Thursday becomes doubly important from the fact that it was in writing, and that it had been prepared in consultation with his Colleagues. Therefore, it must be assumed that every vagueness, every uncertainty, and every elasticity which have been put into the words in which their case is contained are studied and elaborate ambiguities. And now that we know that, are we not entitled to say that this statement, if it is to be called a statement, of policy is vague, disappointing, contradictory? It is a policy framed to win, if possible, the support of contrary opinions. The Government, in fact, say—"We will go to Khartoum and overthrow the Mahdi to please the Whigs; we will run away from Khartoum to please the Radicals." I pity either one or the other of those two great classes, for one or the other is doomed to be disappointed. I do not care particularly for that; but I do care very much for this—that in this process of elaborate and studied vagueness it may be that the nation will be compelled to lose thousands more of its best lives, and to spend millions more of its hard-earned money. At all events, we have this from the Prime Minister—that they have a basis of policy, and that that basis is the overthrow of the Mahdi at Khartoum. Now, that is a very grave and serious basis, that, if adopted, should be the foundation of a well-considered policy; but if it is the basis of nothing except of a platform on which to join the Whigs and Radicals together, it is something which I should not like to christen with the name of policy. I can understand and realize that, after what has occurred in the East, it is necessary to do something to re-establish our credit, which must be seriously impaired in the Eastern mind. The Prime Minister indicated on Thursday the methods by which he proposes to carry out the basis of his policy—namely, the making of a railway from Suakin to Berber, so as to open up the Suakin-Berber route. The basis of the policy of the Prime Minister was the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum; and it is a basis of policy laid down in conjunction with his Colleagues. To-night the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster is that the governing principle of the military operations is the opening up of the Suakin-Berber route by the construction of a railway. Many objects, some of them very interesting and philanthropic, were stated by the Prime Minister as the result of the war. What we want to know is, how far the Government consider that they are pledged to carry out all or any of those objects? Is it competent for the Government, on the plan they have drawn up for themselves on paper, and guarded and fenced round with conditions to satisfy their basis, to spend millions of our money, to lose thousands of precious lives, and then to proclaim that they are unable to carry out the objects for which they went, and to announce that forthwith they must withdraw from the country? How long do they intend to pursue the Mahdi? Do they intend to seek him at Khartoum, or beyond it? Is Khartoum the governing principle of their policy, or is the Mahdi? Is the going to Khartoum their object, or do they intend to seek the Mahdi wherever he may be found? I should like to know what is the object the Government seriously intend to carry out? If the Government have no fixed or settled policy—if the Government have no fixed and steady purpose which they have adopted and are in a condition to proclaim to the House of Commons, then they have embarked on a career—I will not say of vengeance, but on that of a very rash and ill-considered spending of blood and treasure. Last night the Prime Minister did not unsay a single portion of his statement on Thursday; and, therefore, we must take it that that deliberate written statement is still to be regarded as the basis of the policy of the Government. He applied to it a process of mild attenuation; but this is too grave a matter for us to permit it to be attenuated. They must stand upon their words, that the basis of their policy is the overthrow of the Mahdi, or they must withdraw them. We cannot allow these things to be left to doubt, uncertainty, or vagueness. Some words used on the subject by the Prime Minister appeared not inconsistent with, but somewhat to weaken, the previous statement. But I presume the basis I have mentioned must be taken to be the one adopted and intended. The obscurity is as to how far their objects are to be sought, and how far they are to be realized. The Prime Minister has been anxious to explain that he is consistent; but I do not care to go into that subject. I think he said that the Government had never varied in their policy of abandoning the Soudan, and that their policy had been entirely consistent. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] I do not think the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister need take me up for suggesting that he was adhering to his consistency, because I am not aware that at any time in his long and honoured career he has ever admitted that he was inconsistent. Now, Sir, if there was no past for us to remember; if we had not the wretched experience of the last two or three years in Egypt, and the miserable experiences of the past year, I could understand the Government meeting this Motion by asking once more to be trusted. We might hope, if this were a question of a fresh occasion, that there would be in the future some resolution and purpose about the Government; but the past career of the Government indicates that the future under the control of the Government must be absolutely hopeless. They have been unreliable in the past, and they will be unreliable in the future. They have been tried and found wanting, and there is no guarantee whatever upon which any rational man can rely that, no matter what pledges are now given, the Government policy will not be again one of useless expenditure and wanton bloodshed.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Mr. Speaker—Sir, I hope that in the course of this debate we may have reason to convince ourselves whether the taunt which has been levelled by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down at the Government is, or is not, without foundation—namely, that they intend to go to Khartoum to please the Whigs, and that they intend to retire from Khartoum to please the Radicals. I trust that the Government, by the most explicit declarations, will be able to show that for such a statement there is absolutely no foundation. I am sure that I express the almost unanimous view of this House when I say that if there is one thing for which we are all anxious, it is that we may thoroughly understand what the policy of Her Majesty's Government is. I will venture to implore Her Majesty's Government, even more than has hitherto been done, to take the House into their confidence, and to let us see what the ultimate objects are at which they are aiming. We have to remember this—that we have not only to decide these matters in this House, but that the country has to be called upon to make considerable sacrifices; that it will not be sufficient to place before our constituents vague statements and problematical contingencies; that it will not be enough to say there are some objects which under certain circumstances we must use reasonable efforts to secure; but we must be able to show that there is something vital to the interests of this country at which the Government are aiming by the sacrifices which the nation will be called upon to make. At this time of the evening I will certainly not dwell on the retrospective part of this case. I will not go over ground which the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) has touched upon—whether there was danger to General Gordon or not. I will confine myself on that point to one single remark—that if it was incomprehensible to some persons in May and August that the Government did not recognize that there was danger to General Gordon, it is not likely that subsequent events will have changed their minds in that respect. Nor do I think it fair that the danger should be calculated in this matter by the single test—whether heroism was able to avert the danger. A man may have been in tremendous danger for many months, and it is no proof of there having been no danger that by stupendous efforts — with almost impossible means — he succeeded in averting the danger which threatened him. None of us can be surprised that many hon. Members in this House, and the whole country out of it, should review the circumstances connected with the death of General Gordon with the greatest indignation. But it is still more important in the situation in which we find ourselves to know what are the responsibilities we are about to undertake, what will be the ultimate sacrifices we may be called upon to make, and what are the difficulties that will be encountered in this matter. The question cannot be confined, as in the eloquent speech of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) it was almost confined, to the military operations, but it touches some of the most important political considerations ever submitted to an Assembly such as this. Now, I am bound to say that I do not find, as regards my own mind—and I should like to know what is the case with hon. Members who sit both below and above the Gangway—I do not find that my own mind has become clearer as to the ultimate intentions of the Cabinet as this debate has proceeded. I think there was one surprise this evening for some hon. Members below the Gangway. They erroneously imagined that Her Majesty's Government had pledged itself to the evacuation of the Soudan; but if they had followed accurately the language of my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government, they would have plainly seen that he had certainly said no such thing. But why do these misapprehensions occur? Because the important point of evacuation or non-evacuation was simply treated by that one phrase, which was quoted to-night, and was never expounded or placed clearly before the House of Commons. We were unable to gather, except from that one phrase, what the intentions of Her Majesty's Government were with regard to the Soudan, after they had made these forward offensive operations to which they are pledged. I should wish to be permitted, before I make some remarks upon the policy of the Government as regards the Soudan, to say a word or two on some other political points connected with our position in Egypt, to which scarcely any allusion has hitherto been made in the statements of Ministers. I wish to show how little we really know, even at present, of our situation in Egypt and the Soudan. I want to know what it is that Hassan Fehmy Pasha, the Turkish Envoy, is negotiating at present with the Government in London? Are there negotiations in progress which touch the Eastern portion of the Soudan? Are there operations contemplated with regard to the occupation of Suakin, or has it occurred to Her Majesty's Government that the Sultan is the Suzerain of the Soudan, and that, if we do not wish to stay there, or if we wash our hands entirely of that country, he may think it wise to take our place? I know nothing about this; but we see matters going on of which we know absolutely nothing. Take, again, that queer incident of Prince Hassan. These things puzzle hon. Members on both sides of the House. I am glad to see that my right hon. Friend acknowledges we have a right to be puzzled. But why does my right hon. Friend not give us somewhat clearer glimpses of his policy? It seems to amuse my right hon. Friend; but I was extremely puzzled the other day by a journal not unfriendly to Her Majesty's Government which suggested that Hassan was going into the camp of Lord Wolseley, because, possibly, Lord Wolseley would find something for Hassan to do ultimately at Khartoum. How are we to understand a hint of that kind? I have seen the Papers presented to the House; but whether this ultimate intention is in the breasts of any of Her Majesty's Advisers I am unable to ascertain. A third point to which I should like to call attention is this—what are the Italians doing at Massowah? What is our position with regard to those ports of the Red Sea which have been partly occupied by the Italians? Is there any understanding with that gallant and friendly nation that they will be of some assistance to us? Do we look to them to garrison Massowah; or is it simply an extraordinary coincidence that the Italians should occupy that port at such a time? Let me suggest a fourth point, about which, for my part, I know very little, and of which I do not know whether hon. Members know more, and that is that, coincident in time with all these difficulties in which we find ourselves in the Soudan, we hear of Germany and Russia and other Powers claiming more power and greater *locus standi* in Egypt Proper than they have done for some time past. Therefore, when this country is to be called upon to make great sacrifices to protect Egypt Proper, I should like to ask what is to be the future of that Egypt which is to be protected by the money of the British taxpayer, and by the bayonet of the British soldier? Now, we know that the Government have pledged themselves to a distinct policy; but there are two alternatives. There is an international Egypt, and there is an autonomous Egypt. We may soon see, in these negotiations with the Powers with regard to finance, what the view of the Government is as to the autonomy of Egypt, the development of her institutions, and leaving her to stand alone, as far as she can possibly be allowed to stand alone. Is that principle to be sustained in its absolute integrity? It is suspicious that Foreign Powers have been so extremely eager to give an international guarantee. I should hope that we shall soon hear, and I trust and believe that Her Majesty's Government may be able to give, a satisfactory answer on that point—at all events, an assurance, that in the coming years, while we are making these efforts, which will have to be as great as the Government have sketched out, we shall retain as free a hand in Egypt as we have now, and have even a clearer position in relation to the Egyptian Government. Some time ago it was a policy of neutrality for Egypt towards which the Government were tending. Is that still their policy? It would be wrong of me to elaborate these points now in any degree; but I wish to suggest them to Members of the House of Commons, to show how ignorant we still are of the whole situation, and how much we must learn still before we know what the real policy of Her Majesty's Government is, as a whole, in regard to

Egypt, because I think we shall be justified in assuming that the policy of Her Majesty's Government as regards Egypt will more or less influence them in their policy as regards the Soudan. According to our position in Egypt Proper, so will be the attitude we take in the Soudan. I wish now to call attention to the policy of the Government, so far as we know it, in the Soudan, in consequence of the disaster which has recently occurred. The first announcement of policy was made almost immediately after the great disaster at Khartoum, and it is on that we have definite information from the Government—namely, that they intend to break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. To that I understand they have pledged themselves. Other subsidiary objects they have suggested; but to that one point they have pledged themselves. Hon. Members will remember that soon after the news arrived there was no uncertain sound in any Governmental quarters. Lord Wolseley was instructed that the power of the Mahdi must be broken at Khartoum. The Earl of Rosebery made an eloquent speech at Epsom; he joined the Cabinet upon what was believed to be a declaration of a strong and vigorous policy in Egypt; the Colonies responded to the general note which had been struck; and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) also made an eloquent and somewhat martial speech. Then came the Thursday on which my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government made his statement of the intentions of the Government—a written statement, as it has been explained to us —and I am bound to say that most of us who listened to the statement of my right hon. Friend did not recognize in its tone the same ring that had characterized the previous utterances of some of his Colleagues, and the declarations that had been previously made. As has been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down, several matters were stated in that declaration as lying within the intentions of Her Majesty's Government. There was the obligation to the persons for whose safety General Gordon had forborne to escape; there was the possibility of establishing an orderly Government at Khartoum; there was the subject of the Slave Trade; there was the matter of the Egyptian garrisons in the Soudan; and, besides that, there were the important and serious general consequences to Egypt and the East. And we must attach considerable importance to this document, because, as we now learn, it was a written document, and it expressed the views of the Government.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not wish to be misunderstood. I did not go so far as to call it a written document; I stated that there were written notes affecting the material parts of it.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I would not wish for a moment to push my right hon. Friend further; but I take it that, in the main, the statement represented the carefully-expressed views of the Cabinet, and it is extremely important for us to note that point. As to the extent to which the Government intend to stand to these objects, that is a matter on which I confess that my own mind is at present a perfect blank. It was in the same speech that my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government said they were pledged to the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt. [Mr. Gladstone assented.] I am glad to see that my right hon. Friend assents to that. That is one of the points on which there is no doubt. But the curious point is this—that when my right hon. Friend spoke, on the following Monday, nearly all those points which were introduced on the Thursday before vanished from the enumeration that he then made.

Mr. GLADSTONE, who rose amid cries of "Order!" said: I rise to Order. I must correct my right hon. Friend. I distinctly referred to those points. It was not necessary for me to go over all of them again.

Mr. GOSCHEN: That is a point upon which I distinctly join issue with my right hon. Friend. I think that it was necessary to refer to them again, because it was done before only in the way of allusion; it was a simple allusion to those points; and I want my right hon. Friend to remember that, as I have suggested before, hon. Members have to go to their constituents on these matters; and we wish him to give us the key-note in this House, and to expand these points, as he expanded some of the points in his reply to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote). Take the one subject of the Slave Trade. The Slave Trade was referred to in the first statement of my right hon. Friend, but not in the second. He did not refer to it again. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes; I did.] Of course, I accept the statement of my right hon. Friend at once; but I do not think we have had any other answer than this, nor did my right hon. Friend distinctly develop the point, although, on a previous occasion, the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had stated in debate that there was no good whatever in attempting to stop the Slave Trade at Khartoum, but that it must be stopped on the East Coast. I assure my right hon. Friend that I allude to these matters only that we may have a clear case, and know precisely where we are, and not for one moment in any controversial spirit. Now, I ask my right hon. Friend, since he has alluded to this subject of slavery, and since he says he alluded to it again in his second speech, whether we may take it for granted, and put it before the public, that a part of the object of Her Majesty's Government, and a serious part at a moment like this, is to assist in suppressing the Slave Trade? Is that going to last? Is that a motive which is to operate on our minds? In the speech which my right hon. Friend made in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), he did not allude to the difficulties which have been started in regard to the Slave Trade. I want to clear up this important matter. May I take it from the Government, and will some subsequent Cabinet Minister, when speaking, tell us, that we may fairly go to the country with this as one of the objects of the sacrifices they are called upon to make. But if they are not in earnest, and if it is not intended that this is to have any weight at all, let us withdraw at once frankly from the position, and say that the Slave Trade is not one of those matters for which we are going to Khartoum. I object to these philanthropic aims if they are only put forward for the time. Although my right hon. Friend told me I was wrong upon one point, and consequently lengthened my remarks, his correction has enabled me to put before the House this one point as one of the objects for which we are going to Khartoum. But to return to the declarations of my right hon. Friend. In his first speech the question was as to whether there was a possibility of establishing a Government at Khartoum. I notice that my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) has repeated that statement this evening, in connection with his somewhat extraordinary remarks with regard to negotiations with the Mahdi. It appears that we are to utilize the Mahdi in the Soudan after we have broken his power at Khartoum. We are first to attack and smash him, and then we are to utilize a smashed Mahdi for those purposes for which we may, in that condition, still find him useful. But let the House note this—that the recommendation of General Gordon was that the Mahdi should not be utilized for Khartoum, but that he should be utilized for Kordofan.

MR. TREVELYAN: That is what I said.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; and my point is that if we are to establish a Government at Khartoum the very quotation in which the use of the Mahdi was recommended shows that for Khartoum he should not be utilized, and therefore there is to be some other form of Government at Khartoum. Let me put before the House the statement of the Prime Minister in his second speech with regard to establishing a Government at Khartoum. It is this—

> "We are not prepared to say that there is no obligation upon us to use, according to circumstances, reasonable efforts, if we go there, to leave behind us an orderly Government"—

that is to say, this statement contains a double negative, and three hypotheses. There are three "ifs" and two "noes," and it is upon that statement that we are to go forward and break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. Now, it appears to me that this is far too shadowy a statement for us to be able to utilize it as an argument that there is a real object in going to Khartoum. Do we mean or do we not mean to establish an orderly Government at Khartoum? It appears to me that my right hon. Friend was infinitely more eloquent in denouncing the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, which much more resembled his own policy, than he was in denouncing the policy of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), which struck at the key-note of the Government policy. What is the key-note of the Government policy? We are to break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. To that my hon. Friend is thoroughly and decidedly opposed. The Prime Minister dealt very gently with my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle; but he was extremely strong in his answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, who proposed to

> "assure a good and stable Government to Egypt, and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."

Now, the proposal of the Government is that we should try and leave behind us an orderly Government at Khartoum, and the proposal of the right hon. Baronet opposite is that we should

> "assure a good and stable Government to Egypt, and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."

I must say that I thought my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister went too far when he said, in reply to the right hon. Baronet, that that must mean the whole of the Eastern Soudan. Why should the whole of the Eastern Soudan be necessary to the security of Egypt? I do not think that was laid down by the right hon. Baronet, and surely my right hon. Friend himself cannot think the whole of the Eastern Soudan is necessary to the security of Egypt, because he has himself said that such measures as are necessary for the security of Egypt must be taken by Her Majesty's Government. I wish to call the attention of the House to that point. I do not think that the words

> "assure a good and stable Government to Egypt, and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security,"

bear the very wide interpretation put upon them by my right hon. Friend. Now, in answering my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), what did the Prime Minister say? He joined issue with my hon. Friend mainly on the military operations. He did not join issue with him on the objections made to the breaking up of the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. And I say this—being anxious to support a vigorous policy—that we have not had sufficient arguments presented to us in this House, so far, to justify that pledge of the Government, that we are necessarily to break up the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. I do not say that it is not necessary—I do not say that the Government have not exercised a sound judgment in coming to that conclusion. I doubt it; but all I say is that they have not placed before the House sufficient arguments to justify that course, especially if there is no other good to flow from it than a military retreat. I would ask any Members of the Cabinet who are going to speak in this debate to tell us, if they can tell us in no uncertain manner, this—Do they attach, or do they not attach, importance to the argument that we must break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum in order to influence the East generally with regard to the omnipotence of our arms? Is that, or is it not, the argument of Her Majesty's Government? They cannot be silent upon points like that; they must tell us, if we are to make further sacrifices, whether there is in this more than the military question; whether their policy is to assert our influence generally; or whether it is simply to assist General Wolseley in retreating in the most creditable manner? These are issues which cannot be evaded, and with which it is the bounden duty of the Government to deal. Now, I will frankly state to the House my opinion that this programme of going forward to break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, without any more definite objects than those given in the shadowy declarations of the Prime Minister, is both too much and too little. I am not sure whether it is not too much. The Government have pledged themselves to a much more difficult task than some of the other objects referred to by them. But how long during the months of weary waiting will the country stand by them and insist on the breaking of the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, relying only upon this shadowy argument, and without anything tangible before them? I say it with as profound a conviction as I have ever held on any subject in my life, that it would be disastrous if in the end we should fail in the performance of the task we have undertaken, and have to bear the ignominy of retiring from the position we have taken up. Let us, while there is still time to deal with this question, pause and see whether the House of Commons will exact from the Government that they should absolutely pledge themselves to this task. In my opinion, there are tasks less heavy and more useful which would equally assist the honourable retreat of our Army, and, at the same time, secure certain ends in which I am sure Her Majesty's Government will concur as being desirable, and which, I believe, are more possible than the course which they propose. Now, there are two objects which, to my mind, ought to be almost an irreducible minimum in what we are about to undertake. I gathered with great pleasure from the speech of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) that the Government recognized the responsibilities we have incurred to those tribes and to those men who have supported us in our operations in the Soudan. Now, that is a tangible point upon which the country would, I believe, be unanimous; it is a point on which you can appeal to every sentiment by which it ought to be inspired. We must stand by those who have stood by us, and therefore we must consider especially what is the position of such a Province as Dongola and the tribes in that neighbourhood who have assisted us; and I should consider that any scheme for the settlement of the Soudan which did not afford some security to those who have assisted us would be unsatisfactory in the highest degree. But there is another point which I would humbly submit to the consideration of my right hon. Friend and the House. We are to construct a railway from Suakin to Berber. Am I to understand that that railway is for military purposes alone? In that case, what is to be the fate of that railway? Is it to be broken up, or is it to be handed over to the wild hordes of Arabs? Again, I have no information as to what steps have been taken with regard to slavery, and whether any precautions will be taken to prevent it at Khartoum; but I want to know whether we are also going to leave Berber unprotected, and is the railway to be in such hands and in such a condition that fourth-class carriages will be attached for the conveyance of slaves from Khartoum to the coast? What is to be the fate of the railway? Now, I say there is a clear—I will not say an easy policy, because Heaven knows that I thoroughly recognize the great difficulties which beset Her Majesty's Government—but we have to choose; and I say it strikes me it would be a better policy to put our grip on the Nile by holding Berber and the railway from that place to Suakin, than to march forward and break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. It appears to me that this is a simpler policy, and one which places us nearer to our true base—namely, the sea. If I am asked—"Do you propose to garrison Berber with English troops?" I reply by another question—"How do you intend to deal with Suakin; how do you intend to deal with the littoral of the Red Sea? What is your policy there?" You may hold Berber, not by British troops; but I do trust that, in any case, it will be held as the outpost of Western civilization on the Nile, and not in any selfish interest of England alone, but as signifying that civilization is not entirely to be driven out of the Soudan, and that arrangements may be made in that way to secure the route from Suakin to Berber. Of course, I can imagine that most of my hon. Friends below the Gangway may be opposed to that idea; but are they more opposed to it than to the idea of the Government that we must crush the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum? I submit that it is a simpler policy; that it is an easier policy; and, more than that, that it is a policy which does not leave us open to the fearful reproach that we are simply to move forward to conquer and fight battles, without being able to point in the Soudan to one single object which we have attained. For I do not believe in the establishment of a stable Government at Khartoum, unless the Government hold much stronger language upon the subject than they have held hitherto. I say, again, that it is not only necessary to convince us that they will do it, but that it is necessary to convince the country; and unless they can do that they will not have the country with them. Sir, I have endeavoured to place before the House the difficulties in our way, and the various issues which cannot be put aside. I am not prepared myself to support the policy of pledging ourselves absolutely to break up the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, without any further pledges and without any stricter declarations of intention from Her Majesty's Government than we have received up to this moment. If Her Majesty's Government will say how far they really intend to go; if they can say that they will at least hold Berber, even if they do not go to Khartoum; if they will say they will not leave the Soudan until they have ensured the safety of those who have stood beside us; if they will make these declarations in clear and unmistakable language, and not surrounded with too many contingencies; not putting it as that one declaration has been put, with a double negative and three "if's;" if they will put such an object clearly before us, then I shall be prepared to support Her Majesty's Government. But if they will not pledge themselves to anything more than to break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum; if they will not say that there is anything more to which we shall be able to point before we retire, then I cannot see my way to support Her Majesty's Government, and shall be bound to vote for the Motion of the right hon. Baronet opposite.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Thursday.*

MOTIONS.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Bill to amend "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883," and for other purposes connected with Labourers' dwellings in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 68.]

LOCAL COURTS OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Bill to provide for the establishment of Local Courts of Bankruptcy in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 69.]

DURATION OF PARLIAMENTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stansfeld, Bill to shorten the duration of future Parliaments, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. John Morley, and Professor Stuart.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 70.]

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT [STAMP DUTY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment of a Stamp Duty on any Copy of Memorandum of Enfranchisement, of the same amount as if it were a deed of conveyance, which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for amending the Copyhold Acts.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 25th February, 1885.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Ordered — First Reading*—River Thames * [71].
Second Reading—Private Bill Legislation [25], *debate adjourned.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION BILL.

(*Mr. Craig-Sellar, Mr. Davey, Mr. Raikes, Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir Henry Holland.*)

[BILL 25.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CRAIG-SELLAR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was not his intention to wander over that well-worn track which travelled through a wilderness of complaints against the present system, and which, so far, had led to nothing. That track had been well trodden for the last 40 years. The subject of Private Bill legislation and the evils attending it had been discussed in the House over and over again. They had been considered by Committees of the House; they had been considered in "another place;" they had been considered by a Joint Committee of the two Houses; and they had been considered by a Royal Commission. Outside the House the evils attending the present system had been an unfailing source for discussion in all sorts of learned Societies—in the Social Science Association, in Chambers of Commerce, in Statistical Societies, in Municipal Corporations, and in other societies in England, Scotland, and Ireland. It seemed to him, so far as he had been able to follow those discussions, both in and out of Parliament, that the system, as at present carried on, was left with very few friends. The only friends it had were the large monopolist Railway Companies, which were so ably supported and represented in the House by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease). The other friends were that useful and valuable set of men, who were so well represented by his hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), those who were professionally employed in the Committees upstairs—a highly honourable body of public servants, who, by their ability, industry, and courtesy had done much to lessen the friction which must attend legislation which dealt with matters of private property. But if any hon. Member doubted what he was now stating, and believed that the system was defensible, then he would refer him to the evidence which was taken before the Select Committee in 1863; and if that hon. Member would take the trouble to read the evidence which was given by Mr. Rickards, who was formerly counsel to the late Speaker, or the evidence of Lord Redesdale, or Mr. Massey, formerly Chairman of Committees, or the evidence of Lord Grey, Sir Erskine May, and Colonel Wilson Patten; and, perhaps, more than anything else, if he would consider the draft Report drawn up by Mr. Lowe, he felt convinced that the hon. Member would be satisfied that the uncertainty of the system was indefensible, and that it was emphatically condemned by those experienced and distinguished men. His hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex might say that that was ancient evidence, that it referred to a state of things long past, and that it had been all changed. If so, he should then refer him to the debates on the question in 1872, initiated by the then Mr. Dodson, and, still later, to the reports of the discussion in 1883 and 1884, and he would see that the main evils attending the system had increased, that the expenditure was greater, that the decisions were as capricious and uncertain as ever, that the waste of time had not diminished, and that the waste of Parliamentary energy had, owing to the new conditions under which the Parliamentary machine was compelled to work, vastly increased. He was convinced that any hon. Member who would carefully read through the evidence of 1863 and the debates in that House to which he had referred must arrive at the conclusion that the present system was radically bad; that, as Sir Erskine May said in his evidence, "many of the evils were incurable;" and that the only remedy was to be found in the constitution of a new tribunal and a different system. He would consult the convenience of the House if he confined himself to a summary of the evils which he maintained existed in the present system, and if he reduced the illustrations in proof of these summaries to a minimum. But in doing so he must guard against the imputation that he could not extend those illustrations further. His object was not so much to dwell upon the details of the disease, as to suggest what he believed to be, at least, a fairly satisfactory remedy. He would not enlarge upon what Mr. Massey called the "vices which are inherent in the present system." Those inherent vices, shortly summarized, were great costliness; great uncertainty and ambiguity in the decisions come to by the Committees; and great waste of Parliamentary time and energy. The system was satisfactory neither to the suitors nor to the general public, nor did it redound to the business capacity of the two Houses of Parliament. Such were the charges which those who thought with him brought against the existing system, and on which they indicted it before the bar of public opinion. The charges one and all had been made good on many occasions, and it had been shown that the system had been satisfactory to no one. He would illustrate each of the charges by a single case. As to costliness;—a series of valuable Returns was laid before Parliament last Session, showing the amount of money spent in promoting and opposing Private Bills in Parliament during the 11 years from 1872 to 1882. The sum total amounted to about £7,000,000, or £650,000 to £750,000 spent each year. In other words, £750,000 a-year was the tax imposed by the present system in getting Parliamentary sanction to a series of useful industrial undertakings; and, though nominally that tax was paid by the promoters and opponents of these schemes, it was really paid by the public. Every day they heard complaints of heavy railway rates, heavy gas rates, and heavy water rates. In the first instance, of course, the shareholders paid the Parliamentary expenses of Private Bills; but those expenses must be repaid in some way or other, because they were not wiped off as bad debts. And who repaid them but the public which used the railways, burned the gas, and drank the water? Could they wonder that the managers of commercial undertakings, who had been mulcted to the extent of £500,000 a-year before those undertakings had been launched, should endeavour to recoup themselves for this heavy taxation by imposing heavy rates on the public? They could not blame them, but they could blame the system which forced them to make these charges; and they might depend upon it that the first step towards the reduction of rates and freights must be taken by lowering the expenses incurred in the initial Parliamentary proceedings; and that was what he wished to urge upon the House. The first step to take in Parliament to lower the rates which they paid was to change the system under which those charges were originally incurred. Passing to the second evil of the system — namely, the uncertain and capricious character of the judgments of the Select Committees, he would ask the attention of the House to the case of the Manchester Ship Canal Bill. The scheme proposed under that Bill dealt with upwards of £8,000,000. In 1883 the Bill was passed by the Select Committee of the House of Commons, and rejected by the Lords Committee. It was 39 days before the Committee that passed it, and 10 days before the Committee which rejected it. Last year its fate was even more tragic. It was passed by the Select Committee of the House of Lords, which rejected it the previous year, and rejected by the Committee of the Commons, which passed it in 1883. In 1884 the Bill was 43 days before the Committee of the Lords, and 20 days before the Committee of the Commons. Thus this unfortunate scheme, with which the two Houses had been playing battledore and shuttlecock for the last two years at a cost of about £250,000, had altogether been 114 days before the Committees upstairs, for the labours of which there was absolutely nothing to show, except another flagrant example of the uncertainty and caprice of the decisions of the tribunals which were appointed to adjudicate upon great schemes of private enterprize. He did not assert that these contradictory decisions were wrong. No reasons were given, and no judgment could be formed. Each House in 1884 came to a decision diametrically opposed to the decision to which it came in 1883; and the net result was that a Bill of magnitude and importance which had been approved at one time or other in its eccentric career had ended in being rejected, and was to all intents and purposes as dead as if it had never been introduced. This illustration—an illustration of yesterday—was sufficient to show that he did not exaggerate when he applied the epithets "capricious" and "haphazard" to the decisions of the Committees. He did not overstate the case when he said there had been no improvement in the stability and consistency of those decisions, and that the system which produced them was satisfactory neither to the suitors nor to the public, and that it did not redound to the credit of either House of Parliament.

But, grave and serious as were the evils of costliness and uncertainty, they were almost trivial in comparison with the third evil—the waste of Parliamentary time and energy which was involved in the continuance of the present system. Fifty years ago, when the system was in its infancy, the work of that House was probably about one-tenth of what it was now. In those days the occupation given by the Select Committees on Private Bills, if it did not do much good, at least did very little harm, so far as regards the waste of Parliamentary time and energy. No doubt, in that school of 30 or 40 years ago, many able and distinguished Chairmen were trained who had done much to keep up the flagging remains of the *prestige* and character of the decisions of Committees. From 1832 to 1835 the average number of Private Bills which came before Committees of both Houses was only 11, and in 1836 the number was 29; but in those happy days it did not much matter how much time was occupied by those inquiries. There was no difficulty then in manning the Committees. The best men of business in the House were glad to sit on them; there was no other opening for their business capacity, and no other scope for their Parliamentary ambition. It was, he thought, the late Sir Robert Peel who said that these Private Bill Committees were the best school in which a young Member of Parliament might learn his duties. In those days the hours were shorter, and the subjects which came under discussion were very much fewer than at present, the attendance of Members easier, and the wear and tear of Parliamentary life comparatively trifling. The work was a relaxation in those happy lotus-eating days of Parliamentary life. The Prime Minister said, when he entered Parliament, that the work was not arduous, probably not more arduous than the work was now in "another place" at the present day. In those days there were few Private Bills. But they lived in different times. The work of the House had, he believed, increased tenfold. Hon. Members could not give the time and attention to Private Bill Committees that they used to give. There were other training schools for men who wished to take a leading part in Parliamentary life. The best men of business in the House did not go on these Committees, but preferred to serve on Select Committees, Grand Committees, or Royal Commissions, and even the younger and less experienced men were unwilling to serve on them. That was not merely his own opinion, but the opinion of a man who had more right to speak on the subject than any Member of that House—he meant the right hon. Baronet the Chairman of the Committee of Selection (Sir John Mowbray). Speaking last year, the right hon. Gentleman said that every year there was an immense mass of work to get through, and an increasing indisposition on the part of Members to do that work. He thought the House would regard that as a conclusive opinion upon that matter. It was obvious to every Member that the Business of the House was increasing at an enormous rate; and it was inevitable that it must go on increasing every year as new centres of Imperial interest were opened out, and as year by year there was more knowledge of, and more interest in, the great expansion of the Empire. It would become more and more difficult every year to make that House a place where it was possible to do real work. Every year it would become more a place of talk and less a place of work; and it was not unreasonable that it should be so, because now-a-days they had grievances of every sort which must be ventilated. Public attention must be aroused on political matters, and both the most stupendous and the minutest interests of the Empire must be discussed in that House; and in that case those time-honoured and venerable ways they had of conducting Business must be, as future Parliaments went on, to a large extent changed. There must be, as the Prime Minister said, much greater delegation of the work of the House; and there would be, and must be, more work done in the Grand Committees, and less work done in the House itself. If that were so, there must be a change in the system that applied to Private Bill Committees and other Committees of the House. They had two Grand Committees just now, and these two Committees absorbed about 160 of the best business men in the House. They had, he believed, been promised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer another Grand Committee on Finance; and it was more than probable that as time went on other Grand Committees would be appointed. If that were so, how were the Private Bill Committees to be manned? The question had been perplexing many of the most experienced men in the House. He had already referred to the opinion of the Chairman of the Committee of Selection; he would now quote what had been said by a Colleague on that Committee. The hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) said that the existence of the Grand Committees had the effect of doubling the work of many Members; that there were four classes exempt—the Directors of Railway and other Companies, who were more than 120, practising lawyers, of whom there were 120, Members of the Government 30 or 40, and others who were exempt on account of their age. They must add, therefore, to the 160 Members told off for the Grand Committees nearly 300 who were excluded from serving on Private Bill

Committees, and that left but a fraction of the House to serve upon them. It was as clear as day that the necessity for Grand Committees was the knell of the Private Bill Committees. As the present Home Secretary said in 1872, speaking on Mr. Dodson's Motion—

> "The question is not whether you will abolish the present tribunal, but rather whether you are able to continue it."

That was said before the institution of Grand Committees. If it was a question then, it was a certainty now. Unless the number of Members of the House was to be considerably increased—and the feeling of the House and the country was certainly not favourable to that course—the Private Bill Committees must practically die of inanition.

If that were so, the question arose, what was to be substituted for them? Many suggestions had been made from time to time by hon. Members and noble Lords of marked experience—by Lord Redesdale and Lord Grey, by Colonel Wilson Patten and Mr. Dodson, when Members of the House, and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), whose name was on the back of the Bill; but though each suggestion had met with a certain amount of approval, it had failed, because it had not been presented in a definite form to the House. But another suggestion had been made by one who had studied that subject, and the whole subject of Parliamentary procedure for many years, and who was justly regarded as the highest authority on these questions—he meant the right hon. Gentleman at the Table (Sir Erskine May). Sir Erskine May's plan had been before the House for many years. It was stated by the right hon. Gentleman before the Select Committee of 1858, and it had been before the country since then on several occasions. In 1863, before the Select Committee on Private Bill Legislation, of which Mr. Milner Gibson was Chairman, Sir Erskine May, in reply to questions by the Chairman, said—

> "He thought the principal defects of the system were the great costliness of the proceedings, the double inquiry before the two Houses, the necessity of passing all Bills, however unimportant, through both Houses of Parliament; the necessity of numerous requirements, which were expensive, and which did not afford any essential security to the public. It had long been his (Sir Erskine May's) opinion that a complete remedy for the whole of the defects was to be found in the constitution of a distinct tribunal. He also thought that if Parliament was prepared to adopt a new system, it would be preferable to an alteration of the present system. There were, in his opinion, inherent defects in the present system which were incapable of amendment. He would make the new tribunal as judicial in its character and constitution and in its proceedings as possible, constituted so as to be quite independent of Parliament, and he would select the very best men who could be obtained, giving the decisions of this tribunal as much weight as was usually attached to the decisions of Parliamentary Committees. He did not apprehend that it would be difficult to establish a tribunal which would soon gain so much public confidence, and also the confidence of Parliament, that its decisions would not be disturbed more frequently than were the decisions of Committees under the present system. He would constitute the Court of four Judges or Commissioners, and constitute it as powerfully as possible of men eminent for their judicial or Parliamentary experience. It was difficult," he added, "to indicate precisely the class of men; but he should wish to see some Judge, for instance, withdrawn from the High Court to take the lead in the New Court, or some ex-Chancellor, if he could be found, a gentleman of reputation and standing, a Parliamentary counsel of able character and high standing, and he should also like to secure a Chairman of Committees who was willing to leave Parliament."

This was the scheme proposed by the man of most experience in this matter in the Kingdom; and this, with very slight modification, was the proposal of the Bill now before the House. The object of the Bill was to set free the time, but preserve the control of Parliament. It was of the essence of the measure that the legislative action of Parliament should be undiminished. Private Bills dealt with private property, and therefore it was essential that the ultimate sanction should rest with Parliament. There would, therefore, be no change in that respect. Neither would there be any change, except in one particular, in the earlier stages of Private Bills. Deposits, inquiries before Examiners, notices, fees, and matters of that kind would remain precisely as at present. If the Bill were passed, schemes in future would continue to be embodied in Bills, which would be read the first and second times, would be committed and reported and read a third time in both Houses. Therefore, both Houses would retain complete and absolute legislative power over such measures. The change proposed by his Bill was at the Committee stage. The proposal, like that of Sir

Erskine May, was to constitute an external tribunal closely connected with, but independent of, Parliament, consisting of at least three Judges appointed by the Crown, with the powers and jurisdiction of the present Select Committees. In future, when Bills were committed, they would be committed not to Committees, as at present, but to these Judges. The difference in the proposed procedure before the Judges and the existing practice was three-fold. In the first place, it was proposed that the Judges should in future give the reasons for the decisions they arrived at with regard to these Private Bills. At present, when a Bill was thrown out by a Committee, the suitors were left in the dark as to the reasons for its rejection. If the Bill before the House were to pass this would no longer be the case. Another difference would be that under the new system there would be no double inquiry. The present system in this respect was the main cause of the waste of time and expense; and it was indefensible that two Courts of co-ordinate jurisdiction should each go through the same matters, and each give a decision. If his Bill passed, that unreasonable procedure would be at an end. The Report of the Judges to the House in which the Bill originated would be received by the second House as if the Bill had been referred to the Judges by that second House. This would obviously result in a great saving of money and of time. The third point of difference was technical, but important. It was that all questions of *locus standi* should henceforth be decided by the Judges, and not by Referees, as at present. In this proposal he wished to guard against any imputation that he was casting any reflection on the ability and industry and good work and unfailing courtesy of the gentlemen who, for the last 20 years, had performed the difficult functions of Referees. But it was generally admitted by those who were more intimately cognizant with the subject that questions of *locus standi* should be decided by those whose duty it was to come to a decision upon the merits of the schemes themselves; and if Judges were appointed to try the merits it would be superfluous to retain a second Court to decide questions of *locus standi.* That, however, was a matter of detail for the House to decide if they got into Committee on the Bill. These were the serious changes proposed by the Bill. The principle on which he went was *quieta non movere* to leave things as they were where they were good, and where they required alteration to make the alteration thorough. As to the titles of the Judges to be appointed under the Bill, he proposed that they should be called "Justices of the High Court of Parliament;" but if the House preferred "Commissioners," or any other name, it was of no consequence to the Bill. He proposed that they should have salaries of £5,000 a-year each. That might appear to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be a considerable sum; but it must be remembered that if they were to have good men, who alone could inspire confidence, they must not be afraid to pay them well. Then it was shown by the Return obtained last year that between £70,000 and £80,000 a-year was paid in fees in the House of Commons and the House of Lords by promoters and opponents of Private Bills; and he thought it was not unreasonable that they should get from 20 to 25 per cent of these fees to have their cases well tried. Upon this point he had the support of a Member of the Government; because in 1872 the present Home Secretary, speaking on Mr. Dodson's proposal, said such a tribunal similar to what was now proposed must not be starved either in numbers or remuneration, for the funds supplied by suitors were quite sufficient to defray the cost. There were only two other minor points. It was further proposed that the Court should sit as a rule in London; but power was given—and it was, he thought, right it should be given—that if the suitors in any locality thought it desirable, the Court should go down to try cases in the locality, provided the Court thought it would be for the reasonable despatch of business to do so. They had also power to go to Scotland and Ireland, to spend, at least, one month in each year for Scottish and Irish Bills, if it should be thought necessary in those countries, and concurred in by the Court. His reason for this proposal was that the evils connected with the present system were more serious in Scotland and Ireland than in any other part of the United Kingdom. The dissatisfaction in these countries was more acute, because the distance and the consequent expense were so much greater; and the complaints which came from public bodies—certainly in Scotland, and, he believed, also in Ireland—were loud and long. Speaking from his own experience—and he was certain some of his Friends and Colleagues from Scotland could say the same thing—he was aware of several schemes of useful industrial enterprize which had been stifled in their birth through dread of the cost of obtaining Parliamentary sanction. He should have been glad if separate Courts could have been established for Scotland and for Ireland; and he had suggested such a thing when he brought forward a Motion on this subject last year; but as he got little support, and as it was shown that the average number of Private Bills from Scotland in each year amounted only to 23, and from Ireland only to 18, he did not think he was justified in proposing the creation of separate Courts to deal with them; he, therefore, presented the proposal contained in the Bill. It might be said that the Judges, with the discretion left to them, would not leave London; but he thought they would not, in the face of public opinion, refuse to visit a locality when it was declared by the locality to be desirable that they should do so. There was also in the Bill a proposal with regard to remanents, which was merely an extension of the principle which now prevailed in the case of a Dissolution of Parliament. There was a suggestion, rather than a proposal, that the new Judges, if it were found possible to do so, should be empowered to try Election Petitions together with the ordinary Judges. The suggestion could be defended on the ground that Election Petitions used to be tried by Select Committees, exactly as Private Bills were now considered by them, and that Judges who were qualified to deal with Private Bills were also qualified to deal with Petitions. That, however, was a matter which was not in any sense of the essence of the Bill. Then there was a proposal as to Standing Orders on Private Bills. It was proposed that a sort of Committee, consisting of the Speaker, the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, the Chairman of Ways and Means, and the three Judges, should suggest alterations in the Standing Orders in connection with Private Bills. This proposal, like some others to which he had drawn attention, was, however, in no sense vital to the Bill, which, as he had said, had, as far as possible, been framed in accordance with the principle *quieta non movere.* The Amendment which the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) had placed on the Paper admitted a great deal. It admitted that the system was defective, and it proposed to strengthen the Committees. But how was his hon. Friend to strengthen the Committees? As to his alternative to send these Bills to Joint Committees of the two Houses, that proposal had been made over and over again, and it never had received any acceptance whatever. The hon. Baronet proposed his Amendment because he would not delegate the legislative functions of the House. He (Mr. Craig-Sellar) did not propose to do that. The legislative functions of the House were kept intact by the proposals of his Bill. It was the judicial functions that he proposed to change—functions which he did not think the House was qualified to discharge. He hoped the House would not accept the proposal of his hon. Friend. He (Mr. Craig-Sellar) could not help thinking and believing that if his Bill passed it could not fail to meet the worst evils of the present system. He believed it would check expense to a large extent. It would knock on the head for ever the double inquiry before the two Houses, and it would give a stability and consistency to the discussions of the two Houses, which they lacked at present. Finally, he believed that by the delegation of the work there would be a saving of the time and energy of Parliament, and by that saving a simple and direct means of expediting and improving the work of the House of Commons and the Business of the country. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Craig-Sellar.*)

Sir JOSEPH W. PEASE said, that he fully acknowledged the great pains his hon. Friend (Mr. Craig-Sellar) had taken, and the great ability he had shown, in the endeavour to work out some improvement in a system which, it was generally conceded, required amendment. He (Sir Joseph Pease) rose to move the following Amendment:—

> "That whilst this House is prepared to take such steps as may be needful to strengthen its own Committees sitting on Private Bills, or by arrangement with the other House of Parliament, to refer opposed Private Bills to Committees consisting of Members of both Houses of Parliament, and thus obviate the present cost to promoters and opponents of having to appear before Committees of both Houses of Parliament, it is unwilling to delegate its legislative functions to paid Judges or tribunals."

The House had been told that the present system of Private Bill legislation had existed about 50 years; but the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs was hardly correct in so saying, as many alterations and improvements had been made in it during the period the hon. Gentleman had referred to. He (Sir Joseph Pease) was connected with one of the largest Railway Companies in the Kingdom; but, so far as the present Bill was concerned, he knew of no resolutions having been passed by the Railway Association against his hon. Friend's Bill, and he had put his own Amendment on the Paper, because he felt that the Bill would not be advantageous to the interests of the constituency he represented, or to the traffic which he, as one of the largest senders of traffic, sent over the railways. It was a mistake to assume that the Railway Companies were generally approving of the present sysem of Private Bill legislation, the fact being that those Companies, quite as much as the traders throughout the country, felt the amazing cost of the existing tribunal. His hon. Friend had referred to that cost, and to the millions spent on Railway, Water, and Gas Bills; but he (Sir Joseph Pease) held that it was most desirable that there should be a very careful inquiry into such matters as granting State monopolies to Gas, Water, and Railway Companies. It had been stated that £7,000,000 had been spent in Private Bill legislation during a period of 11 years. That seemed an enormous sum; but, by his (Sir Joseph Pease's) proposal, that amount would be reduced one-half. Out of the £7,000,000 at least 10 per cent had been paid in fees to the two Houses of Parliament; but, on the other hand, it should be known that the capital spent on the part of the promoters of the private legislation to which it related had amounted to the enormous sum of between £300,000,000 and £400,000,000, of which £200,000,000 had been expended by Railway Companies. It was quite true that there had always been great difficulty in arriving at anything like systematic legislation in regard to Private Bills; indeed, it was difficult to conceive how it could be otherwise, and it would equally fail before the Judges, especially when it was remembered how year by year circumstances so continually altered cases, that it was very difficult to establish precedents for railway legislation, or the action which Parliament might take as to the Gas and Water Companies. His hon. Friend spoke of the Manchester Ship Canal and of the enormous sum of money which had been spent on that Bill. As to the project, he (Sir Joseph Pease) did not desire to offer an opinion; but it should be remembered that there had been upon that question one of the greatest fights ever known as between two large towns, Liverpool and Manchester; that there had been the railway and shipping interests of one place on the one side, and all the local interests of the other place on the other side; that when it was recollected, as he was informed, that new professional evidence of the most startling and contradictory character was constantly being brought forward, and that men were brought across the Atlantic to give evidence before the Committees of both Houses, it was not to be wondered at that the result should have been what it was, and that those Committees should have been somewhat puzzled. At any rate, one of the consequences had been that the promoters of the Bill had this year brought forward a Bill, he was informed, vastly different from the last, and one which they deemed to be a great improvement on the one previously presented, and there was also the prospect that it would be still further improved in passing through the Committee stage. The result might be that the previous expenditure of time and money might prove highly advantageous, that it might, in the long run, be a saving, and would go into the pockets of the promoters of this great national undertaking. As to the work of past and present Parliaments, he could only say that his own experience had failed to show that there was more work done by the Members at the present day than when he first entered the House of Commons. The hours then were as long as now, debates were quite as fierce, Cabinet Ministers were just as much worn out and jaded, and the Opposition quite as attentive to the interests of the country. As to the work of the Committees, he did not think they were harder worked now than formerly. As to Grand Committees, he had had experience on one of them, and he must say that he thought they had not been a great success, and that the system of Select Committees was far preferable, both as to the time consumed and the practical examination bestowed on the questions considered. He had, indeed, been given to understand that there would be no Grand Committee on Trade appointed this year, as there were no Bills to bring before it. He held that if the Bankruptcy Bill had been referred to a Select Committee, they would not now have the complaints which were made against that Act. He would rather sit on a Select Committee or a Private Bill Committee than on a Grand Committee, for he would feel that his humble abilities would be better bestowed. As to the proposal to constitute a tribunal of Judges, he (Sir Joseph Pease) was at a loss to see in what respect the Judges would be more infallible than others. His hon. Friend said the new tribunal would consist of independent men; but he (Sir Joseph Pease) would like to know where these desirable men were to be obtained, for he did not think that leading Parliamentary counsel, as suggested, would consent to act as Judges under this Bill for salaries of £5,000 a-year; but even if they did, as it was proposed that there should be three Judges, he thought that, taking into account their clerks with £400 a-year each, and their retiring pensions after 15 years' service, the total expense would be more like £20,000 than the £15,000 a-year mentioned by his hon. Friend. Then the question arose, how were these three Judges to get through all the work which was now laid upon the Private Bill Committees of that House? They had seen sometimes as many as 30 to 40 Committees appointed, and there would still be cases in which it was necessary to sit for 30 or 40 days, and in which a Judge would be occupied for the whole of the time. But in a case like that of the Manchester Ship Canal no two Judges would like to sit by themselves. The whole of the three Judges would have to sit together, and while they were thus engaged what was to become of the other Private Business, such as Gas and Water Bills? It would soon be necessary to have six Judges. The Judges would probably sit quite as long, if they did not take twice as long, as a Committee now did, as they would not have the same motives for getting away. They would have greater sympathy with the counsel who were pleading before them; and as they had nothing to do but to sit for their salaries they would not cut the counsel short. In his opinion, therefore, the inquiry would be lengthened, and the fees to the counsel —as cases would be prolonged—would probably be more under the new system of his hon. Friend than under the present system; so that the expense and loss of time would be just as great as now, and greater than it would be if the Private Bills were referred to only one Joint Committee, composed of good men chosen from both Houses. As to the want of legislative system, most Judges would be apt to be warped by the events which were passing in the country; but, if not, the result would be no better. Committees had varied their decisions with the sense of the country and of Parliament existing at the time. They were told that there would be no change in the control of Parliament over a Private Bill; but was that so? The hon. Member said that he did not propose to intrust the tribunal he would appoint with legislative functions; but it seemed to him (Sir Joseph Pease) that when they intrusted a tribunal with the power of saying whether the Preamble of a Bill was proved, and of settling the clauses, they did distinctly transfer to them legislative powers. For his own part, he thought it would be derogatory to the power and dignity of that House to make such a transfer. The hon. Member proposed that the Judges should make a Report stating the reasons which had governed their decisions; but when a Judge began to give his reasons he was done. Moreover, that would be a very imperfect substitute for the present system, under which the Chairman, or the Members of a

Committee, could get up in that House and explain the proceedings of a Committee, if explanation were required. The truth was that the Report of the Judges would never be accepted as conclusive, and there would be constant debates; for as soon as the Judges' reasons were placed before the House, they would have a dozen Members from the locality affected by the Bill jumping up and saying that this reason or that reason was wrong, and that the decision was wrong. Nothing could add more to the length of time required for the passing of a Bill than that. His hon. Friend proposed to give the Judges power to sit during the Session at Dublin or Edinburgh for the consideration of Irish or Scotch Bills—[" No, no! "]—and that, he said, would diminish the cost; but how would that be done? Apart from any saving there might be on the fees of the House, the fees of the counsel would be the same, or would even be increased; for people who had important interests at stake would not be content with second-rate counsel, and the first-rate men at the Parliamentary Bar, as well as the leading engineers, would always be employed, and they would require double fees, if they were taken to Edinburgh or Dublin. Even though the expenses of local witnesses might be reduced, that was comparatively a small matter compared with the increased fees that would have to be paid to the higher class of professional witnesses. The expense of witnesses in London was nothing, at the present time, with the existing conveniences of railways and telegrams, compared with what it used to be when they might have to be kept weeks in London. Those expenses would be reduced by one-half if his proposal for Joint Committees of both Houses were adopted. What was wanted was a Committee that would possess the public confidence. Under the present system of railway competition, competition frequently became combination, and, in the interests of the public, required practical constant supervision. In addition to this, he believed that the people of this country had much more confidence in the Members of the House, and in Committees composed of them, than they were ever likely to have in any Judges that could be appointed. What was the training that most of the men had received who sat on Private Bill Committees of that House? They were men who possessed a great deal of local experience, many of them themselves members of great Corporations, working on Boards of Guardians, on Local Administrations, or who had taken that part in the administration of the Criminal Law which fell to the lot of most gentlemen being either in town or country. They thus formed a practical tribunal, better fitted for the consideration of such matters than Judges. When that House had to deal with Gas and Water and Railway Bills, and to decide on the propriety of passing or rejecting them, they would do their duty to the country much better by taking the decision upon themselves alone, leaving the Judges to take their proper places in the administration of the law, which they thoroughly understood. In conclusion, he begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

MR. GREGORY, in rising to second the Amendment, instead of the one of which he had given Notice—namely, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, he agreed generally in the views expressed by the hon. Baronet who had brought it forward (Sir Joseph Pease). As regarded himself, he (Mr. Gregory) spoke, not on behalf of solicitors, or of Parliamentary agents, but as a Member of the House who had had considerable experience upon Committees. They had on that occasion to consider what were the grievances which existed under their present system of Private Bill legislation, and what were the remedies proposed to be applied to them by this Bill. That certain grievances did exist he was not there to deny. There was, no doubt, great expense in promoting Private Bills, and he admitted that some difficulty arose in consequence of the occasional uncertainty in the decisions of Committees. But he did not think that those evils were so great as to justify the House in agreeing to so great a revolution in its procedure as would be effected by handing over to a judicial tribunal the jurisdiction over Private Bill legislation, which it had hitherto retained in its own hands, and which amounted to a surrender of what so high an authority as the late Sir Robert Peel always maintained was one of the proper functions of the House which ought to be preserved.

For himself, he thought the grievances which actually existed under the present system had been exaggerated by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Craig-Sellar). Large sums of money were, no doubt, now expended on Private Bill legislation, and it was true that £7,000,000 seemed a large sum to have been expended during the last 11 years; but then it must be recollected that that related to an expenditure of capital of something like £400,000,000 ; nor did he believe that the cost of Private Bill legislation would be materially lessened by the Bill before the House. At the time when railway enterprize was very rife, and there was a keen competition between rival Companies for making the same lines, fees were certainly run up in some cases to an extravagant height; but it should be remembered that the preliminary expenses incurred by promoters were often very considerable, the work in many instances having to be done in a very limited time, and there were, therefore, expenses connected with private legislation which that Bill did not meet, and which he did not suppose that any Bill would meet, arising as they did from competition and the ordinary course of human nature. There would be no diminution in that heavy item of preliminary expenses incurred in respect of making survey-plans and books of reference; and contests would still be commenced and carried on at a great outlay, because the temper of one or both of the parties was irritated. Again, it must be borne in mind that the House had, of late years, been relieved of a good deal of the minor Private Bill legislation by means of Provisional Orders; so that, at present, it was only the higher class of Private Bill legislation which came before them and taxed their energies, Gas, Water, and sometimes Harbour Bills, being only brought before it by means of a Bill for confirming Provisional Orders. Furthermore, it must be remembered that important improvements had been made within his recollection in regard to the Committees selected for trying questions of that character, the result being that the present Private Bill Committee was by no means a bad tribunal. He believed that those Committees were animated by a high sense of the duty they had to perform, and that their Members were often well acquainted with commercial undertakings, and able to take a large and practical view of the questions submitted to them, and of their financial bearings. Now, these questions were not, let it be observed, questions of law or fact. They were questions of expediency and of commercial results such as men of common sense, though having very little judicial experience, were quite competent to decide, for it was not a judicial tribunal that they really wanted. At the same time, he admitted that improvements might be made in these tribunals in the direction suggested by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease). It would be well to have Joint Committees of both Houses, so that a double inquiry would be saved. That plan had been mooted more than once, and it was actually tried some years ago with great success, when a number of Bills for effecting extensive railway amalgamations, and especially one for amalgamating the London and North-Western and the Lancashire and Yorkshire was referred to a Joint Committee of Peers and Members of the House of Commons. He (Mr. Gregory) had himself served upon that Committee, which sat for six weeks, and gave the most careful consideration to those Bills, requiring the promoters to prove their case substantially before they passed a Bill, whether it was opposed or not. He thought some system of that kind might be pursued in the future conduct of such Bills. Not only would a system of Joint Committees effect a great saving in the expense of Private Bill legislation, but it would, to a great extent, get over another difficulty which had been referred to in connection with the present system, under which Bills were successively referred to Committees of each House. Instead of four or five Members being required, as at present, to serve on each Committee, it would not, under a system of Joint Committees, be necessary to obtain the services of more than two or three for a Committee. What was the alternative? It was said that the plan proposed by the Bill was recommended by high authority in 1863; but since 1863 we had had some experience of the result of appointing a judicial tribunal to deal with questions affecting the rights and relations of railways. It had been found necessary to repeal the Act which referred such questions to the Court of Common Pleas, and to substitute another tribunal, simply because the Court of Common Pleas was found to be quite unfit for the work. If three Judges were appointed, as was proposed by the Bill, considerable expense would be thrown on the Exchequer, and he presumed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have something to say on that point. It was said that the Fee Fund would provide for this; but the Fee Fund was appropriated to other purposes, and, therefore, the salaries and the pensions of the Judges and the provision for their clerks must be paid out of the Consolidated Fund to an amount which he did not think would be less than £20,000 a-year. Then, having got the Judges, they would proceed to make rules of procedure to give precedence to the Bar, and to invest their Courts with a state and solemnity which, however appropriate to the administration of justice, was by no means adapted to the rapid and satisfactory disposal of questions such as those which were involved in Private Bill legislation. He had a great respect for the Judges. They were all men of the highest integrity, animated by a high sense of duty, and of great learning; but there were few men more ignorant than many of them of the ordinary transactions of life, and the ordinary affairs of life could not be carried on according to the rules which they laid down—such, for instance, as many of the rules relating to trustees. He thought that the proposed tribunal would be altogether unworkable. The truth was, that we wanted for such questions a much more elastic tribunal than one composed of Judges could ever be. And more than that, it was desirable that the several questions should be dealt with not according to legal rules, but according to considerations of expediency, and by the light of the common sense of men of business. He did not think that the Bill before the House would conduce to this result, or that it would be desirable to pass it at the cost of increasing the Public Expenditure, and depriving Parliament of the jurisdiction it had hitherto exercised over Private Bill legislation.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "whilst this House is prepared to take such steps as may be needful to strengthen its own Committees sitting on Private Bills, or by arrangement with the other House of Parliament, to refer opposed Private Bills to Committees consisting of Members of both Houses of Parliament, and thus obviate the present cost to promoters and opponents of having to appear before Committees of both Houses of Parliament, it is unwilling to delegate its legislative functions to paid Judges or tribunals,"—(*Sir Joseph Pease,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. W. M. TORRENS, in supporting the Amendment, said, it had been argued that instead of two trials in these matters, there should be one only; that the order of Business in Parliament should be assimilated to the order of business in every other Court of the Kingdom. The double trial of the same issue by two tribunals of co-equal jurisdiction was not only an an anomaly, but an absurdity. Let them take a case of great magnitude, such, for instance, as the Manchester Ship Canal. What was the real question involved in that Bill? It was simply to judge, as practical men, whether the accommodation that was sought was required or not. It was proposed to leave such a question as that to the Judges; but, in his opinion, they knew nothing whatever of the conditions of Lancashire, and what accommodation was required there. For himself, he objected to take any step in the direction of curtailing the Privileges of that House; on the contrary, he had always endeavoured humbly to magnify and fortify the authority of the House, and he thought there was nothing so unwise or undutiful as to seek to take away any of the Privileges of the House. The real authority of Parliament, if it was to exist, must exist by its ascendancy over the minds of men; not merely the litigants who came before them as promoters or opponents of local Bills; but the great classes of the community, commercial, agricultural, or manufacturing, whose interests were incidentally, if not directly, affected by their decisions. As for taking away from the other House its jurisdiction in these matters, he hoped the time would never come when the House of Commons would seek to eke out its power by usurping to itself a legislative monopoly. He agreed entirely with the suggestion that the House of Commons ought to ask the other House of Parliament to consult with them as to how they could together improve the system of private and local legislation by which the investigation of Private Bills should be performed more cheaply, expeditiously, and with greater certainty. Sir Robert Peel, the greatest Member of Parliament of their time, was always opposed to transferring the privileges and duties of the House to paid servants of the Crown, because the life of England consisted in doing its duty for itself without fee, and not because he in any way doubted the power and integrity of those servants. He agreed with what the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Gregory) had said with regard to the unsuitability of members of his own Profession to deal with these matters. The many issues to be decided by that House were not trials which could be conducted by Judges, but matters of fact with which the Members of the House could best deal.

Mr. A. F. EGERTON said, that Committees on Private Bills were, as a rule, eminently fair and reasonable, and their decisions were for the most part approved by the public. There were, no doubt, objections to the present system, of which the most important, perhaps, was the enormous cost, and, therefore, all they had to do was to take the necessary steps to reduce that cost. The expenses of the Manchester Ship Canal had been very heavy, and he was himself concerned in the prevention of a Private Bill which cost £8,000, a very considerable charge to make upon a private estate. He thought, however, that the proposal made in the Bill would not be an improvement upon the existing system. The House of Commons would have some difficulty in accepting the Report of the Judges. He believed that Committees of the House of Commons were better judges than Her Majesty's Judges of evidence relating to training and engineering questions submitted to them. The real question, as it seemed to him, was whether the procedure of the two Houses could not be improved, and in his opinion it could be improved by adopting the Amendment which had been moved by the hon. Baronet (Sir Joseph Pease). He thought that a Joint Committee of both Houses would answer every legitimate purpose at which the Bill aimed. He would, therefore, support the Amendment of the hon. Baronet.

Mr. HORACE DAVEY said, that everyone who had spoken, even those who opposed the Bill, had admitted that some reform of Private Bill legislation was necessary. The two main objections to the present system were its great expense, which was far greater than it need to be; and the inordinate amount of time that hon. Members had to devote to Public Business. The exigencies of Public Business had greatly increased, and it seemed unreasonable to ask hon. Members who had been in the House, perhaps, until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning to devote a portion of the time before the next Sitting to the work of Committees on private legislation. Whenever a Railway Bill was brought in it became a field for competition among various Companies; and, though he did not doubt the competence of Select Committees, it was probable that such questions, which became more complicated every year, might be better dealt with by some such tribunal as was now proposed. Some hon. Members did not think highly of Grand Committees; but he was disposed to think that the defects which had been shown were only the friction which necessarily accompanied the first setting in motion of a complicated machinery. In his opinion, the delegation of Parliamentary work to Grand Committees, or Select Committees, was destined to take permanent root in our system. As he had said, the Business of the House had largely increased, and it would be found necessary to delegate more and more of its functions to Committees upstairs. Thus the work of the Committee of Selection would become increasingly difficult. They would naturally choose as Chairmen of Committees men of the greatest knowledge and experience. But it was precisely those men whom the House required in the conduct of Public Business. Thus they were encountered by a formidable difficulty. Then the questions which came before Select Committees were becoming more and more complicated, and more and more conflicting interests had to be reconciled. To that state of things his hon. Friend (Mr. Craig-Sellar) had proposed a remedy which would create less possible alteration in the machinery by which Private

Bill legislation was conducted than almost any other scheme could do. He had, however, raised a storm of opposition to his Bill which might have been avoided. It was unfortunate that he had proposed to call the officers to be appointed under his Bill by the name of Judges, and to give them £5,000 a-year, the exact salary of the Judges of the High Court. Now, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory), Judges in the strict sense they were not. They would not have to decide upon questions of law, but matters of fact, and considerations of expediency. It would be easy to change their name and call them Commissioners, Referees, Committee men, or by some similar title. They might with advantage be chosen from the experienced body of Parliamentary agents or Parliamentary counsel, or other persons of special qualifications. They need not be confined to the Legal Profession. Then it was not necessary to surround these officials with any of the circumstances of judicial pomp. They need not even wear wigs. Those officers, he believed, would sit in the same rooms as the Select Committees now did. They would be attended by the same Parliamentary agents and counsel, and conduct the inquiries in the same way as they were conducted by a Select Committee. The only real difference would be having one gentleman sitting on those Bills instead of three or four, and that, he thought, would be a great advantage. Then the Bill preserved a principle of the utmost public interest and importance—namely, the absolute control of Parliament over Private Bills. It was highly necessary that principle should be maintained intact, for he would strongly object to the devolution of the legislative function to any body whatever. But not the least of its advantages was that the Bill would give the two elements, difficult of co-existence, stability and elasticity. One of the greatest evils of the present system was the divergence of principles applied, not only by Committees in different Sessions, but by Committees sitting next door to each other. Then the danger of too great rigidity was obviated by the control of Parliament which was preserved by the Bill. He did not pledge himself to the details of the Bill; but he strongly supported its principles, for he believed they were correct. With regard to another question, he would advocate the principle that these officials should give their reasons when they reported the decision at which they had arrived. In the present system, when, as sometimes happened, the House was asked to reject a Bill on its third reading when a Select Committee had reported on it, it was difficult or impossible to come to a satisfactory conclusion in consequence of ignorance of the reasons which had led the Committee to its decision. No doubt the expense of the procedure would be urged against it. But the suitors' fees now amounted to £70,000 or £80,000 a-year, which would provide a fund for that purpose; and, whatever the expense, it was desirable in the public interest that the best possible tribunal should be constituted. For these reasons he supported the second reading of the Bill.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he congratulated the hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Bill (Mr. Craig-Sellar) and the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken (Mr. Horace Davey) on the increased moderation of their tone. When the Mover of the Bill first dealt with the question, two years ago, there was a wildness in his proposals, and an unjustifiable violence against the existing system. But he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) was sorry to say that he was not himself prepared to support the Bill, even though it were made a condition that it should go before a Select Committee. Did the hon. Member and did the House believe that if the abuses had been so serious, and the dissatisfaction of the country so great, that the system would have lasted so long as it had done—namely, 22 years—since the adverse Report of the Select Committee? The fact was that the questions that were dealt with by the tribunals under the existing system were, for the most part, of a political character, or questions of policy and expediency, and not merely of law. In spite of all the objections that might be entertained to the present system, he believed that suitors and the public at large had been and were, on the whole, satisfied with the decisions which the Committees of the two Houses had arrived at, and that they had a confidence in the jurisdiction of those Committees which they would not have in the jurisdiction of individuals selected as this Bill proposed to select them. The question of expense was one of the principal subjects for consideration; and if they could, by the adoption of the Amendment of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Joseph Pease), see their way to a reduction of the expense attending Private Bill legislation, much of the ground for the proposed serious change would be cut away. A great objection to the plan of the hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill was, that it took no account whatever of the enormous improvements, simplifications, and economies introduced into the existing system by means of Provisional Orders. Certain questions relating to municipal and other matters might now, by the Provisional Order system, be settled on the spot, without the expense of counsel and agents, and the cost of bringing the parties to London; and in that way legislative sanction was given to many schemes that were required for local and parochial convenience and advantage. It would be an unfortunate thing if they were to break up that system, as would be the case if the proposal of the hon. Member were adopted; for, as he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) read the language of the Bill, every one of these Provisional Orders would, unless care were taken, be placed under the direction of the Judges, who would be much less qualified to exercise a wise discretion as to what ought or what ought not to receive the sanction of Parliament than the present authority in the matter. Under a Standing Order which he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) persuaded the House to pass, Private Bill Committees might decline to adopt the provisions of a Bill, in spite of the fact that there was no opposition to it; but he did not think the public would be satisfied that that discretionary power should be given to paid officers outside the House. He lamented, as did others, to hear the immense percentage of cost to promoters when they came before Parliament; but they must not forget that promoters looked to the success of their endeavour to get Parliamentary sanction in order to raise large sums of money from the public. He thought, upon the whole, that it would be better to adopt the Amendment proposed by the hon. Baronet.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he thought it might be for the convenience of the House at that hour if he stated, on behalf of the Government, the course they proposed to take in respect of the Bill. He believed he only expressed the feeling of everyone present when he said that the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar) had done the utmost justice to the subject, and had illustrated what was naturally a very dry question with an excellent and clear statement. While the hon. Member ought to receive much credit for the general lines of his argument, he must say he thought that, in the course of that argument, he had, from the first, exaggerated some of the points which he took up, and he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) felt it his duty to call attention to one or two of what appeared to him to be those exaggerations. He sympathized with him—everyone did—with respect to the cost of these inquiries under the present system. That cost was undoubtedly large. He was not going to say whether it could be avoided; but he thought the hon. Member was not quite accurate in stating that it fell upon the public. Speaking with respect to railways and works of that kind, his hon. Friend had said that the cost was made good to the promoters by the charges imposed by the Company; and, therefore, the expense did not fall upon the shareholders, but upon the travelling and freight-sending public. But that was not the real case. In settling fares and rates, managers of railways did not consider at all what the Bills had cost in the first instance; they always looked to one thing, and one thing only—what, within the limits of their statutory powers and subject to the competition with other Companies, they could impose so as to make the largest profit. It did not come into their calculation what amount of capital might have been expended in obtaining their Acts or making new lines. They only looked to making the largest amount of profit, and in deciding that they had regard to two considerations—namely, their competition with other Companies, and the maximum rates and fares which by law they were entitled to charge. His hon. Friend spoke of the enormous accession to the work of the House during the last 50 years. There was during the last two Parliaments some increase of work;

but 50 years ago was 1835, and if the hon. Member looked at the pages of *Hansard*, or the Records of the House, between 1833 and 1838, he would find that the work of the House was quite as great as now. In point of fact, the work at that time was universally complained of as extremely onerous. Two, three, four, and even five o'clock were as often the hours of adjournment then as they were now; and practically, therefore, the House must not take credit to itself for doing more work now than it did 50 years ago. His hon. Friend prophesied that, in future years, they would talk more and work less. He doubted that very much. He thought it would be difficult to talk more. On these points he thought his hon. Friend had overstated his case. His hon. Friend also explained to them the merits and the nature of this proposal as compared with the proposal made by the right hon. Gentleman at the Table (Sir Erskine May) in 1863, and, going into details, he said that while the right hon. Gentleman proposed four Commissioners, he himself proposed three; but that in other respects, practically, the two proposals were on the same footing. But his hon. Friend forgot this great difference—that whereas, according to Sir Erskine May's proposal, the Commissions which were to deal with Private Bills were to consist of four persons sitting together, his proposal was that there should be, in all, three Judges, each usually sitting alone. There was all the difference in the world between assigning those duties to a single Judge, or whatever he might be called, and the proposal of Sir Erskine May. He was sorry his hon. Friend did not make that quite clear to the House in the course of his speech. The proposal of the Clerk at the Table was really no very great change from the system then in force, except that the Members of the Commission need not all of them be Members of the House; but his hon. Friend's Bill proposed to get rid of the Committee or Commission altogether, and to have for these inquiries one Judge, one single person, upon whom were to be conferred very large powers. As to the extenuations of the proposal placed before the House by the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch (Mr. Horace Davey), he must observe that his hon. and learned Friend's name was on the back of the Bill, and therefore it was his Bill. And yet his hon. and learned Friend had abandoned a great part of it, because, after hearing the debate, he said—"You need not have Judges; you may call them Commissioners or Referees; and you would have all the advantages of the Bill." But he was much struck by the hon. and learned Member for Christchurch insisting upon one provision of the Bill—that the Judge or Court should be bound to give reasons for the judgment arrived at. If so, he could not well be a layman. His hon. and learned Friend must have forgotten the saying of Lord Mansfield, that whatever a Judge might do, a layman ought by no means to give his reasons for arriving at a *quasi*-judicial conclusion, because though if he used his common sense his decision would probably be right, his reasons would certainly be wrong. Had his hon. and learned Friend borne that in mind, he would not have urged that the functions proposed in the Bill could be discharged as well by the employment of laymen as skilled Judges.

MR. HORACE DAVEY said, he did not intend to exterminate the Bill. All that he had suggested was that the persons should not be called Judges, but that they should be of the same class.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he did not see in that case why they should not call a spade a spade, and if they were to be Judges they should call them Judges. He saw by the 23rd clause that they were to try Election Petitions, and that they must rank *pari passu* with the Judges of the High Court of Justice, with equal authority, power, and jurisdiction. If they were not in that case to be called Judges, then it was a mere question of name. Let him say a word as to what the Bill proposed—how far it was possible to sympathize with it, and what objections he felt to it. He entirely sympathized with the objects of the Bill, so far as they were intended to get rid of the waste of time, and, to a certain extent, to cost. There was a very great waste of time. He would show in a moment how that waste of time and that cost had been recognized. This question was by no means a new one. He had looked back for some years to see what Parliament had done, and what Parliament had been obliged to undo. In 1846 there was great dissatisfaction with the system then in force, very similar to the present; and the result was that, with the approval of Sir Robert Peel, in 1846 it was tried to be remedied by appointing Commissioners to ascertain the facts as to each Private Bill. They went down into the country, very much as was proposed in the Bill, and then they made Reports to Parliament upon which Parliament might act, while reserving to itself the power of sending Bills again to a Select Committee. That system failed absolutely, and Parliament was obliged in 1851 to give it up. If anyone wished to see the grounds on which Parliament gave it up, he should read a speech of the late Mr. Milner Gibson in 1864, when this whole question was discussed at very great length in the House, and the history of it given. In 1863 a Select Committee was appointed to inquire into the whole question. That Select Committee was probably the strongest that had ever been appointed on that subject, and it threshed out every conceivable proposal which was made either by a Member of the Committee or in the course of the evidence; and it reported that no Court of Inquiry could be constituted which would be, on the whole, so satisfactory to the public as Committees composed of Members of the Houses of Parliament. What the Committee reported in favour of was either a Joint Committee of both Houses, or that each House should accept the Report of a Committee appointed by the other, and he was bound to say he thought that the former was the better plan.

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR pointed out that this Committee did not make such a Report.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that if his hon. Friend would refer to pages 6 and 10 of the Report he would see this alternative presented. In 1864, the present Lord Salisbury, then Lord Robert Cecil, brought forward a Motion in the House of Commons, which was debated at much length, and was practically to the same effect as the proposal of his hon. Friend. It was that the duty of ascertaining the facts upon which Private Bill legislation should proceed should be discharged by a tribunal independent of that House, and the noble Lord had the support of the present Duke of Cleveland, Lord Sherbrooke, and others. The proposal was opposed by the late Mr. Milner Gibson, the present Lord Derby, and Lord Cranbrook, persons of great weight and authority in the House, and the result was that it was withdrawn, and never went to a Division. That was the history of the question up to the proposal of the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs, the first objection to which was the enormous power proposed to be given to a single Judge or Commissioner. It appeared to him that, while they ought to aim at the advantages of greater speed and greater economy, which could be arrived at by some of the proposals he had referred to, the objections to the present proposal were almost insuperable. They could not shut their eyes to the fact that great railway contests, involving millions, arose in connection with Private Bill legislation; and how could such contests be left to one single person—whether a lawyer or not—for his decision?

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR said, his Bill provided for two or three Judges sitting together in any large measure of the kind that required it.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that was no doubt true; but he would ask, if the three Judges were engaged on one Bill, what was to become meanwhile of all the other Private Bill legislation? Some of these very important contests would take two or three months, and it could not be tolerated that, for the whole of that time, the other Private Bills should be at a standstill, in order that three Judges should sit together. Again, contests very often arose upon these Bills, not only between different Railway Companies, but between Railway Companies and the public. For instance, there was at present pending a very important inquiry as to the rates and tolls to be charged by nine Railway Companies; and, in all probability, it would occupy a considerable part of the time of this Session. Would his hon. Friend like to see that important question dealt with by a single Judge? It had been said that Parliament would retain its powers, and that when the Bill came before the House for second and third reading any Member could be heard upon it; but the result would then be that, almost uniformly, there would be contests in the House itself on the proposal of each Bill, and the ordinary Business of the House would be greatly retarded. Besides, he would venture to say that, of all tribunals, unless under most exceptional circumstances, the House itself was about the very worst for considering a Private Bill. Fifty Members were, perhaps, present during the discussion upon it, and 300 flocked in when the Division was to be taken. The course which he would venture to propose was this. This was the last Session of this Parliament—[Mr. WARTON: No, no!] Yes, he thought it was; and a great Constitutional question of this kind ought not to be decided on the eve of the Dissolution, and the meeting of a Parliament elected on a totally different basis; the more so as the change could not take effect until after the Dissolution. Therefore, what he would suggest to the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs would be to withdraw the present Bill altogether, and that his hon. Friend (Sir Joseph Pease) should also withdraw his Amendment. It would be better to leave the subject to be dealt with by a new Parliament, who might have very different views from the present one as to the delegation to others of a portion of their work. He thought it would be a misfortune if, at the present moment, they arrived at a decision on this important question; and, on the part of the Government, he had to say that if that should be the line taken by the House, and the question should be left open for discussion in the next Parliament, then, should they be in Office, they would do their best to assist the House in the matter.

MR. RAIKES said, that even if the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were adopted, it might not be undesirable to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, so that their Report might guide the new House of Commons. Supposing the right hon. Gentleman were in Office this time next year, it would be very difficult to get this question taken up in the first or second Session of the new Parliament. He had put his name upon the back of the Bill; but by doing so he only desired to endorse the principle that the present tribunal for Private Bill legislation was extremely unsatisfactory, and that it was desirable to substitute some extraneous and more satisfactory one. But he held himself free to propose very sweeping changes in the Bill now before the House. One of the great objections which he felt to the present system was due to the fact that there was in the House a large and powerful body of Gentlemen, belonging to each side of the House, who always acted together and turned the decisions of the House on all Railway Bills in a direction in which they might otherwise not go. He would like to see Private Bills brought before a tribunal that was free from this influence. With regard to the amount of work in the House since the establishment of Grand Committees, it was only 17 or 18 years since he had first the honour of sitting in that House, but since the appointment of these Committees there had been a great increase in the work to be done; and if hon. Members were all to attend on the Grand and Select Committees on which they were placed, it would be found impossible for the Committee of Selection to constitute the Committees on Private Bills in a proper manner. For his own part, he was inclined to think that either Private Bill Committees or Grand Committees must go; and as Her Majesty's Government had apparently, at present, no intention of abandoning Grand Committees, it seemed to him that some other mode of conducting the necessary business must be found. With regard to the propriety of the Judges giving their reasons for their decisions, he ventured to say that if any such scheme were adopted as was now proposed they would find that the Judges would not be required to give their reasons. With regard to the question of professional witnesses, he considered that their employment formed one of the most serious blots on our system. It would be a great benefit to the country if the pestiferous influence of hired witnesses could be destroyed. They did not appear to be advocates, only because they were nominally on their oaths. Then came the question of a Joint Committee of both Houses, which had practically been accepted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. For his own part, he had only had experience of one Joint Committee. That had been one composed of men who were supposed to have experience on the subject, and to be of great weight in their respective Houses. The decision they had come to was unanimous; but neither of the Houses of Parliament had accepted the decision to which they came. Such a Committee as proposed might be of use, but not as a Court of First Instance. It should rather be a Court of Appeal. He had more than once advocated a scheme with regard to this matter, which was even more advanced than that which had now been brought forward. The experience gained by the House in late years from the institution of legislation by Provisional Orders was too valuable to be altogether disregarded. He would suggest that it might be a useful thing to establish a tribunal, not necessarily of Judges, but of competent and qualified persons, who should sift the scheme which was proposed to be submitted to the Legislature, and to lay down its principles in the form of Provisional Orders. He would even go so far as to do away with the necessity of a first, second, and third reading, and allow these Orders to lie on the Table for 40 days, after which, if there was no proposal for their rejection or modification, they should become law. He would, however, reserve control over the Bill by establishing a Joint Committee, to be appointed at the beginning of every Session, to which any Order might be referred by Motion in either House. If they had a really efficient body, in the habit of dealing with these questions, to whom they might leave the bulk of ordinary legislation, it might pass in the form of Provisional Orders, and there would be no necessity for the procedure of first, second, and third readings. The history of the Manchester Ship Canal was a *reductio ad absurdum* of the present system. They had been told that the judgment of Parliament, if not infallible, was sufficiently certain. But that Bill, first of all introduced into that House three years ago, had been passed by a Committee of the House, and then thrown out in a Committee of the other House; and in the following year it had been passed by a Committee of the other House, and thrown out by a Committee of the House of Commons. There was one other point which he wished to urge. In the last few years they had had too many debates raised upon Private Bill questions at the ordinary time at which these Bills came before the House. That they could not help; but there was another thing which, in the interests of the country and of the House, they ought to stop, and that was the practice of the House instructing the Committee on a Private Bill as to the course they were to take. If they were to place faith in these Private Bill Committees, as being composed of honourable and competent men who were to do their duty with regard to the Bill before them, he hardly thought that they ought to fetter them by any instructions. This practice of the House giving instructions to Committees on Private Bills had been condemned as irregular by the late Speaker. Some such change as that proposed by the Bill had been countenanced, he believed, by everyone who had filled the Office of Chairman of Ways and Means during the last 20 or 30 years; and, having himself had the honour of occupying that position, he thought that no man could do so without becoming day by day more keenly impressed with the evils and the unsatisfactory nature of the present system of Private Bill legislation in that House, and with the desirability of a change which would be at once beneficial to the public and conducive to the fair fame of Parliament.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR said, that unless the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was taken, that both the Bill and the Amendment should be withdrawn, they must vote on the latter. Now, the words of that as proposed by the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) were entirely contradictory of each other. The hon. Member admitted the evils and the cost of the present system; but he "would strengthen the Committees," which in no way would lessen the cost. Then he gave up the Committees of this House, and would have Joint Committees of both Houses. The position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been more comprehensible if he had promised that the Government would deal with the acknowledged evils. He hoped there would be no proposal to have another Select Committee to consider the general question of Private Bill legislation. There was nothing to be gained by a new inquiry except procrastination and delay, for there had been too many Select Committees, while the shelves of the Library were overburdened with their Reports. Every Select Committee had condemned the present system, by which an opposed Bill must go through two tribunals—one in the House of Commons, the other in the House of Lords. This method resembled no other double judicial proceeding. They should consider what was the present mode, in theory at least. The Chairman of Committees, aided by counsel in each House, was held responsible for a general supervision of Private Bills. He communicated with the agents, and pointed out the more obvious defects of the measures; but he had no power to enforce his views, and they might not be adopted before the Bill went up to Committee. This preliminary work was more effectually done in the Upper than in the Lower House, because the Chairman in this House was an overworked officer, and had not the time which he ought to have to devote to this important subject. At least, that was his own experience when he filled that Office. All unopposed Bills were dealt with by the Chairman of Committees, and they generally had few of those glaring anomalies as to rates and charges upon the public which appeared in Bills coming from Committees having no continuity of action or connection with each other. For example, Gas Bills frequently came down from upstairs with charges on the public varying as much as from 3*s.* to 12*s.* per 1,000 cubic feet. Those details did not strike the House, and the public suffered from the variety of its Courts. The same diversity existed in the time fixed for the repayment of loans by Local Authorities. He had seen periods allowed by Committees varying from 40 to 100 years. A continuous Committee of Judges, as proposed by this Bill, would, on the other hand, be guided by common principles, and if it departed from them, must make a special Report to the House. What was wanted for opposed Bills was a single Court, acting on uniform principles, to protect, at the same time, the rights of private individuals and the needs of the public. The increasing need of delegation had already forced itself upon the House, and would continue to do so. The Grand Committees were means for delegating the work of the whole House to a selected number of its Members; while the increasing number of Select Committees was simply delegation in disguise. The House postponed an enlarged system of further delegation; but he doubted whether there were many Members of the House who remained of the opinion that Parliament could continue as an efficient Legislative Body, and at the same time as a deliberative body upon the interests of their vast Empire, unless they delegated more largely than they had yet done their work of detail. At least, for his own part, he felt convinced that Parliament could not retain the respect and confidence of the country unless it did so. But already the delegation of the work of Parliament to the few Grand Committees with their very limited range of subjects had largely deteriorated the Committees on Private Bills as Courts of judicial decision. The Grand Committees required 163 Members, and when to these were added Members of the Government, the leading Members of the Opposition, and Members of advanced age who were not expected to act on Private Bill Committees, they could not be surprised that the Committee of Selection found serious difficulties in manning them. He quite admitted that the whole subject of Private Bill legislation was so large that it would have been better if the Government, rather than a private Member, had dealt with it under a full sense of responsibility. But the evils were admitted, and they had been waiting 50 years for a remedy. One method was put before them in a well-considered form; and if it were not accepted, it should be under the full obligation of the Government that it was bound to propose a plan of its own. They could not continue the costly, lengthy, and haphazard system, or rather want of system, which now prevailed. Its cost stopped many useful undertakings. Many places in Scotland, Ireland, and England had to submit to bad water supply, inefficient drainage, and imperfect railway or tramway communication, because they could not face the present expense of a contested Bill in Parliament on a dual system. The proposal before the House would certainly greatly lessen the cost, and, by producing uniformity of decision, diminish the chances of contradictory findings, and he, therefore, would support the second reading of the Bill.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, that he recognized in the proposal the great pains which had been given to the subject, the time devoted to it, and the information which had been afforded to the House. He thought, therefore, that it came before the House fully entitled to respectful consideration, and as a remedy for the evils which existed was worthy of a second reading. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had charged the author of the measure with using exaggerated language; but the right hon. Gentleman had used exaggerated language himself in regard to the amount of time which the House would have to devote to the consideration of appeals from the new tribunal which the measure would establish. The hon. Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) urged that the proper step to take would be to strengthen Select Committees. But how was that to be done? He had been a Member of the Committee of Selection for 20 years, and he might, therefore, claim to know something about the subject before the House. Thirty Members were excused from serving on Select Committees in consequence of their being Members of the Government, and the same immunity was extended to the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench. Then the House included 120 Railway Directors, who could not serve on Committees concerned with Railway Bills, which formed the bulk of the Business before Select Committees. Others were excluded because they were railway shareholders, and then there were the lawyers and bankers, who could not leave their daily avocations to attend Committees. Other Gentlemen were excused from service because of their age or infirmities, and some, when they were placed on the panel, found it convenient to go to Paris beyond the jurisdiction of the House. It could, therefore, be easily understood how great were the difficulties which the Committee of Selection encountered in the performance of their duties. With regard to Grand Committees, he would appeal to the Government not to nominate any until there were Bills ready for reference to them. Last year 160 Gentlemen were told off in the early part of the Session to serve on such Committees; but they were not called upon to perform any duties until the Session had far advanced. Of course, they claimed in the interval to be exempted from attendance on Private Bill Committees. It would be, he considered, a waste of time to defer dealing with the subject until it could be brought before a new Parliament; and he, therefore, supported the second reading and a reference of the Bill to a Select Committee. He did not say that he committed himself to the Bill in its entirety; but when an hon. Member had brought forward a measure so carefully framed as this Bill was, he thought it was respectful on the part of the House to give it a second reading.

Mr. LAING remarked, that the great mistake committed by hon. Members who looked at this matter solely from the theoretical side was that they overlooked the enormous magnitude of the interests concerned. The question was, in what way were they likely to get the greatest advantage to the public? That was a large question of principle, on both sides of which there was a great deal to be said; and, therefore, was it likely that a solution of it was to be obtained by referring it to one or two ex-Parliamentary agents. He thought the adoption of the proposed scheme would inevitably open the door to the objectionable practice of "Lobbying," and schemes would be decided more frequently by a canvass got up by Parliamentary agents outside than upon a due consideration of the merits in this House. He was sensible of the difficulty of getting Committees to serve, and he was in favour of the plain, practical suggestion to refer Private Bills to a Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he did not know whether the hon. Member who had moved the second reading of the Bill intended to go to a Division; but he hoped that he did so intend, because the right hon. Baronet the senior Member for the University of Oxford (Sir John R. Mowbray) had conclusively shown the necessity of some alteration in the present system of Private Bill legislation. If the legislation required by the wants of the country was to be carried out, it was absolutely necessary to relieve the House of some part of the work now imposed upon it. But if this Bill, with its particular scheme, was thrown out, he (Sir Henry Holland) could not see any reason why the general question of how to remedy the present state of things should not be at once referred to a Special Committee. He could not at all agree with the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the question was not one to be dealt with by an expiring Parliament, but that it should be postponed for the consideration of a new House of Commons. Why should not the experience of Members, who had served as Chairmen or as Members upon these Private Bill Committees for so many years, be utilized at once for the benefit of the new House of Commons, which would be composed, probably, to a large degree, of men who had not served before in Parliament? The Report of experienced men would have great weight with those who were coming new to the work, and who had not felt the evils of the present system. He had put his name on the back of this Bill, not as supporting it in all its details, but because it was consistent with two main principles, to which, after hearing a great part of this debate, he still adhered. The first point was that the House of Commons should not lose touch of these Bills, which often involved, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member who had preceded him (Mr. Laing), questions of public policy, and interests of great magnitude. Now, it was specially provided by this Bill that the House should have full power over such Bills. The House could deal with them, as heretofore, on second reading, Report, and third reading; and, in truth, the only difference in this respect was that the stage of Committee was taken out of the working and cognizance of the House. He was not alarmed by the picture drawn by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the interminable debates which would be raised on the second and third readings of these Private Bills, if this change were adopted, provided that effect was given to his second principle—namely, that in lieu of the Committee a tribunal should be constituted which would command the confidence of the House and of the country. He believed that this could only be effected by having what he would term a "judicial" tribunal in lieu of the Committee. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Laing) seemed to think this unworkable, partly, as he understood the hon. Member, because lawyers, however eminent, were not of sufficiently varied experience to deal satisfactorily with the class of cases that would come before them. But, in reply, he would observe that the proposed Judges, though called Judges or Commissioners, and having the same rank as Judges of the Supreme Court, need not be lawyers; and some of them probably would not be. Another objection seemed to be that a single Judge would have, as a rule, to deal with a Bill. That was, of course, a matter of detail; but he might point out, what he believed most Members who had served on these Private Bill Committees would be ready to admit, that the conduct and mode of dealing with cases before such Committees had in a large proportion of cases rested mainly with the Chairman; and that not unnaturally, as the Chairmen were Members of experience who had been selected, in the first instance, for their good judgment, and who had had the advantage and knowledge derived from having presided regularly over so many Committees. In saying that, he must not be misunderstood as throwing any slight upon the work of private Members who had served upon those Committees—a work of which he fully recognized the value; but he thought the tendency, especially of Members new to the work, and only coming to it once a-year, was naturally to trust to the Chairmen, who were thus practically much in the position which the single Judges would hold. But, however, that was a matter of detail, and it might be provided that every case of any importance should be heard before two Judges. In conclusion, he would say that he had approached this question from what he would call the House of Commons side of the question—that was, the necessity of relieving the House of some work; and not because of the expense of the present system, nor because of the decisions being "haphazard," as they had been termed by many speakers on former occasions. Upon this latter point he was, however, of opinion that there was every probability that if some tribunal, such as that suggested by the Bill, were constituted, there would be much less chance of haphazard and differing decisions than there was now. He trusted that the Bill would be referred to a Select Committee; or, if there was any difficulty in doing so, as pledging the

House by a second reading to the principle of a judicial tribunal, he hoped that the general question might be referred to such a Committee.

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY said, the House had so often and so recently affirmed the opinion that reform in the procedure on Private Bills was necessary that they could hardly be surprised that the hon. Member should have endeavoured to give effect to that Resolution by a Bill. Looking at the Bill, and at the names of the hon. Members on the back of it, he felt it was only due to those hon. Members that the measure should receive a fair consideration at the hands of the House; and he should personally have been disposed to support the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, on the understanding that it should be referred to a Select Committee. All previous inquiries into the question of Private Bill legislation had been of too extended a character; and he thought that it would have been of some advantage to the new Parliament that they should have before them a Report of a Select Committee of that House in reference to a Bill on the subject which contained a definite proposal. He was in perfect agreement with his hon. Friend so far as the Preamble of his Bill went; but he was sorry to say that his accord with him there ceased. Even under the present system there was frequently an attempt made after a Bill had passed through Committee to overrule their decision upon the third reading; and if that was the case when the Chairman and the Members of the Committee were present to defend the decision at which they had arrived, what would be the case when the Judge who had adjudicated upon a Bill was not present to give his reasons for his action in the matter? He admitted that a reasonable reduction might be made in the scale of fees in reference to Private Bill legislation, because he considered that the present high scale of fees had conduced to the decrease in the average annual number of Private Bills from 490 in 1864, 1865, and 1866, to 279 in 1882, 1883, and 1884. In view of the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Government were willing to introduce a measure dealing with this question in a future year, he thought that the best course that the hon. Member for Haddington Burghs could adopt would be to content himself with the very useful discussion his measure had given rise to and to withdraw his Bill.

Mr. R. H. PAGET remarked, that while there had been a general expression of opinion in favour of the Preamble of the Bill, not a single hon. Member had approved of the details of the proposal the measure contained. In his opinion, the resources of that House were unequal to manning two Grand Committees of 80 Members each, while providing at the same time for Committees for Private Bill legislation. While fully recognizing the necessity of reform in this procedure, and the evils of the present system, he did not think the hon. Member had pointed out how they could escape from the existing difficulties. He therefore could not support the proposal that the Bill should be read a second time.

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR said, he hoped there would be no interposition between the House and a division on this Bill. He was anxious to take a division now. His main object in rising was to thank the House cordially for the attention it had accorded to him, and the manner in which the debate had been conducted. He felt certain that the House would agree that the movement for some reform would be greatly facilitated by the discussion, and that was no small advantage. He agreed with the Chairman of the Committee of Selection in deeply regretting that they had lost from the Treasury Bench Lord Monk Bretton, who would have made a speech very different from that delivered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Monk Bretton viewed the subject thoroughly and accurately, and would have distinguished the strong and the weak points in the scheme before the House. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not deal with the principle of the Bill, and did not attempt to defend the existing system—indeed, no one attempted to defend that system. He laid great stress on points of detail, which he (Mr. Craig-Sellar) said were matters of no consequence, whether agreed to or not. The right hon. Gentleman's speech was taken up chiefly with the names of the Judges, and the pomp which would surround them. In his (Mr. Craig-Sellar's) speech in moving the second reading, he said it was of no consequence what those functionaries were to be called. The right hon. Gentleman also dealt with the proposal to send Election Petitions to those Judges, although he (Mr. Craig-Sellar) said that was a mere suggestion. He did not think that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman could be satisfactory either to himself or to the House. In reply to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Raikes), he would only say that if the Bill were read a second time, he was willing to consent to its being sent to a Select Committee. He would not proceed beyond that point during this Parliament; but it seemed to him that they should have the Report of a Select Committee to lay before next Parliament, so that possibly the reform desired might be carried out.

MR. WARTON objected to forcing on a Division when other Members desired to speak. He thought it clear that the real object of the promoters of the measure was to thrust Grand Committees upon the House. He objected to that, and did not scruple to say that the Grand Committees had utterly failed. He opposed the second reading, on the ground that the Bill was a cruel one to everybody concerned.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 58; Noes 160: Majority 102.—(Div. List, No. 32.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that the Government could not accept the Amendment unless it were altered so as to leave the question entirely open, pending further inquiry.

SIR JOSEPH W. PEASE asked leave to amend his Amendment by adding, after the word "unwilling," the words "without further inquiry and consideration."

MR. BIGGAR objected to the Amendment.

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

QUESTIONS.

NAVY — THE TROOPSHIP "POONAH."

MR. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he had received any information in regard to the troopship *Poonah;* whether the vessel had sailing independent of steam power; and, by whose authority she was sent to sea with so large a body of troops in a disabled condition?

MR. CAINE, in reply, said, the following telegram was received at 4.30:—

> "A steamer has been reported nine miles south-west of Ballycotton Island, having all canvas set and an ensign flying. Admiral Lethbridge has gone, and taken with him the only tug in this port. It is not yet known whether it is the *Poonah* or not."

An hon. MEMBER: Is the ensign flying upwards or downwards?

MR. CAINE: She is under full sail.

The hon. MEMBER: Is she in distress or not?

Subsequently—

MR. CAINE said: I have just received a message from the Admiralty to say that the vessel to which I have referred is the *Poonah*, and that she is being towed into Queenstown.

NOTICE.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—THE VOTE OF CENSURE.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: It may be for the convenience of the House if I now state that it is my intention, on the Vote of Censure in reference to Egyptian affairs, in the event of the hon. Member for Newcastle's (Mr. John Morley's) Amendment becoming a substantive Motion, to move to leave out all the words after the word "this," in the first line, in order to insert the words—

> "Government has failed to indicate any policy in reference to Egypt and the Soudan which justifies the confidence of this House or the Country."

RIVER THAMES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. STORY-MASKELYNE, Bill for the Preservation of the River Thames above Teddington Lock for purposes of public recreation, and for regulating the pleasure traffic thereon, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. STORY-MASKELYNE, Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Mr. ELTON, Mr. WALTER JAMES, Mr. SELLAR, and Mr. MOLLOY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 71.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 26*th February*, 1885.

MINUTES.] — *Sat First in Parliament* — The Marquess of Cholmondeley, after the death of his grandfather; The Earl Vane (Marquess of Londonderry), after the death of his father.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.—QUESTION.

Earl DE LA WARR begged to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a communication addressed to *The Pall Mall Gazette* by Madame de Novikoff, purporting to give the views of a high Russian authority in regard to the Afghan boundary; and whether it is true, as stated in this communication, that the Afghans were instigated to occupy Penjdeh by members of Sir Peter Lumsden's Staff?

Earl GRANVILLE: It is not correct, and, indeed, could not be so. Sir Peter Lumsden arrived at Sarakhs on November 8. On the 9th, Colonel Alikhanoff called on Sir Peter Lumsden to complain of the advance of the Afghans to Sari Yazi, 35 miles north of Penjdeh. He then stated that the Russians had been nearly a year at Merv, and that during the whole of that period the Afghan outposts had been at Penjdeh. As a matter of fact, both the Sarikhs and the Salors settled in the Penjdeh Valley have acknowledged that they were on Afghan soil, and have paid a revenue to the Afghan Government.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.—RESOLUTION.

The Marquess of SALISBURY, in rising to move—

> "That this House, having taken into consideration the statements that have been made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, is of opinion that—(1.) The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided counsels of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations; (2.) That the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations will be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire,"

said: My Lords, the Motion which I have the honour to lay before your Lordships to-night has a double aspect; it passes judgment upon the past, and it expresses an opinion with respect to the policy of the future. Some persons receive with considerable impatience the idea that at the present crisis of our country's destiny we should examine into the past, and spend our time in judging of that which cannot be recalled; but I think that such objections are unreasonable. In one of the gravest crises through which our country has ever passed we depend upon the wisdom and decision of those who guide our councils; and we can only judge whether that dependence is rightly placed by examining their conduct in the past, to see whether what they have done justifies us in continuing our confidence in the difficulties which are yet to come. Now, whatever else may be said of the conduct of Her Majesty's Government, I think those who examine it carefully will find that it follows a certain rule and system, and is in that sense, if in no other, consistent. Their conduct at the beginning of this Egyptian affair has been analogous to their conduct at the end. Throughout there has been an unwillingness to come until the last moment to any requisite decision—there has been an absolute terror of fixing upon any settled course; and the result has been that when the time came when external pressure forced upon them a decision as to some definite course the moment for satisfactory action had already passed, and the measures taken were adopted in haste, with little preparedness, and were ill-fitted for the emergency with which they had to cope. The conduct of Her Majesty's Government has been an alternation of periods of slumber and periods of rush; and the rush, however vehement, has always been too unprepared and too unintelligent to repair the damage which the period of slumber has effected. I do not wish to hark back into this Egyptian Question; but it is necessary to point out the uniformity of character in the conduct of the Government. The first commencement of our troubles was the height to which Arabi's rebellion was allowed to go. The Government knew very well the danger of Arabi while he was yet a small man, and had little influence. They were perfectly aware of the mischiefs he was brewing; and they not only declined to act themselves, but, if they are not greatly belied, they prevented the local authorities from acting—they prevented Arabi being removed, as he should have been removed, from the confines of Egypt. If that had been done, all the evil that followed would have been averted; but while his enterprize was going on they reposed in absolute security, and they took no effective measures till the pressure of public opinion forced upon them the movement which culminated in the bombardment of Alexandria. That was a very fair illustration of the vice which has characterized their policy, that when they did move the movement was made suddenly, with no preparation, and with no foresight of what was to follow. The Fleet was moved in, and, as a matter of course; Arabi resisted, and the Fleet, as was inevitable, suddenly replied; and then it was found that there were no forces to land and back up the action that was taken. The result of that improvidence was not only that the Khedive's Throne was shaken, and the fidelity of his Army was utterly destroyed, but the town and fortifications of Alexandria, through the vengeance of Arabi, were grievously injured, and that tremendous debt for the injury done to Alexandria was incurred, which still remained a weight upon the Egyptian finances, and a hindrance to all negotiations for the settlement of foreign claims. That was the first act, the first specimen of that period of slumber followed by a sudden and unprepared rush. Then came the question of the Soudan, which was no new question. Before the battle of Tel-el-Kebir the Mahdi was already in arms. It was a matter as to which anybody who undertook to deal with the destinies of Egypt should have arrived at a decision as to the plan on which the Government of Egypt should act. But no decision was arrived at—the thing was allowed to drift; and Her Majesty's Government, plunged in absolute torpor, seemed to have but one care—that they should escape from nominal responsibility, ignoring the real responsibilities which would inevitably be attached to their actions. The despatches, one after another, during that period only repeat the old burden—"Her Majesty's Government has no responsibility as to what takes place in the Soudan." The result was that the unhappy Hicks was sent into the Soudan, wretchedly equipped, with an army altogether beneath the number that he ought to have had, composed of men, moreover, who had been turned out of the Egyptian Army as worthless. The inevitable result followed—a result which Her Majesty's Government had no cause to be surprised at, for they were warned of it by their own confidential agents. Yet they absolutely declined to interfere, and hoped, by disclaiming responsibility, to escape from the inevitable consequences of their own neglect. The anticipated disaster came. Hicks and his army were totally destroyed, and not a man escaped to tell the tale; and then it was that Her Majesty's Government awoke from the period of slumber, and the period of rush began. They adopted two measures, both of them as inadequate and inapplicable to the circumstances as it was possible to conceive, and both of them big with future trouble. In the first place, they announced suddenly to the world and to Egypt that Egypt must abandon the Soudan. It was impossible to conceive a more stupendous political blunder than that. It was a proclamation to all our enemies that they could enjoy impunity; and it was a proclamation to all our friends that they would be handed over without mercy to those who desired to overwhelm them. But the announcement was made, and from that moment the fate of the garrisons whom they had left scattered over the Soudan was sealed. The fate of the garrison of Khartoum was brought home to them forcibly, and they might have taken seasonable measures for its relief—they might have sent troops upon which they could rely to defend its garrison, and adopted some definite and effective plan of relief. Instead of that, they took advantage of the chivalrous devotion of one of the noblest spirits which this age has seen; and, making use of his self-devotion, they sent him forward on an impossible and hopeless task to accomplish by mere words and promises what they had not the courage to do by force of arms. From that commencement—the abandonment of the Soudan and the mission of General Gordon—all our subsequent troubles have arisen. But that was not all. Among the garrisons of the Soudan were those of Sinkat and Tokar, which, so long back as November, 1883, were severely pressed by the Mahdi's lieutenants, and their danger was announced to Her Majesty's Government as extreme. For three months they took no notice of that danger; they allowed the matter to be left to General Baker and a body of Egyptians, whose worthlessness was announced in every page of the Correspondence laid before them. Of course, General Baker, with such a force, was inevitably defeated; but it was not until Parliament met—I think it was not until a Vote of Censure was announced—that Her Majesty's Government determined to make an effort to do that which they ought to have done, and which, if they had not been asleep, they would have done three months before, to make an effort to relieve the garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar. When the resolution was come to, when at last the necessity dawned upon their minds, they plunged into the matter with their usual improvidence and want of plan. They sent men to Suakin, apparently with no idea of what they were to do when they got there. Before they started Sinkat had fallen, and before they could undertake any active operations the garrison of Tokar, giving up in despair, had surrendered. Then the planlessness, the aimlessness, of the Government was revealed; they landed their Forces, and, lest they should expose themselves to derision for taking them away without doing anything, they slaughter 6,000 Arabs, and go away absolutely without any result for the blood of their friends or the blood of their enemies that they had shed. They go away guilty of all this bloodshed, leaving behind them absolutely no result, except the enmities and the blood feuds they had created, because they had plunged into the enterprize without any definite view, and without any fixed plan to guide themselves. These three cases—the case of the bombardment of Alexandria, the case of the abandonment of the Soudan, and the case of the mission of General Graham's Force—they are all on the same plan, and all show you that remarkable characteristic of torpor during the time when action was needed, and hasty, impulsive, ill-considered action, when the moment for action had passed by. Their further conduct was modelled on their conduct in the past. So far was it modelled, that we were able to put it to the test which establishes a scientific law. The proof of a scientific law is that you can prophesy from previous occurrences what will happen in the future. That is exactly what took place in the present instance. We had had these three instances of the mode of working of Her Majesty's Government before us, and we knew the laws that guided their action. As astronomers, observing the motions of a comet, can discover by observation the future path by which that comet is to travel, so we could prophesy what would happen in the case of General Gordon. My right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) prophesied it in the House of Commons, and was met by a burst of fury from the Prime Minister such as that Assembly has seldom seen. He was told that Egypt was of much less importance than, I think, Sutherland or Caithness, and that everything that was wrong was the result of deficits imputed to him in the finances some 10 years ago; and he was generally denounced because he would interfere with the beneficent legislation of the Government on the subject of capable citizens and so forth by introducing the subject of Egypt as many as 17 times. Well, that did not prevent my right hon. Friend's prophecies from being correct, and I venture to repeat them in this House. I do not like to quote my own words—it is egotistical—but as a proof of what I may call the accuracy of the scientific law by which the motion of the Government is determined, I should like to quote what I said on the 4th of April, when discussing the prospect of the relief of General Gordon. The Government were proclaiming that he was perfectly safe, and that an Expedition to relieve him was an utterly unnecessary operation, while it was very unreasonable for us to raise the question before Parliament. What I said was this—

> "Are these circumstances encouraging to us when we are asked to trust that, on the inspiration of the moment, when the danger comes Her Majesty's Government will find some means of relieving General Gordon? I fear that the history of the past will be repeated in the future; that, just again, when it is too late, the critical resolution will be taken; some terrible news will come that the position of Gordon is absolutely a forelorn and helpless one; and then, under the pressure of public wrath and Parliamentary Censure, some desperate resolution of sending an Expedition will be formed too late to achieve the object which it is desired to gain."—(3 *Hansard*, [286] 1616.)

I quote these words to show that by that time we had ascertained the laws of motion and the orbits of those eccentric comets who sit on the Treasury Bench. Now the terrible responsibility and blame rests upon the Government, because they were warned in March and April of the danger to General Gordon; because they received every intimation which men could reasonably look for that his danger would be extreme; and because they delayed from March and April right down to the 15th of August before they took a single measure to relieve him. What were they doing all that time? It is very difficult to conceive. Some people have said—I think it is an unreasonable supposition—that the cause of the tardiness of Her Majesty's Government was the accession to the Cabinet of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby). I have quoted some of the earlier misdeeds of Her Majesty's Government, partly for the purpose of defending the noble Earl from the charge—they were almost as bad before he joined them. What happened during those eventful months? I suppose some day the memoirs will tell our grandchildren; but we shall never know. Some people think there were divisions in the Cabinet, and that, after division on division, a decision was put off lest the Cabinent should be broken up. I am rather inclined to think that it was due to the peculiar position of the Prime Minister. He came in as the apostle of the Mid Lothian campaign, loaded with all the doctrines and all the follies of that pilgrimage. We have seen on each occasion, after one of these mishaps, when he has been forced by events and by the common sense of the nation to take some more active steps—we have seen his extreme supporters falling foul of him, and reproaching him with having deserted their opinions and disappointed the ardent hopes which they had formed of him as the apostle of absolute negation in foreign affairs. I think he always felt the danger of that reproach. He always felt the debt that he had incurred to those supporters. He always felt a dread lest they should break away; and he put off again and again to the last practical moment any action which might bring him into open conflict with the doctrines by which his present eminence was gained. At all events, this is clear—that throughout those six months the Government knew perfectly well the danger in which General Gordon was placed. It has been said that General Gordon did not ask for troops. I am surprised at that defence. One of the characteristics of General Gordon was the extreme abnegation of his nature. It was not to be expected that he should send home a telegram to say—"I am in great danger, therefore send me troops"—he would probably have cut off his right hand before he would have written a telegram of that sort. But he sent home telegrams through Mr. Power, telegrams saying that the people of Khartoum were in great danger; that the Mahdi would succeed unless military succour was sent forward; urging at one time the sending forward of Sir Evelyn Wood and his Egyptians, and at another the landing of Indians at Suakin and the establishment of the Berber route, and distinctly telling the Government—and this is the main point—that unless they would consent to his views the supremacy of the Mahdi was assured. This is what he said no later than February 29, almost when first he saw the nature of the problem with which he had been sent to deal—

> "Should you wish to intervene, send 200 British troops to Wady Halfa . . . . and then open up Suakin-Berber route with Indian Moslem troops . . . . If you decide against this, you may probably have to decide between Zebehr and the Mahdi."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884) p. 131.]

It was impossible that he could have spoken more clearly. But Mr. Power, who was with him, who was one of the three Englishmen in the town, who was the Consular Agent, whom he trusted so much that he sent him down with Stewart upon that last ill-fated journey, and whose decoration and reward he recommended to the British Government—he could speak plainly; he was not the General in command, and there was no appeal to his chivalry in the matter. Power said on the 23rd of March—

> "We are daily expecting British troops—we cannot bring ourselves to believe that we are to be abandoned by the Government. Our existence depends upon England."

Well, now, my Lords, is it conceivable that after two months, in May, the Prime Minister should have said that they were waiting to have reasonable proof that Gordon was in danger? By that time Khartoum was surrounded; the Governor of Berber had announced that his case was hopeless, which was too surely proved by the massacre which took place in June; and yet in May Mr. Gladstone was still waiting for "reasonable proof" that the men who were surrounded, who had announced that they had only five months' food, were in danger. Apparently he did not get that reasonable proof till the month of August. I may note, in passing, that I think the interpretation which the Government has placed upon the language of their trusted officers has more than once been exceedingly ungenerous. They told us that they did not think it necessary to send an Expedition to relieve Sinkat and Tokar because they could quote some language of hope from the despatches of General Baker; and in the same way they could quote the same language of hope from the despatches of General Gordon. But a General sent forward on a dangerous mission does not like to go whining for assistance unless he is absolutely pressed by the extremest peril. All those great qualities which go to make men heroes and soldiers are incompatible with such a course, lead them to underrate danger, and to shrink as from a great disgrace from any unnecessary appeal for exertion for their protection. It was the business of the Government not to interpret Gordon's telegrams as if they had been statutory declarations; but to judge for themselves of the circumstances of the case, and to see that those who were surrounded, who were only three English men among such a vast body of Mahommedans, and who were already cut off from all communications with the civilized world by the occupation of every important town upon the river, were really in danger, and that, if they meant to answer their responsibilities, they were bound to relieve them. I cannot tell what blindness fell over the eyes of some Members of Her Majesty's Government. On reading over these debates I find that the Marquess of Hartington, on the 13th of May, actually gave utterance to these expressions—

> "I say that it would be indelible disgrace"—indelible disgrace—"if we should neglect any means at the disposal of this country to save General Gordon."—(3 *Hansard*, [288] 224.)

And after that announcement by the Minister chiefly responsible, the Secretary of State for War, three months elapsed before any step was taken for doing that which he admitted that the Government were bound to do under the penalty of indelible disgrace. It has been said that General Gordon was destroyed by treachery, and that that treachery would have happened at any time when the British Army came near Khartoum. What does that extraordinary theory mean? It means that the Mahdi had agreed with Farag Pasha that it would be much more comfortable to go on besieging, and that they should go on besieging until Lord Wolseley's Force came and made it dangerous to continue doing it any longer, and that then the previously-arranged surrender of the place should take place. Have those who put forward this extraordinary theory not heard or read of the hard straits to which the Mahdi and his followers were for a long time reduced—how they were suffering from fever, from cholera, from small-pox, from the difficulty of feeding themselves, how there were constant threats that the Mahdi's men would desert his cause, and how very hard it was for him to maintain his position? Depend upon it that if the Mahdi could have shortened that period of trial by one hour he would have done so. But supposing this theory to be true—supposing the danger was so extreme, and that the moment General Gordon was in Khartoum treachery was certain sooner or later to do its work, and that its execution was only delayed until the necessary emergency arrived—what does that prove? Does it not show that the sending of General Gordon to Khartoum was an act of extreme folly? I do not know of any instance of such a man being sent to maintain a position like Khartoum without a certain number of British troops going with him. If British troops had been there such treachery would have been impossible. The sending of General Gordon by himself, to rely alone on the fidelity of Egyptian troops, for whose allegiance he had no kind of security, was an act of the extremest rashness; and if the Government can succeed in proving—as I do not think they can—that this treachery was inevitable, they only pile up additional reasons for condemning the expedient by which they sought to cover their previous action. I must confess that it is very difficult to separate this question from the personal matter which it involves. It is very difficult to argue it on purely abstract grounds, without turning for a moment to the character of the man who was thus engaged, and the terrible risk which he ran. When we consider all that he underwent, all that he sacrificed in order to serve the Government in a moment of extreme exigency, there is something infinitely pathetic in reflecting on what must have been his feelings as day after day, week after week, and month after month passed by, and he spared no exertion, no personal sacrifice, to perform the duties placed upon him, as he lengthened out the siege by inconceivable prodigies of skill, ingenuity, and resource, and as, in spite of it all—in spite of the deep devotion to his country which had prompted him to this great risk and undertaking—the conviction gradually dawned upon him that this country had abandoned him. It is terrible to think what he must have suffered when, at last, as a desperate measure to save those whom he loved, he parted with the only two Englishmen with whom, during those long months, he had had any converse, and sent Colonel Stewart and Mr. Power down the river to escape from the fate which had become inevitable to himself. It is very painful to think of the reproaches upon his country, and his country's Government, which must have passed through the mind of that devoted man through successive weeks and months of unmerited peril and neglect. No wonder he should have at last written that tragic letter, which has only appeared yesterday before the world—the letter he wrote on the 14th of December—

> "All is up; I expect a catastrophe in 10 days' time. It would not have been so if our people had kept me better informed as to their intentions."

The Government had no intentions to keep him informed of. They were merely acting from hand to mouth to avert a Parliamentary Censure or a political crisis. They had no plan, no intentions to carry out. If he could have known their intentions, that great hero would have been saved to the English Army, and a great disgrace would not have been enrolled on the history of the English race. My Lords, by the light of this sad history, what are our prospects for the future? Was there ever a time when clearness of plan and definiteness of policy were more required than they are now? I am not going to say that the policy of the Government is bad. I should be paying them an extravagant compliment if I said that. They have no policy at all. As my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) epigrammatically described their policy the other night, they are going to Khartoum to please the Whigs, and they are going to abandon it to please the Radicals. I dare say that that is as true as any other description of their policy that can be given. But at such a crisis of our country's fate, in both Houses of Parliament, in the Press, in society— everywhere—you hear people asking "What is their policy?" You get no answer. You get no answer from themselves. Here and there you get a faint echo of a policy, something vague and ill-defined, like the distant sound, to which you can attach no definite meaning. You sometimes seem to see for a moment the phantom of a policy; but if you try to grasp it, it escapes you. We used to think that the policy of the Government was the evacuation of the Soudan as soon as the military operations were over. A very bad policy! But even that does not seem now to be their policy. We do not know whether they are going to evacuate the Soudan or not. They do not know who are going to hold the Soudan; they leave themselves open as to that; it may be the Italians, the Turks, or the Chinese. Only one point they put their foot down on, and that is that Egypt shall not hold the Soudan. I confess I thought that when they swept all the rest away they might sweep that away also; for there is the portion of the Soudan which the Earl of Dufferin thought should remain under Egypt, and which must always follow the destinies in some sense of "the Egyptian Government." Then we were told that they were to "smash the Mahdi;" but now we are to make use of the Mahdi. To smash the Mahdi is not the best way of inducing him to take a favourable view of your operations. If you smash the Mahdi, you may do it so thoroughly that he will not be of any use in the future; and it is possible he may retain a certain resentment for the process of being smashed. It is possible either that the Mahdi, in fulfilment of his claims to the religious position he occupies, will have to decline to have any dealing with the infidel; or that if you crush him so entirely by force of arms that he will consent to treat with you, he will have lost all position in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen, and you will not find his influence of any assistance in the solution of the terrible problem which you have in the Soudan. They have no policy, in the same way, as to the railway. It is a very important measure making a railway. It is very difficult work; it is unprecedented in history to project a railway into an enemy's country, and follow it up by conquering the country. Whether that is possible or not, the construction of the railway did seem to imply some policy. If the Government are going to make a railway, and then leave it to the first comer to take and do with it what he liked, that is an extremity of generosity which can only belong to a Government which lives from hand to mouth. It appears to me that, on this matter of our Egyptian policy, though I do not say that you can lay down the precise steps by which the end is to be obtained, still it is a time when we ought to conceive to ourselves what the end of our policy is to be—that we should clearly define it, and follow it out with consistency and persistency. Now, let us examine broadly what are the interests of England in this matter. With Mediterranean politics, as such, we have no great reason to concern ourselves. France may be mistress in Algeria and Tunis; Morocco may go its own way; and it is said that Italy has views in Tripoli; but Egypt stands in a peculiar position. It is the road to India. The condition of Egypt can never be indifferent to us; and, more than that, after all the sacrifices that we have made, after all the efforts that this country has put forth, after the position that we have taken up in the eyes of the world, we have a right, and it is our duty to insist upon it, that our influence shall be predominant in Egypt. I do not care by what technical arrangements this result is obtained. Technical arrangements must necessarily conform, among other things, to the International Law and the Treaty conditions of the world; but the substance of the thing must be this—with all due regard—I do not wish for a moment to disturb the rights of the Suzerain—but with due regard to those rights, the interests of England in Egypt must be supreme. Now, the influence of England in Egypt is threatened from two sides. It is threatened on the North diplomatically by the position which the Powers are taking up with respect to Egypt. I do not think it was necessary that the Powers should have taken up that position. I believe that, with decent steering, it might have been avoided; but it has not been avoided, and we undoubtedly have to face, at all events, the inchoate claims which will demand the utmost jealousy and vigilance of Parliament. I do not know what are precisely the arrangements which the Government are said to have arrived at with respect to the Guarantee. I greatly fear that it may include the idea of a Multiple Control, and to the idea of a Multiple Control I believe that this country will be persistently and resolutely hostile. But, diplomatically, we have to guard Egypt from the superior influences of any Power but our own from the North. From the South at the present moment we have a danger of another kind. We have the forces of fanatical barbarism let loose upon the South of Egypt. Owing to the blunders that have been committed, those dangers have reached a terrible height. They undoubtedly will require a very strenuous effort on the part of this country to conquer. But unless we intend to give over Egypt to barbarism and anarchy, unless we intend to sacrifice all the advantages for civilization that we have won there, and all the value of the services which that country may render to British interests as its path to the East, we must contrive to check this inroad of barbarian fanaticism which is impersonated in the actions and character of the Mahdi. Now, General Gordon never said a truer thing than when he said that we could not do so by simply drawing a military line, and that we might as well draw a military line to keep back fever. If the insurgent Mahommedans reach the North of Egypt, it will not be so much by their military force as by the moral power of their example that they will threaten the existing state of things in Egypt and the interests of all the European Powers, and, most of all, of our own. We have, therefore, to check—it is absolutely necessary that we should check—

this advance of the Mahdi's power. Her Majesty's Government, in those glimpses of policy which they occasionally afford us, have alluded—I cannot say they have done more—to the possibility of setting up a good Government in the Soudan. I quite agree that a good Government is essential to us in the Soudan. That is the only dyke that we can really erect to keep out this inundation of barbarian and fanatical force. I entirely concur with them if that is their view, which I cannot certainly determine. I entirely concur with them that it is the duty of this country to see a good Government erected in that country, a Government upon which we can rely, and which shall have power to stem the forces which the Madhi has set in motion. But they speak of a Government as if it was a Christmas present that you can give a country and then go away. England, it seems, possesses a great many good Governments in store to give away; she can always give one to a nation when it requires it; or rather, like the ostrich's egg, they can leave it in the sand to hatch itself. But a good Government, like any other organized being, must pass through the stages of infancy to maturity. There must be a long stage of infancy during which this Government is unable to defend itself; and if it is to exist for any useful purposes, it requires, during that period, protection and security, which it can only derive from the action of an external Power. It is that protection and security that England must give. She must not desert her task in the Soudan until there is that Government which can protect Egypt, in which her interests are vital. I do not say whether it should be done by the Nile or from Suakin. I think I see a noble Lord, one of the greatest ornaments of this House, who has conducted an Expedition, not over 250 miles from Suakin to Berber, but over 400 miles, and that with success, over the same burning country, and his opinion, as given last year, is that the Suakin and Berber route is the route by which the Soudan should be held. In that opinion I do not say that I concur—that would be impertinent; but it is an opinion to which I can humbly subscribe. Whether it is to be done by a railway or not is another matter; but I fully believe that by using the Suakin and Berber route, we may maintain a hold over that portion of the Soudan which may enable us to perform that which is our primary duty—namely, to repress these forces of barbarism and fanaticism, to protect Egypt from further incursion, to nourish the civilization which they protected and secured, and which would find such abundant root in that fertile country; and, above all, to quench, and check, and ultimately to destroy, the Slave Trade, which has been the curse of Africa. All those advantages can be readily obtained if England will lay down a determined policy, and will adhere to it. But consistency of policy is absolutely necessary. You cannot envelop your policy in obscurity, trusting to chance and taking this or that side, according as Parliamentary exigencies require. You cannot do that without fatally damaging the *prestige* of your power and the chances of your success. We have to assure our friends that we shall stand by them; we have to assure our enemies that we are permanently to be feared; and it is only on the conditions on which our enemies dread us and our friends trust us that we can be successful in dealing with our enemies. My Lords, we must not conceal from ourselves that the blunders of the last three years have placed us in presence of terrible problems and difficulties, which will require all our manhood to overcome. We have great sacrifices, too, to make. I earnestly trust that this railway, of which I hear so much, may be made. It will be an enormous benefit to Africa. But do not conceal from yourselves that the task is one of no slight magnitude. To throw forward a railway into a country which is not in our possession has never been done before. When you have thrown it forward you will have to guard it against a population who know the country thoroughly, who are very difficult to reach, and who are singularly hostile to any Christian or civilized effort. If you carry this railway forward, you will not only have to smash the Mahdi, but you will have to smash Osman Digna as well, and to smash him so completely that he will not only not be able to resist at the moment, but that he shall be unable to turn back and take up the railway when it is made. All those things involve great sacrifices. They involve the expenditure not only of much money, but more of that English blood of which the noblest has already been poured forth. They involve the creation of blood feuds that you will have great difficulty in dealing with, and we are not so strong as we were. At first all nations sympathized with us; now they look upon us coldly, and even with hostility. Those who were our friends became indifferent; those who were indifferent have become our adversaries; and if our misfortunes and disasters go on much longer, we shall have Europe interfering, and saying that they cannot trust us—we are too weak—that our *prestige* is too broken to justify us in undertaking the task. My Lords, those are great dangers we have to face. They can only be faced by a consistent policy, which can only be conducted by a Ministry that is capable of unity of counsel and decision of purpose. I have shown you that from this Ministry you can expect no such results. They will only produce after their kind; they will only do what they have already done. You cannot look for unity of counsel from an Administration which is hopelessly divided; you cannot expect a resolute policy from those whose purpose is hopelessly halting. It is for this reason, my Lords, that I ask you to record your opinion that in a Ministry, in whom the first quality of all—the quality of decision of purpose—is wanting; from such a Ministry you can hope no good in this crisis of your country's fate. If you continue to trust them; if you continue for any Party reason—if Parliament continues—to abandon to their care the affairs which they have hitherto so hopelessly mismanaged, you must expect to go on from bad to worse; you must expect to lose the little *prestige* which you retain; you must expect to find in other portions of the world the results of the lower consideration which you occupy in the eyes of mankind. You must expect to be drawn on, year by year, step by step, under the cover of plausible excuses, under the cover of high philanthropic sentiments—you must expect to be drawn on to irreparable disasters and disgrace, which it will be impossible to efface.

Moved to resolve,

"That this House, having taken into consideration the statements that have been made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, is of opinion that—

1. The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided councils of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations;

2. That the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations will be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

LORD WENTWORTH, in rising to move the following Amendment:—

"To leave out from 'That' to the end of the Motion, and insert 'an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should not employ British forces to occupy the Soudan or to prevent the exercise by the Egyptian people of their right to select their own government,'"

said, he was always loth to occupy the time of the House; but at a moment when friends of peace were being assailed with opprobrium and ridicule no opponent of this most unhappy and unhallowed war ought to conceal his convictions, and it became his duty, however inadequately, to represent those opinions before their Lordships. Ever-increasing burdens had been laid upon the people, fresh responsibilities and growing dangers were incurred by the successive sanguinary crusades of the Government against Moslems and False Prophets. He had never thought it either wise or right to invade and conquer Egypt in 1882, and more than once he had expressed that opinion to their Lordships. If he considered that the blood lately shed, the slaughter of the enemy, the appalling and irreparable loss of so many of our own best and bravest men, were the fatal and necessary consequence of going to Egypt at all, these butcheries would be the strongest possible addditional condemnation of the fundamental error. But admitting, even for an instant, the comfortable doctrine of whoever was able to believe the bombardment of Alexandria to have been neither crime nor mistake, no case at all had ever been made out for the delusion that British interests in Egypt could be maintained either by sending agents to intervene in the affairs of the Soudan, or by withdrawing troops from where they might at any time be wanted to defend their already enormous Empire, in order to make new conquests in the remote deserts of Africa. He knew the valour of their soldiers, the heroism of their officers; but the more he admired them the more he hated to see them ordered on duties as to the purpose of which one dared not say—"May God defend the right!" Would that they might never fight for spurious *prestige*—the object of duellists and bullies—but only like Christian soldiers, in defence of their country. But the men who fell in battle would not be the only or the principal victims. There were millions who would suffer — perhaps starve — through the direct and indirect effects of war, taxation, and waste of productive energy; and, however bad they might think the Mahdi, his overthrow would add nothing to the happiness or welfare of the mass of the English population, who would have to endure most of the ruin and misery caused by war. But were they justified in speaking so harshly of the Mahdi if they compared his actions with our own? Was he invading and slaughtering us, and while so engaged was he praying to God to assuage the violent passions of the enemies who dared to resist him—as one of our chief pastors was said to have prayed about the Soudanese? Other fanatics than Arabs had caused their present troubles. They had no right to speak of a campaign to "smash up" the Mahdi as if it were a trial sent by the Supreme Dispenser of glory—which was very good for them—provided always they thankfully and piously followed those chosen saints who governed them. Five years ago another celebrated campaign took place, but of a very different kind, for it was against blood-guiltiness, and brought to power the makers of the arrangements that followed Majuba. One of the victorious heroes—of Mid Lothian—spoke a week or two ago at Epsom, and earnestly recommended more war, at the same time urging the maintenance in Office of those Ministers who had brought us where we were, and this was represented as a patriotic duty. The noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery) might have given another reason; but he either did not know or forgot to mention that almost immediately afterwards he would himself become a Member of the Cabinet in which he was so warmly expressing his confidence. The safe and speedy withdrawal of their Army from the Upper Nile appeared to him the first necessity, and no reinforcements ought to have any object but the rescue of Lord Wolseley if, by a rash advance, he had become unable, without help, to get out of the country. They could not with honour or safety to themselves sacrifice that brave little Army, either by withholding from it the means of return, or by sending it on to fresh losses and risks, the avowed object for which had disappeared, and, indeed, had been proved not to have existed as a possibility. Whatever the natural condition of the Soudanese might be, ours was peace, and a heavy burden of proof rested upon those who would deprive us of it. How often were the aims of war as worthless as they were wicked! For example, war was not justifiable if made to save the places or restore the political reputation of Ministers guilty of a long course of violence and vacillation. Neither ought the forces of England to be used as a remedy to save from collapse the rotten speculations of a secret society of Semitic financiers and Levantine usurers. An unrighteous war would become the parent of other wars, and must corrupt the conscience of the nation. For, of aggregates as of individuals, Cowper's lines were true—

"Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,
And these reciprocally those again."

Their Lordships might have observed in the unfortunate occupiers of the Front Bench instances of that action and re-action of conduct and character on each other. There was a large mass of peaceful public opinion in the country that would be for ever grateful to their Lordships if they would prove their power and their will to interpose their protection between the people and those dangerous men who would inflict on it the horrors of war; and he would entreat all of them, even the Members of the Government, before it was too late, to deliberate, without passion or panic, as to what were the real duties and interests of their country.

Amendment *moved*,

To leave out from "That" to the end of the motion, and insert "an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her

Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should not employ British forces to occupy the Soudan or to prevent the exercise by the Egyptian people of their right to select their own government."—(*The Lord Wentworth.*)

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, in rising to follow the noble Marquess and the noble Lord I can assure your Lordships that I do so with great difficulty and diffidence. To follow the noble Marquess at any time is no easy task; but to follow him on this occasion, when Her Majesty's Government must admit at once that the efforts they have made to rescue General Gordon have failed, renders the task still more difficult. We deplore, I think I may even say, more than the noble Marquess opposite or any noble Lord in this House the fatal end which has come to the mission of General Gordon, and, before I endeavour to meet the observations of the noble Marquess, I would say one word to express my personal grief at his death. I had known him myself probably better than most; and in common with all who knew him I felt not only that admiration for his career which all of us feel, but an affection for the simplicity of his character and the charm of his manner which I shall ever preserve during my life. I would also express, in a word or two, the grief which I feel at the loss of officers and friends of my own, and I would mention particularly General Earle, as I am able to speak with perfect knowledge of his high soldierlike qualities, his great powers of administration and his devotion to his duty—a devotion in which he was not exceeded by any officer in the Army, and which undoubtedly would have enabled him to perform still greater services to his country than in the successful action in which he lost his life. I will not detain your Lordships by any further observations of this kind, though I should not omit to mention that the Navy has also its losses to deplore in the deaths of Lieutenants Pigott and de Lisle. My Lords, the noble Marquess has travelled over the history of many years, and, with his great power of language and his choice of epithets in describing the conduct of the Government, has gone back to the beginning of the whole of these transactions—the first beginning of Arabi's rebellion, and the event which the noble Marquess called, with elaborate inaccuracy, the bombardment of Alexandria. [*Opposition laughter.*] I repeat, with elaborate inaccuracy; because it is known to every man who has taken the trouble to examine into the circumstances of the case that the attack by Her Majesty's Forces upon the forts of Alexandria was conducted by my hon. and gallant Friend (Lord Alcester) in such a way that hardly a shot fell into the town, and the burning of Alexandria was caused by the forces of Arabi. The noble Marquess then went on to mention the unfortunate Expedition of General Hicks to the Soudan, the loss of Sinkat, and, indeed, all the transactions which have taken place since the beginning of the Egyptian troubles. In his reference to each of these the noble Marquess, in my opinion, was hardly accurate in the manner he dealt with them. For example, I will take the first—what ought the Government to have done to Arabi? The noble Marquess said that the moment we found Arabi was troublesome we ought to have exiled him from Egypt. How was it possible for Her Majesty's Government to have done anything of the kind? There is no man who ought to know that better than the noble Marquess. When the present Government succeeded to Office, the British Government was not in possession of complete power in that country. Then the noble Marquess went on to say that we should have sent an Army at the time of the attack on the forts of Alexandria; but he must himself recollect that our relations with the Powers in Europe were then such that it would have been impossible for this country by itself to send an Army—in point of fact, to invade Egypt. That was a course which I do not believe the noble Marquess himself, or anyone on the other side of the House, would at that time have recommended. My Lords, the noble Marquess criticized the Government for having, after the loss of the Army of General Hicks, issued a Proclamation making it known to the whole of the Soudan that, in their opinion, the Egyptian Government should abandon the possession of that country.

Well, he might consider that that was an injudicious proceeding; but that was certainly not the opinion of those who knew the country best, including General Gordon, who always contended that the main cause of the insurrection in the Soudan was the misgovernment by Egyptian officials, and therefore that it would be a policy which would be satisfactory to the people of the Soudan that they should be told that the Egyptian Government would cease in that country. The noble Marquess then, in very eloquent terms, denounced the Government for not having sent British troops to rescue the garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar before the Army of Baker Pasha was defeated at El Teb. It appears to me that the Government at that time had every reason to suppose that the Army of Baker Pasha would have been victorious over the Soudanese. [*Opposition laughter.*] Noble Lords may laugh—indeed, I should be inclined to laugh myself if I had never studied the particular details of the case. It is all very well to laugh now, and to suppose that the Egyptian troops at that time were believed to be unequal to resist the troops that fought against them. It has only been found, more or less, by gradual experience that these troops—those who went with Baker Pasha—were not perfectly capable of meeting the Soudanese. Those troops who went with General Baker, I happen to know, were some of the finest men in the Egyptian Army; they were as big as our Guards, and if they had only stood the attack of the Soudanese for a few minutes they would have had the victory. [*Opposition laughter.*] I do not understand the laughter of noble Lords opposite at the very terrible massacre of those men. ["Oh!"] I repeat, and history will prove it, that from the type of General Baker's troops we had every reason to believe that they would give a good account of the enemy they had to meet there. The noble Marquess says—Why did we not send assistance before Baker's troops were in danger? What was the reason of our sending the Expedition at all? It was not because of any pressure of public opinion, or any agitation in the newspapers, or anything of that sort. It was because of the generous instinct of an English Government desiring to rescue, if possible, two garrisons almost within gunshot of the sea shore that were in a position of great danger from the hordes that surrounded them. I say that on all these occasions the motives which the noble Marquess has attributed to the Government for their action are not deserved; and that when those occasions arose we did what we conceived to be our duty in order to meet the difficulties which confronted us. And now I come to the terms of the noble Marquess's Motion. He asks your Lordships to say that—

> "The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided counsels of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations."

I listened with attention to the noble Marquess's speech, in order to discover what ground he had for saying that the counsels of the Government were not decided in respect of the measures to be taken for the relief of General Gordon. I discovered that the noble Marquess differed entirely and completely from the view which the Government took from the very first on that matter; but I could not find anything in his speech to enable me to answer that part of his indictment. The noble Marquess, no doubt, however, endeavoured to prove that the Government had shown culpable delay in the commencement of the operations; and on that part of the Motion I will, with your Lordships' permission, say a few words. The noble Marquess here again went back rather far in his attacks on the Government. He went back to February and March of last year, and he quoted two telegrams to show that even at that time it was clear that General Gordon required to be supported by military force. Well, my Lords, there were telegrams from General Gordon about that time, making many suggestions, among others to the effect that Zebehr should be sent to Khartoum; that there should be a demonstration at Suakin; that some troops should be sent to Wady Halfa—

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: To Berber.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: And that some Egyptian troops should be sent to Wady Halfa. Many suggestions were made; but when the noble Marquess read those telegrams he did not go fairly into the matter, and did not read to your Lordships other telegrams which showed, at any rate, that at that time the Government had no reason to suppose that the force against General Gordon was really a very powerful force, or that he was in any real danger. For example, there were two telegrams received later than those which the noble Marquess quoted, because they served his case. In one of these Gordon put the force of the enemy round Khartoum at 1,500 or 2,000 men, amongst whom there were, perhaps, not 150 determined men. And again, in a telegram from Khartoum, dated April 1, General Gordon says—

> "I wish I could convey to you my impression of the truly trumpery nature of this revolt, which 500 determined men could put down."

I say, then, that at that time Her Majesty's Government had no reason to believe that General Gordon might not be able to give a good account himself of the opposition he had to face there; and, indeed, he was nearly doing so on several occasions. I simply state this to show that the telegrams read by the noble Marquess do not give a complete and accurate account of the circumstances of the case at that time. I will now go on to what happened in the month of May. The noble Marquess referred to the discussion which took place in the other House of Parliament at that time, and he read an extract from the speech of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington) on May 13, and he said that, although the Marquess of Hartington had said that the Government were pledged as soon as they saw the necessity to do their best to rescue General Gordon, nothing whatever was done for three or four months from that date. In making that statement I do not think the noble Marquess was fair to Her Majesty's Government. It is clear that there is a distinct difference between the preparations for a campaign and the actual military operations. From the very beginning of the mission of General Gordon to Khartoum the Government had been carefully considering the different measures with a view to sending a Force to Khartoum if that should become necessary; and when the necessity became more urgent in May those preparations—namely, the examination of the different routes and certain other preparations—took a more definite form. I need not detain your Lordships by describing the different routes by which Khartoum can be reached—the Massowah route, the Suakin-Berber route, and the Nile route. It may be readily understood that operations by any of these routes are very serious in a military point of view. The Government, having carefully considered all the difficulties as to all these different routes, came to the conclusion that the route by Massowah must be put on one side, and that the route from Suakin to Berber was the one that afforded the best prospects of success. That was about the month of April or May of last year. To make that route successful it would have been necessary to have constructed a railroad, because the supply of water was so small that it would have been impossible to march a large force along that route without the help of a railroad. On June 14, I think it was, certain preparations were made for the construction of a railway from Suakin. Engineers were sent there and a certain amount of plant, with the view of being prepared to enter upon the construction of a railroad as soon as the weather would enable troops to be sent to that place. Piers were made so as to facilitate the disembarkation of the materials for the railroad. But in order to make that railway it would have been necessary to have sent troops to Suakin, and to have so far obtained the mastery of the situation as to give security for the undertaking. At that time of year, during the months of May, June, and July, Suakin is probably the very worst place on the whole of that part of the Red Sea. It would not have done to have sent English troops at that time to Suakin to conduct operations of that sort. Therefore, all that was done was to make those preparations in June of last year. I have now to endeavour to explain the reasons why it was considered necessary, after full consultation, to alter the route from Suakin and Berber to the Nile. About the month of May the attention of the Government was more particularly directed to the Nile. There were some disturbances in Upper Egypt which necessitated the sending up of one or two battalions thither. A system of patrol of the Nile was established under Captain Bedford and other naval officers. A short time afterwards it was necessary to push on a portion of the Egyptian Army to Assouan and

Wady Halfa. It was about the month of June that news reached us of the fall of Berber. Now, that Berber should be in the possession of the enemy made an entire difference in the situation as to sending an Expedition from Suakin to Berber. There are 100 miles of desert, with only one well on the last stage to Berber. Then, at the last moment, came the position of the Mudir of Dongola. It was thought desirable to send Major Kitchener to the neighbourhood of Dongola. His reports were satisfactory. The Mudir of Dongola defeated the troops of the Mahdi; and we believed it probable that a small force of British troops in the neighbourhood of Dongola would check the progress of the Mahdi, and that Gordon might be able to join hands and bring the garrison of Khartoum away across the desert or by Shendy and Berber to Dongola. An officer of the Royal Navy (Captain Hammill) was sent at the end of May to the Second Cataract to survey the cataracts, with the view of sending steamers. It was said that until the month of August, when the Vote of Credit was taken and the troops actually in motion, no preparations were made to relieve Gordon. But we had been occupied in making those preparations which were necessary if the Government decided to carry on operations. I must ask your Lordships' attention to this—that whether the operations were to be from Suakin or by the Nile, there were two limits in point of time over which the Government had no control. It would not have been right to send a large English Force to Suakin during the worst months; and, secondly, we could not get steamers necessary for the transport by the Nile past the cataracts until the river rose, about the middle of August. And, as a matter of fact, I believe that all the steamers that could be got up, leaving a sufficient number to carry on communications below, were actually taken up during August and September, so that no time was lost in that respect. I mention these facts to show that it is not correct to say that no preparations were made for the purpose of acting when the Government came to the decision that action should be taken for the relief of General Gordon. The reason why the commencement of operations was delayed undoubtedly is this—the Government were most reluctant, and had been from the first, to involve English troops in an Expedition into the interior of Africa, and they hoped that circumstances might have arisen which would have enabled General Gordon to get the better of his antagonists and to come away from Khartoum with the Egyptian garrison of that place without the necessity of being assisted by British troops. I think that was a proper feeling on the part of Her Majesty's Government. We knew that when Gordon went to Khartoum he believed in his heart his mission was a pacific one, and that he would be able to execute his task without the support of British troops. I say distinctly Her Majesty's Government are not ashamed to confess that they were most reluctant to send an Expedition into the Soudan. I am not going to argue that if the Expedition had started earlier, or that if some other arrangement had been made, it might not have been successful. It is impossible for any man to prove that, any any more than to prove that if the arrangements had been in the hands of the noble Marquess his plans would have been successful. Some have entertained the view that success was impossible; but all I can say is that the Government arrived at these decisions with a full sense of their responsibility. Then the noble Marquess turned to the future policy of the Government in regard to the present position of the Soudan. I feel it far more profitable to examine that part of his speech which deals with the future. He says that the policy of abandoning the Soudan was dangerous to Egypt, and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire. He asked what was our policy, and he assumed that the Government had no policy whatever. Now, what are the circumstances of the case? The Government sent out an Expedition, which, unfortunately, failed just at the moment that we expected it to succeed, and when success was almost within our grasp. It then became necessary to consider and decide what orders should be given to Lord Wolseley with respect to the conduct of the Forces under him; and what the Government had to do was to give those orders to Lord Wolseley which he required in substitution for his first orders

—namely, to do his best to rescue General Gordon. Having that decision to take, I believe the decision we took deserves the approval of your Lordships. The decision was to inform Lord Wolseley that it was his duty to prevent the power of the Mahdi spreading into those Provinces which were undisturbed, in order that Egypt might be protected against any danger from the forces of the Mahdi, and that for that purpose it would be necessary to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. I entirely respect and admire the frank and gallant manner in which the noble Lord (Lord Wentworth), representing opinions, undoubtedly, at the present moment, not popular in this House, has proposed his Amendment. I respect those opinions, and regret that events have forced us to go into the Soudan. Do not let the noble Lord suppose that Her Majesty's Government are engaged in these operations with any desire or inclination for them, or for their deplorable consequences. The noble Lord says that orders should now be given to Lord Wolseley to retire with as much expedition as possible from the position he now occupies. There I venture to differ from him; for I think if such orders had been given they might have brought on a military disaster, and affected most seriously the safety and prosperity of Egypt. The obligations we have entered into in Egypt render it necessary that British Forces should protect that country, and, in a military point of view, retiring before the Mahdi would have endangered the safety of Egypt. Immediately on receipt of the news of the failure to relieve Khartoum Her Majesty's Government announced to Parliament the orders they had given to Lord Wolesley. What more does the noble Marquess want? Does he want Her Majesty's Government to say what is to be the future government of the Soudan? What means have we at present of saying what it shall be? When the Expedition left Cairo instructions were given to Lord Wolseley with respect to the government of the Soudan. Of course, the main part of these instructions were to rescue General Gordon; but certain instructions were given with regard to the future government of the Soudan, which, as they are very short, I will venture to read—

> "The Egyptian Government would be prepared to pay a reasonable subsidy to any Chief or number of Chiefs who would be sufficiently powerful to maintain order along the Valley of the Nile from Wady Halfa to Khartoum, and who would agree to the following conditions:—
>
> 1. To remain at peace with Egypt, and to repress any raids on Egyptian territory.
> 2. To encourage trade with Egypt.
> 3. To prevent and discourage by all possible means any expeditions for the sale of and capture of slaves.
>
> You are authorized to conclude any arrangements which fulfil these general conditions."

That appears to me to be a very clear expression of policy. A very able officer, Sir Charles Wilson, attached to Lord Wolseley's Staff, had instructions to assist him in carrying out this policy with respect to the future government of the Soudan. It would be his duty to find out what Chiefs there are, and on the conditions I have stated to put them in positions of authority. The Mudir of Dongola, who has distinguished himself very much as a courageous man, and who has a great reputation among Mohammedans, might, it was then thought, have been placed in authority at Dongola, and possibly also at Khartoum. Her Majesty's Government have as yet received no Report from Sir Charles Wilson as to those who might possibly, under certain circumstances, be placed as Rulers in that country. I maintain that Her Majesty's Government have explained that what they desire to see is a settled Government established in the Soudan, the best that can be arranged, and are even prepared to go so far as this—that some aid may be given by the Egyptian Government by way of subsidy in order to keep some hold over the good faith of those who may be appointed Rulers. The noble Marquess has very usually abstained from expressing any opinion himself as to what ought to be done. I do not remember in the whole course of these Egyptian debates so often brought on by him any occasion on which, however wise after the event, he ever gave Her Majesty's Government any advice as to what they ought to do. [*Laughter.*] Noble Lords opposite laughed; but I should like to ask them to mention any date on which any distinct and plain line of policy has been brought forward by the noble Marquess in respect of this Egyptian matter. There was only one occasion on which the noble Marquess went out of his way to express a decided opinion, and that was at the moment General Gordon arrived at Khartoum to damage him in the opinion of the country, by blaming him for his Proclamation with regard to slavery, and for his suggestion to send Zebehr Pasha to the Soudan. The present suggestion of the noble Marquess I understand to be that it would be desirable to place the Egyptian Government in the same position as before the war with respect to the Soudan. That is a proposal in which Her Majesty's Government cannot concur. How is it possible for the finances of Egypt to stand the cost of the administration of the Soudan? Does not the noble Marquess know that the cost of the Soudan has been one of the causes of the present financial difficulties? Does the noble Marquess believe that the Egyptian Government can again embark on a career of expenditure which will oblige them to borrow large sums of money without credit?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I recommended what the Earl of Dufferin recommended. I did not recommend the restitution of those parts of the Soudan to be governed by Egypt which were the cause of financial embarrassment.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: Does the noble Marquess not recollect that the Earl of Dufferin's recommendation was made before the defeat of Hicks Pasha? Does he think that the Earl of Dufferin would make the same recommendation now? It is very well for the noble Marquess to shelter himself behind the Earl of Dufferin's recommendation, made under different circumstances. As I have said, the recommendation would be contrary to the feeling of the people of the Soudan, and involve a drain on the finances of Egypt which they could not bear. Where are the troops to come from to carry out the administration of the Soudan? I can conceive of no recommendation which, under the present circumstances, is less likely to do good than that of the noble Marquess as to the policy he would have wished the Government to announce on the receipt of the news of General Gordon's death. The wording of the Motion of the noble Marquess was very remarkable. When a Motion was introduced in the other House of Parliament by the Leader of the Opposition in that House, it contained the somewhat vague recommendation—

> "That the Government should distinctly recognize and take decided measures to fulfil the responsibility incumbent upon them to secure a good and stable government in Egypt and those parts of the Soudan necessary for its security."

The words "to secure a good and stable government in the Soudan" faithfully interpreted the desire of Her Majesty's Government. Then there was a meeting of the Conservative Party the other day—I think it was Monday—[The Marquess of SALISBURY: Tuesday]—at which a rather curious thing happened. Some of those present made speeches against the Leader of the Conservative Party in the other House, on the ground that the words of his Resolution were not strong enough, and I believe that that is the explanation of the Resolution moved by the noble Marquess.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Earl is somewhat unfortunate in his dates; the Notice of the Resolution was given on Monday, and the meeting took place on Tuesday.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: Then I suppose that "coming events cast their shadows before;" but, at all events, it is not likely that speeches would have been made against one Leader of the Opposition without the other Leader knowing something about it beforehand. This, at all events, is clear—that this Resolution differs from that of the Leader in the other House. The noble Marquess, instead of saying that it is the duty of the Government to obtain a good and stable government for the Soudan, asks this House to say that the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan is dangerous to Egypt, and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire. That, as I understand it, is a very different thing. But what does it mean? It means that, in order to secure the safety of Egypt and the interests of the Empire, it is necessary that this country should hold part of the Soudan after the conclusion of the military operations; and the noble Marquess has said in his speech to-night that Egypt should hold part of the Soudan. That is a policy to which Her Majesty's Government cannot agree. We do not think that the circumstances of the present time justify any such policy, and that it might be dangerous to the interests of the country. The noble Marquess, in making the observations which he did, said some things with which I entirely agree. I agree that after the sacrifices which this country has had to bear in Egypt it is right that England should have a preponderating influence in Egypt. The noble Marquess discussed the danger and importance of the Mohammedan fanaticism which is extending to the Soudan. It is difficult for us, or for anyone, however much he may have been brought into contact with Eastern nations, to gauge the importance and value of that movement. For my own part, my opinion is that it is not to be estimated so highly as the noble Marquess has done. I do not think it is a "terrible danger." I do not deny that it is a danger and a power, and a danger and a power which we must meet; but I do not think that those who are really fanatics in that country are the majority, or are extraordinarily numerous. I think that they find it difficult to resist that wave of fanaticism; but the real fanatics are not the majority. I believe that these tribes of the Soudan are tribes who are ordinarily peaceful and industrious men, many of them interested in trade. I myself think, and hope, that this wave of fanaticism may subside as rapidly as it has risen. But I do not think that it is likely that it will be made to subside by the continuance of hostilities for any length of time, though it is necessary to show that we can hold our own. It may be by the influence of commerce and trade against fanaticism that we shall succeed, and I know of no better remedy than that. There is a great amount of commerce in that country, and many of the tribes are engaged in carrying goods from one part of the country to another. They are to some extent consumers of English and other products; and I hope that when matters are put on a better footing the influence of trade may destroy and defeat the influence of fanaticism. As to trade, my own personal opinion and feeling is that it is probable that this railway, which we have commenced for military reasons at Suakin, may have a beneficial result upon the difficulties that are now before us. As far as the Government are concerned, our policy is a clear one; we should hold our own in that country for the present, and arrange its government, so far as we are able, for the benefit and advantage of the people. I trust that other noble Lords who may follow the noble Marquess will not follow his example in attributing unworthy motives to Her Majesty's Government; but at least give us the credit of having endeavoured honestly to do our duty under the very difficult circumstances in which we have been placed.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON: The noble Earl who has just sat down has asked why my noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury) has not set out the details of a policy which Her Majesty's Government might follow with advantage. It is new to me to be told that it is the duty of a Leader of the Opposition in this House or the other to set out a policy for the guidance of those at the head of affairs. It is sufficient for us to point out where we think they have failed in the duties which have been imposed upon them, and to ask your Lordships to agree with us in that view. The noble Earl, in the latter part of his speech, wanted to know what my noble Friend behind me wished should happen at the conclusion of the military operations in the Soudan. As I understand, my noble Friend said that at the end of the military operations it was necessary that the Government set up should be supported until it had grown strong enough to stand by itself. Those, I think, are reasonable views, and ought to meet the approbation of your Lordships. There was another part of the speech of the noble Earl in which he complained of the tone of my noble Friend behind me in the first of the two propositions which he has put upon the Papers. My Lords, in the first part of the Resolution my noble Friend behind me asks the House to say that—

> "The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided counsels of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations."

But what does the noble Earl tell us? He has told us that they were, for many months, anxiously considering what to do. That does not look like decision. The noble Earl has proved conclusively everything the noble Marquess has said. He tells us that in April there was an idea of making a railway from Suakin to Berber, and the Government at first thought of adopting this proposition. In passing I may say that this course was proposed by a gallant friend of mine—one probably of the most promising officers in the Army—General Stephenson. General Stephenson thought the line from Suakin to Berber was the best, and for holding that opinion, and not agreeing to the line taken on the Nile, was superseded. And now at the last moment the Government come forward to tell us that what ought to be done is to make a railway from Suakin to Berber, the very thing which my gallant friend suggested in the first instance. The noble Lord says there was no indecision; but at the same time he tells us that they had been hoping from day to day that something might turn up, and therefore they had not come to any fixed resolution as to what should be done. And although General Gordon, in April, telegraphed stating the straits to which he was reduced, the Government were considering and consulting the Military Authorities from April to September before any step was taken for his relief. ["No."] Well, Lord Wolseley left this country on the 1st of September, and therefore I say it was from April to September that the Government were considering what was the best mode of acting in that country, and if that is not indecision then I do not know what the English language means. The conduct of the Government seems to be most inexplicable. With regard to the character of General Baker's Force which went to Suakin, I understand that they were taken in chains and compelled to go. The noble Lord says that if General Baker had had 500 able men he would have put down the rebellion; but the point is that he had 500 men who wished they were anywhere else than there. What would any military officer say if he had 500 men placed under his command who had been put under his authority by being taken up in chains? I wish now, my Lords, to go a little into the question of the general conduct of the Government since they have been in Office, and the want of decision they have shown not only in regard to Egyptian affairs, but in regard to the affairs of the whole Empire. It will be in your Lordship's recollection that the Prime Minister during the autumn made a vast number of speeches. He seems to take the opportunity of stopping at the various railway stations in the country to inform the people what his views are on every kind of subject. I find that in Edinburgh, on the 1st of September, he gave a description of the Government of the late Lord Beaconsfield, which I shall be able to show your Lordships before I sit down is much more applicable to the Government of which Mr. Gladstone himself is the Head. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "If I could have addressed the Government of Lord Beaconsfield, especially in its latest years, while Lord Salisbury was its Foreign Minister, I would truly have addressed it in the words of Tennyson—
>
> 'The children born of thee are fire and sword,
> Red ruin and the breaking up of laws.'
>
> Wherever their policy went spontaneous war, gratuitously provoked, waited on their footsteps, and law, on the other hand—I mean the highest of all law, European law—shrunk abased and despised."

Now, I think that the Members of Lord Beaconsfield's Government and those who supported his policy during the six years that that Cabinet existed have no reason to be ashamed of the comparison presented by that period with the period included in the present Government's tenure of power. My Lords, we left Europe in peace, and the country was honoured and respected by all the nations of the world. We steered the country through far greater difficulties and dangers than our Successors have had to deal with. We retained the friendship of all the Powers of Europe; we strengthened the position of this country in her Indian Empire. We were trusted by all the loyal Colonists in all parts of the globe, and, turning to domestic affairs, although I am bound to admit that there were some clouds which threatened in Ireland, yet we had the assurance of Mr. Gladstone that that country had not been in so satisfactory a condition for some years as when he took Office. What is the condition of the Empire now? When the present Ministry came into power one of their first-acts was an apology to a great and friendly State for an insult offered, needlessly, as I thought, and as many thought, by the Prime Minister. A little later we had to deplore the humiliating defeat at Majuba Hill. We have found as time has gone on that Ireland, instead of being in a more satisfactory condition, is at the present moment on the verge of a rebellion. They have tried the patience, though they cannot diminish the loyalty, of our Colonies. They have jeopardized India both in its internal and its external relations, and they have deluged the Soudan with the blood of our brave soldiers and with that of our warlike enemies, who, according to the Prime Minister, are merely fighting for their liberties. I say that the country has been brought into this critical situation by the weak and vacillating conduct of the Government both at home and abroad. I do not rest my charge against them on the opinion of this country, or on the general condemnation of their policy throughout the civilized world. I call Ministers themselves as my witnesses. With all deference to the Foreign Secretary, for whom privately I entertain the greatest respect, I think there is scarcely anyone in the Government, except himself, who is altogether satisfied with the condition of foreign affairs, or of our relations with Foreign Powers. I was very much struck with a passage contained in the Papers recently presented to us, which show the position that this country holds in the opinion of a very eminent man on the Continent. In a letter from Mr. Meade an account is given of a conversation which that gentleman had with Prince Bismarck on Colonial subjects. Prince Bismarck, in the course of that interview, observed that up to within a few years ago he had done everything he could to facilitate English policy in Egypt and elsewhere; but that for some time past he had been treated in a different manner by England, "whose action," he said, "did not accord with her professions." Can there be anything more humiliating for an Englishman than that Mr. Meade, our Agent, in giving information to our Foreign Secretary, should be able to say that Prince Bismarck was of opinion that England did not act up to her professions?

Earl GRANVILLE: What has this to do with the Resolution now before us?

The Duke of RICHMOND and GORDON: I am trying to show that the Cabinet has no policy upon any subject. I doubt, my Lords, very much whether anyone in the Cabinet, except the Colonial Secretary, is altogether satisfied with our position as regards our Colonial Possessions. It was a strange thing to happen in Africa that it should be necessary to send a Force from this country, not of our soldiers, but of volunteers, to restore order and re-establish our *prestige* in that quarter. I doubt whether anyone in the Government, except the First Lord of the Admiralty, is altogether satisfied with the condition of the Navy; and what I say is, that the weak and vacillating conduct which has characterized the Government in every Department has produced the existing state of things in Egypt. My Lords, I want to say one word more. I do not think that I shall find any Member of the Cabinet, in this House at all events, endorsing the opinions—the revolutionary and socialistic opinions—which have been put forward by certain Members of the Cabinet in the other House. I say that the Cabinet is divided, that they have no policy, that they cannot agree upon a policy; and my point is this—that they were from April to September trying to find a policy, but that their indecision prevented them from doing so. That indecision was caused because they are a divided Cabinet, and because no two Members of the Cabinet agree upon the same thing. Will any Member of the Cabinet say what is the policy in Egypt? I listened to the noble Lord, and failed altogether to find that there was any. I do not think that they can be satisfied with what is going on in that country. The noble Lord admitted that it was a very lamentable state of things, and that the loss of blood and treasure was such as everyone must deplore. The noble Lord said that the references to the bombardment of Alexandria were in the nature of an elaborate exaggeration; but I cannot see what difference there is between the bombardment of these forts and the bombardment of a city, when no precautions are taken for the subsequent protection of the citizens. It is certain that from the bombardment of Alexandria down to the time of the death of General Gordon there was no consistent action taken by Her Majesty's Government. They have destroyed the existing Government in Egypt. I fail to see what Government has been supplied in its place. We are told that there will be one, but we are not told how that Government is to be maintained. They ordered the abandonment of the Soudan, but at the same time they took no steps to relieve the garrisons by which it was retained. General Gordon was sent to the Soudan positively without any assistance at all except his own unexampled faith and valour, and he was left in Khartoum with three Englishmen. General Graham was also sent, but he was sent when it was too late to relieve the fortresses in the Eastern Soudan. He attacked and destroyed Osman Digna; but instead of following up this action, which might have tended to the relief of Khartoum and General Gordon, he was stopped altogether, and the General, having failed to relieve those fortresses, and having gained a signal victory over Osman Digma, retired. I believe that Osman Digna at the present moment is in the same position as that in which he was when vanquished; the only difference being that he is in larger numbers and in greater force. The Government resisted the appeals of General Gordon as long as he was able to make them. He was listened to, but nothing came of it. The gallant dash of Sir Herbert Stewart across the desert cost great loss of life and great expenditure of treasure; but what is our position now? We have a small Force scattered over a large portion of the desert, trying to concentrate upon some point where we may oppose the advance and resist the attack of the Madhi. The Madhi is now reinforced by the fall of Khartoum, and we have now despatched to that country the flower of our Army to endeavour to vanquish him. But, the flower of our Army having been sent to smash the Madhi, I know not what will happen when that operation has been performed. I think that we ought to know what is to take place, and what protection is to be given to the tribes who, trusting the promises of this country, have deserted a heartless tyrant, and who should not be left to the will and pleasure of those from whom they have deserted. My Lords, we have now occupied Egypt for three years, and it appears to me that the condition of that country now is worse than when we went there first. Is there any indication on the part of Her Majesty's Government that they are going to adopt any consistent or decided policy? Is there any idea expressed by them which would lead us to believe that they realize the great gravity of the situation, and that they have at last seen the impossibility of guiding the interests of this great country by the vacillating and weak counsels that have hitherto prevailed? I fear that we have no such intimation; and unless Her Majesty's Government rise above the paltry considerations of Party politics, whatever may be the fate of this Motion proposed by my noble Friend, whatever may be the successes which the Government may achieve by means of their mechanical majority in the other House of Parliament, I venture to predict that it will not be long before they are driven from the Offices they have discredited by the indignant voice of the nation they have betrayed.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he was surprised to hear the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) say that the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) had conclusively proved everything which the noble Marquess had brought forward. He listened attentively to the two speeches, and he thought the reasons which the noble Earl gave, and which induced the Government to select the Nile route as against the Suakin-Berber route, were conclusively put and ably argued. As he understood those arguments, they were that in the months of June and July it would have been impossible to send English troops to Suakin, that in the meantime British troops had been advanced up the Nile to the assistance of the Mudir of Dongola, and that it was desirable to protect them by conciliating the tribes and getting a friendly bulwark against the Mahdi's invasion. Those reasons were very conclusive to his mind, and did not bear upon the face of them the charge brought forward so recklessly against the Government that they had not done anything in this matter until September. The noble Duke remarked that he could not understand the difference between the bombardment of forts and the bombardment of a city. For his part, he considered that the bombardment of a town was an outrage against civilization, while the bombardment of forts was an act of war. The second part of the noble Marquess's Motion, which asserted that the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations would be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire, would, he thought, meet with a great deal of assent on the Ministerial side of the House. But the Government themselves appeared to be under somewhat of that impression, for British troops had during the whole of the past year occupied Suakin. He contended that the Government had been quite right in attempting, through General Gordon, to withdraw the garrisons from the Soudan by pacific means. It had, however, turned out a most unfortunate matter. A great deal had been said about the indecision of Her Majesty's Government; but the disasters were in great measure due to grievous bad luck. He should have been glad if pacific means had been adequate to quelling the Arab tribes; but he believed that they were not. This Arab movement was very widespread, and throughout all Mahommedan countries there were many prayers being offered up for the success of the Mahdi. It would, therefore, be very unwise to underrate the power of the Mahdi. He did not say that it was absolutely necessary to "smash" him, but it certainly was absolutely necessary to stop him. As a great nation ruling over a vast number of Mahommedans, we were bound to put down the Mahdi. The Government had been well advised in following the advice of General Gordon as to the Egyptian garrisons; but now that the insurrection had spread, they were wise in adopting the present military measures, which, he hoped, might lead to the establishment of such a Government in the Soudan as would secure order and give peace to the country. They were bound to defend those of the Mahommedans in Egypt who had stood by us throughout these operations, and they ought not to retire from the country until they had left there a Government which would protect those who had supported us in these difficult circumstances, and we ought not to hand these people over to a man who was nothing more than a barbarian and a cruel despot. The railway to Berber would bring incalculable advantages. If it were successfully completed, and Suakin held by this country, we should have an excellent opportunity of promoting the civilization and prosperity of the Soudan. He did not wish to defend everything that had been done; but it was very easy to prophesy disaster, and when disaster occurred to say, "I told you so." They must remember that, in dealing with these Oriental matters, they were dealing with a country which did not belong to them, and they were tied by arrangements with other Powers. There was no doubt that the circumstances of the time were very critical; but he believed that the policy of the country might be safely left in the hands of the present Government, and he intended to cordially support them.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY supported the Amendment, which, he said, meant the withdrawal of the British troops, and that no further military operations should be carried on beyond what were necessary to extricate our troops now in the Soudan. It had been objected to such a course, among other things, that the Indian Mussulmans would be excited by our retiring. But, in his opinion, there was no fear of that; they would be more excited by the continued purposeless slaughter of Arabs. The noble Lord who moved the Amendment had called it an unhallowed war, and the sole origin of it all was the bombardment of Alexandria, the authors of which ought to have been brought to judgment. It was said that we could not retire from the Soudan because of the consequences to those of its inhabitants who had been friendly to us. He thought the tribes were well able to take care of themselves; but he would take the case of the Mudir of Dongola, because that had been given as an instance by Sir Stafford Northcote. Whether the Mudir of Dongola could remain safely, or whether he should retire along with Lord Wolseley, was entirely a matter within the judgment and discretion of the Mudir of Dongola. He thought that he might have been compromised by the decoration delivered to him by Lord Wolseley, and, in his place, he would retire. As to military *prestige*, he thought that the credit of our troops had never stood higher than it did now; and our *prestige* had been amply maintained by Lord Charles Beresford's exploit in repairing his boiler under fire. He deprecated further military operations in the Soduan, on the ground of its climate; there was nothing like it in India. That afternoon, a writer professing to be a competent authority had made light of this deadly climate, and said that the unwholesome nature of the water could be remedied by boiling the water before drinking it. But how, he would ask, was it possible to boil the water for a whole army? As to the railway from Suakin to Berber, its construction had been advocated by many who would be glad to see it made by the Government, in order to buy it cheap when constructed. But its construction would lead to its protection by this country for an indefinite time. Those who knew what the climate of the Soudan was said that the rains would very shortly come, and, after that, the troops would all be down with fever. Then, again, it was said that the Government ought to establish a stable Government in the Soudan. How could they do so, when they had not yet been able to establish a Government in Egypt Proper? The Government could not point to a single reform that they had introduced into Egypt. He wished, before he sat down, to ask the Government why they had induced the Italian Government to occupy Massowah, or why they had not dissuaded them from doing so? In his opinion, by so doing they were alienating the Turks and violating the rights of the Sultan, and in abandoning our ancient alliance with the Ottoman Empire, they were acting like the dog of the fable who abandoned the substance for the shadow.

LORD BRABOURNE said, if everyone who was compromised in this matter were to retire he was afraid that the political life of Her Majesty's Government would be of short duration. Neither could he agree with the last speaker that the Italian soldiers could be of little use to us. No braver soldiers were to be found; and he heartily rejoiced that Italy, for whom England had so often felt warm sympathy, now, in the hour of England's necessity, returned that sympathy, and that the Italian soldiers, who had fought bravely by our side in the Crimean war, were again ready to become our loyal allies. He would frankly own that it was with very considerable regret that he recognized the necessity of the Motion made by the noble Marquess. At a time when the position of public affairs was very critical, he should, indeed, have rejoiced if it had been possible for Great Britain to have presented to the world the spectacle of a firm and strong Government and a united Parliament; and he ventured to think that the people of England and Scotland and the loyal population of Ireland cared little what political Party held the reins of power in comparison with the strong desire they had that the honour of their country should be maintained, and her obligations duly discharged. Therefore, he held it to be the paramount duty of every man to support the Queen's Government, as such, provided he could find reasonable cause for the belief that in giving that support he would be able to secure the objects which the country so ardently desired. He (Lord Brabourne), if he could cherish such a belief, would be ready to forego—or, at least, to postpone—criticism upon the past. He would deprecate attack in the present, and would look with renewed hope to the future. But, unhappily, whilst the conduct of Her Majesty's Government constantly tempted criticism and invited attack, their feeble utterances seemed to exclude that hope which alone could justify abstention from one or the other. He would not weary their Lordships with long extracts from Blue Books or Parliamentary Papers. The issues before them were not such as could be decided by references to this or that speech, to this mistake or that inconsistency. It seemed to him that the issues in the present debate were of a broader and simpler character. The question which he asked himself was this—Had Her Majesty's Government from first to last had any clear and definite policy with regard to Egyptian affairs; or, if so, had they taken wise, reasonable, fair, and adequate measures to insure the success of their policy? It was impossible to look back at the history of Egyptian affairs without seeing that from first to last their policy had been conspicuous by its absence. They had gone upon a policy of drift and dawdle; they had dawdled on in the hope that something would turn up. The complaint he had to make was that, whereas they had adopted this drifting and dawdling course, the country had a right to expect that Her Majesty's Advisers would have shown some little foresight and sagacity, and an intelligible line of action in dealing with such a problem. The truth was, that when the present Government came into Office they had only one defined and certain principle upon which they were agreed—namely, that everything done by their Predecessors was wrong, and affairs both at home and abroad profoundly unsatisfactory. One exception, indeed, he must in justice make, and of that he had been reminded by the speech of the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon). Mr. Gladstone, in his famous Mid Lothian campaign, had certainly stated that the condition of Ireland was satisfactory. It must, however, be remembered that in his more recent campaign in Scotland, the Prime Minister had admitted that he had made this statement in contradiction to Lord Beaconsfield's announcement to the contrary—when, in fact, he knew nothing about it; for he had been so much occupied in picking holes in Lord Beaconsfield's foreign policy, that he had been unable to pay any attention to Ireland. So far as Egypt was concerned, however, the Government had commenced their career by attributing everything that went wrong to their Predecessors, and especially to that "Dual Control," which was described as the child of the wicked Lord Salisbury. Here, however, an exception must also be made in the Prime Minister's favour; for, speaking at Leeds in October, 1881, he had stated that although there might be risks in the Dual Control, he wished to give the credit which was due to those who had gone before him, that the joint intervention of France and England had been beneficial to Egypt, and that he had not the least reason to doubt that they would be able to maintain a thoroughly united action. But for the rest of his Colleagues and supporters, they seemed to have "Dual Control" on the brain, and everything that went wrong was attributed to this act of their Predecessors. At last, however, the country grew sick of this excuse, for it was obvious to everyone that at some period or other in their existence a Government must itself be responsible for the consequences of its own acts. He (Lord Brabourne) had been wrong in saying that the Government had only been agreed upon one principle. They had been united upon another, and it was that of continually shifting their own responsibilities on to the shoulders of somebody else. They had deprived the Egyptian Government from the first of all power and responsibility, and yet they continually shifted responsibility on to the shoulders of the Egyptian Government, apparently desiring to keep for themselves the power without the responsibility, whilst they left to the Egyptian Government the responsibility without the power. In the same way they shifted responsibility on to Gordon; and after reading the recent Papers, and listening to the halting utterances of the Foreign Secretary on the first night of the Session, he could not help fancying that there was a latent intention that responsibility should be thrown on Lord Wolseley. It could not be too strictly laid down that whilst it was undoubtedly right and wise to leave to a General in command the widest discretion as to his strategical movements, it was the Government, and the Government alone, which must be held responsible for their policy. The excuse put forward by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Huntly), that the Government had had grievous bad luck, was the poorest that had ever been offered to Parliament. It was the excuse of the ruined gamester. The complaint he made, and he ventured to say that it was a complaint which would be re-echoed throughout the country, was this—that instead of their having adopted a policy of drifting and dawdling, they ought, as public men, to have accepted the high responsibility which attached to Members of Her Majesty's Government, and should have exhibited some little foresight, some little sagacity, some clear and definite plan in dealing with Egyptian affairs. They had sacrificed many valuable lives, and had shed the blood not only of their enemies, but of their own countrymen. In a single sentence he dismissed the idea that they could withdraw from the Soudan in the way suggested by his noble Friend who moved the Amendment. If they withdrew, there would be, first, the destruction of all persons who had shown any friendliness towards ourselves, and in that attempt to promote peace they would probably produce and promote an amount of war and bloodshed which could hardly be contemplated by the noble Lord (Lord Wentworth). He could not hesitate to condemn the policy of the Government, not only for its results, but because he was afraid if it was not checked by the action of the British

Parliament a similar policy might continue, and similar and even greater disasters might occur. And now let him (Lord Brabourne) say something of General Gordon and his mission. It had been alleged, as if it was some excuse for the Government, that General Gordon had volunteered his services. No doubt, General Gordon had done that which British soldiers had often done before, and would always be ready to do—he had expressed his readiness to be of service to his country. But General Gordon had actually started on his way to the Congo, on behalf of the King of the Belgians, when he was summoned to London by a telegram from the Government. Now, why was General Gordon sent out? Because our Government had forced the Egyptian Government to consent to the evacuation of the Soudan, and in honour they could do no less than send out a British officer of rank to assist in that evacuation. He blushed to think that any Minister could suggest that General Gordon had exceeded his instructions in endeavouring to obtain order and good government for the Soudan. He denied emphatically that Gordon had in one iota exceeded his instructions. The whole life of General Gordon was a life of obedience to orders and of self-devotion; and the suggestion would fall to the ground at once if reference was made to the instructions themselves. On the 14th of February, Mr. Gladstone, in answer to a Question put by Lord Randolph Churchill, said—

> "The direct action and direct functions in which General Gordon was immediately connected with this Government are, I think, pretty much absorbed in the greater duties of the large mission which he has undertaken under the immediate authority of the Egyptian Government, with the full moral and political responsibility of the British Government."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 893.)

And here are the instructions of the Egyptian Government—

> "We trust that your Excellency will adopt the most effective measures for the accomplishment of your mission in this respect, and that after completing the evacuation you will take the necessary steps for establishing an organized government in the different provinces of the Soudan, for the maintenance of order and the cessation of all disasters and incitements to revolt."

But what did the Government do when they had got General Gordon in the Soudan? They refused him every request he made. Take his demand for Zebehr Pasha. It was not his (Lord Brabourne's) business to defend the noble Marquess for anything he might have said or left unsaid in this matter. But here were the facts. General Gordon asked that Zebehr Pasha should be sent as a necessity under the circumstances. Why? Because Zebehr was a native of the place, and had local influence which could be used against the Mahdi. It was said that he must not be sent because he was a slave-hunter, and the reputation of England would be compromised. General Gordon may have thought that this danger ought to be run in order to avert more serious and more real disasters. What reason did the Prime Minister give for having refused the request for Zebehr?—

> "Because within 48 hours an Address to the Crown from Parliament would have paralyzed our efforts."

That was an unworthy reason. If the Government did not trust General Gordon, why did they employ him? If they employed him, why did they not trust him? His demand for Zebehr was either right or wrong, and if they trusted him and desired to grant his demand, they should have boldly done so and justified their conduct before Parliament, let its decision be what it might. Take another instance of the indecision of the Government. Referring to Lord Hartington's speech on 13th of May, Mr. Gladstone, upon the 5th of August, repeated the statement in that speech that—

> "An Expedition for the relief of General Gordon would not be justified for the purpose of enabling General Gordon to smash or overpower the Mahdi, nor for the purpose of giving a satisfactory government to the inhabitants of the Soudan."—(3 *Hansard*, [291] 1758.)

So long ago as the 27th of February, General Gordon had telegraphed—"If Egypt is to be quiet, Mahdi must be smashed up," and had warned the Government that if this was not done, then they would have to do it later at a vastly increased sacrifice. And now, when their delay in taking General Gordon's advice had brought so much misfortune upon us, the Prime Minister, in this very week, speaks of the

> "Resolution of the Government to employ the forces of Her Majesty's Government to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum."

They were going to do now, at an enormous cost, that which a little foresight and energy would have enabled them, a year ago, to do with comparative ease. It had been said, though not in their Lordships' House, that whatever offences of delay might have been committed by the Government had been known to the House of Commons last May, and had then been condoned by their rejection of a Vote of Censure. He (Lord Brabourne) protested against any such doctrine. Neither House was estopped or debarred from a Vote of Censure to-day by what had occurred last May. At that time many men, hoping against hope that the policy of the Government might still succeed, had been reluctant to sever political ties, and to displace the Government at a critical time. But it might well happen that such men might change their minds, when they found how their hopes had been disappointed and the policy of the Government had failed. Their Lordships must not be deceived by those who would have them to believe that we were fighting against a people struggling to be free; the people struggling to be free were those whom the Mahdi attacked and attempted to enslave. If they read General Gordon's despatches they would see that two-thirds of the Soudanese by no means desired the Mahdi; and the people were being slaughtered by the Mahdi owing to the negligence of the Government. All the expectations of the Government had been falsified by the result; and all the prophecies of the Opposition had become true. Nor was it the Opposition alone which condemned the Government policy. Let their Lordships listen to a friendly description—

> "Mr. Gladstone wishes strongly, but wills feebly, and he allows himself to drift here and there at the mercy of circumstances. His Egyptian and Soudanese policy has always been to tide over difficulties by some temporary expedient, instead of meeting them boldly, and he mistakes a Parliamentary victory for statesmanship."

These were not the words of any Tory, nor even of one of the abhorred occupants of the Cross Benches, but they appeared in a newspaper of yesterday's date, the proprietor and editor of which was that notorious Radical, Mr. Labouchere, one of the great supporters of the Prime Minister. The question then arose, What course should they pursue? For his part he could not hesitate. He should vote for the Motion. He well knew what would be the result in their Lordships' House. They would return the same verdict which would be given by any other body of intelligent and impartial Englishmen. Possibly, indeed, a different verdict might be given in "another place." Their Lordships as yet did not tremble beneath the despotism of a political organization which visited independent thought and action with a ruthless ostracism. But behind their Lorships' House, and behind the House of Commons, there was another tribunal to whom the final appeal must be made. The final appeal would ere long be made to the people in their constituencies. He (Lord Brabourne) wondered with what cry Her Majesty's Ministers would face the constituencies. It could not be the good old Liberal cry of "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform." With regard to Reform, indeed, they would probably seek to monopolize the credit of that extended franchise which had been freely conceded by men of all political Parties. But Peace! Since their accession to Office they had given us nothing but war. And Retrenchment, and the reduction of taxation which we had been so boldly promised, had passed from us like an idle dream. He feared the Prime Minister would hardly venture upon another manifesto with a promise to repeal the Income Tax! Would they try to conjure once more with the name of Gladstone? Another name would be uppermost in the hearts of the people. The name of Gordon would not yet have been forgotten. The people of England would remember how the Government eagerly made use of his heroic qualities behind which to shelter themselves in their hour of political necessity—how they sent him forth into the wilderness with the burden of their sins and their failures upon him; how with empty phrases and hollow words here at home they praised his courage and sagacity at the very moment that they were rendering the one of no avail by refusing every request and every suggestion dictated by the other. Aye, and they would remember something more. They would remember how the Government sought to shift their responsibility on to the hero's shoulders by the miserable excuse that he had exceeded his instructions; how they refused him succour, and drifted and dawdled until it was too late; and how, at last, they left that great patriot to perish, and to perish with the bitter reflection that he owed his death, not so much to the savage hordes by whom he was encompassed, as to the delay and neglect of those who governed his own country. And why was all this? Not because Her Majesty's Ministers were not as good patriots as any of us—not because they did not know what was necessary to be done, and were not willing to do it; but because, from first to last, they had been tied and bound by the exigencies of their political position—because it was a dire necessity to them to keep united that mixed multitude of politicians which sustained them in Office, and because they dared not, by prompt and vigorous action, offend and alienate that section of their Party who objected to any action at all. He said boldly that Gordon had been sacrificed to the political necessities of a feeble Government; and if Englishmen were Englishmen still, if there was any of the spirit of the old race still left, if virtue was not dead, and patriotism was not extinct among them, the result of an appeal to the constituencies would be to drive from Office and relegate to private life the men who for five weary years had misrepresented the people abroad and misgoverned them at home, without a policy and without a principle!

LORD THURLOW said, he had listened with great attention to every word that fell from the noble Marquess in moving his Resolutions, in a speech worthy of the occasion and of his great powers, but which it appeared to him might be all summed up in the trite remark that it was easy to be wise after the event. Let them examine for a moment the Resolutions of the noble Marquess. First of all, the noble Marquess attributed failure of the Soudan Expedition to the undecided counsels of the Government and to culpable delay in commencing military operations. Now, of all the charges in the world vacillation was the one that could least be substantiated against the Government. If they erred it was by too obstinate an adherence to the fixed policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of Egypt, and especially of the Soudan, so long as that could be actually avoided, and it was only when the absolute necessity arose that they departed from the prescribed line of action; but although they even then did so with reluctance, it was impossible to deny that they did so with vigour. Then as to the culpable delay in commencing military operations. Of course there was delay, and of course there were hopes entertained till the last moment that military measures would not be required. It was the custom of civilized nations to exhaust the resources of diplomacy before making appeal to the final arbitrament of the sword. Of course there was hesitation to send an army into the desert. Those who had seen the desolate shores of the Red Sea, the fever-smitten banks of the Nile, and the boundless, pitiless, and shifting sands of the desert, sympathized with hesitation in sending fair-haired armies of Anglo-Saxons into those inhospitable regions. The noble Marquess might not have hesitated, and especially in the cool shade and irresponsible freedom of Opposition he would not appear to have been a prey to any hesitation; but for those who were responsible for the decision and the result, who had to draw the route and sign the cheques, they naturally, and very properly, hesitated before committing the country to this vast expense and the regiments employed to such hardships and privation. Had they not hesitated they would have been unworthy to hold the reins of power. Secondly, the noble Marquess said the policy of abandoning the Soudan after military operations was dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire. Did the noble Marquess see no danger to the Empire in our remaining in the Soudan after the close of military operations? A Government must consider many things—it must look beyond the geographical limits of any one country. It could not always only consider what it would like to do. It had to consider what it was possible for it to do in the circumstances; next it had to consider what was politic, and then it had to consider what was honest. The Foreign Office and the India Office knew how all the Powers of Europe and the two Americas watched our proceedings. They knew how infectious a thing a high-handed and annexationist policy was, and although he or many others might regret not founding after military operations a magnificent Colony in the Soudan to grow cotton and corn and oil and wine, and to become a first-class market for our home manufactures, yet they must remember what was possible, what was politic, and what was honest. Then let them consider for a moment the military position. The campaign was not yet over; it had, indeed, only just begun, and it was too early to judge it. When the campaign was first decided upon what did the Government do? Whom did they consult? They consulted the one man in England most competent to give them good advice—they consulted the same high authority, who, had he been in Office, the noble Marquess himself would probably have consulted—namely, Lord Wolseley. He gave them his advice. Others, it appeared, tendered different advice; the Government naturally followed Lord Wolseley's. Would the noble Marquess have done otherwise? It was true the first object of the campaign—the rescue of that heroic man, General Gordon—had not been attained, and all concurred that that was deplorable. He endorsed the word "deplorable" used by the noble Marquess in this connection—but the Papers presented to Parliament showed that this first object—the rescue of General Gordon—had been for a long time past impossible. They now knew that for a long time past the Mahdi had held Khartoum in the hollow of his hand—that he had played with it as a cat with a mouse. But the ultimate aim of the campaign was not jeopardized, nor for one moment doubtful. Let them calmly consider what had happened. They had lost two able Commanders and some brave men. They could not have campaigns without casualties — wars, like revolutions, were not made of rose-water. But if they had no campaigns they would have no Generals, and he was one of those who believed that the demand would always produce the supply both of able Commanders and of brave men in the ranks of the British Army. People forgot that peace had its victims as well as war—that the barrack square was reponsible for more deaths than the field of battle; only the former passed unheeded, while the latter, being more glorious, were telegraphed all over the world. Nothing was more remarkable, in his opinion, than the gross exaggeration that had become habitual with us in forming an estimate of current events. People compared this Expedition with the Crimean War and with the Indian Mutiny. To do so was to lose all sense of proportion. Then people conjured up theories of widespread revolt in India and elsewhere. Nothing could be more false. He knew India pretty well, and he knew there was no unrest in the Native mind there now. The Natives of India were loyal, from the Nizam, the Maharajahs Scindiah and Holkar, downwards to the poorest ryot of Bengal or rajpoot of Central India, and were occupied in following the arts of peace, in making railways and other things. Either the noble Marquess believed in the existence of a national crisis and in its gravity, or he did not. For his own part, he did not think that the noble Marquess did believe in its existence. The noble Marquess was made of sterner stuff than to be led away by all the sentimental nonsense of the day; he knew armies were not made only for the parade ground But still the noble Marquess wàs in a cleft stick. He either believed in the gravity of the crisis or he did not. If he did, he might do worse than follow the patriotic practice of former days, when Her Majesty's Opposition, in a national crisis, considered it a duty rather to strengthen than to weaken the hands of the Executive. The historian had told them of a time when "none was for a Party, but all were for the State." Unfortunately, that was a long time ago, and things had not improved since then. But possibly the noble Marquess did not believe in the gravity of the crisis after all; and in that case he would only say that the Resolutions were drawn with his accustomed skill and ingenuity, and proceeded on the well-known tactics of endeavouring to make others believe what he did not believe himself. He would say no more than to express his conviction that the end of the campaign would fully justify the course taken by the Government, and his belief that the country retained undiminished and unwavering confidence in the Government of Mr. Gladstone and in the generalship of Lord Wolseley.

The Earl of JERSEY said, he thought the noble Lord (Lord Thurlow) had made a new departure that night, and had hinted that there was another object for the Expedition besides the relief of General Gordon. In his (the Earl of Jersey's) opinion, if the Government were to retain the confidence of the country they would have to show a far more decided front than they had done. The language of the Motion did not criticize the conduct of the campaign, but the policy of Her Majesty's Government. They found fault with the Government that, having been warned in February last year of the great danger in which General Gordon was placed, they had taken no steps till August. It was high time that the policy of the Government should be tried by its results. In the past they had succeeded in nothing, and the future only seemed to point to a vindictive Expedition, followed by a hasty evacuation. History could show nothing that could equal the baseness and weakness with which General Gordon had been treated. In March, Sir Evelyn Baring had pointed out General Gordon's peril, and yet nothing was done till August. He wished to have an explanation from the Government as to how long a time the construction of the proposed railway from Suakin to Berber was likely to take, and what was to become of the line when the Soudan had been evacuated. He denied that a substantial beginning had been made in the introdution of representative institutions into Egypt, as alleged by the Prime Minister. The policy of the Government had, he urged, been one of waiting on events, and then of revenging themselves upon somebody whenever they had failed in consequence of their own indecision and vacillation. When they had failed to relieve Sinkat and Tokar, they revenged themselves upon Osman Digna; and now that they had failed to rescue General Gordon, they proposed to "smash" the Mahdi. If they were determined to evacuate Egypt, according to their repeated declarations, on what ground did the Government justify their interference there during the last three years? If, as he contended, England had important interests in Egypt, how were they to be secured by our abandoning that country? Four-fifths of the trade that passed through the Suez Canal was British; and it was of the greatest importance that the Canal should be so guarded that no other Power would be able to use it in a hostile manner towards us. Whoever was master in Egypt must be master of the Suez Canal; and it was our imperative duty to see that no other country had control of the latter. It was for that purpose we went to Egypt, and for it we must remain there. They really required to have what noble Lords opposite so much disliked, a scientific frontier; and whether the line was drawn at Khartoum, Berber, or any other place, they must fix that as the limit of Egypt which they would defend against the Mahdi or any other Arab invader. They must also direct and control the Government of Egypt, and, without any offence to other Powers, let it be clearly understood that they intended to remain in Egypt for good. The future of Egypt was in the hands of this country, and for that reason he was glad that this Resolution had been proposed. The Government were alienating the goodwill of that great German Empire with which they ought to be in friendly alliance; there was now also a gloomy shadow over the frontier of Afghanistan, which was not likely to be dispelled by such a half-hearted policy as that which had been pursued in Egypt; and he, therefore, thought that their Lordships' House would fail in its duty if it did not raise a warning voice against a system which had tarnished the honour and threatened to impair the strength of the Empire.

VISCOUNT BURY said, it appeared to him that the Government were not ready to vindicate their policy. He wished to call attention to the emptiness of the Benches on the Government side of the House. If the Government had a good cause there was reason to suppose that those Benches would not have presented that empty and ridiculous appearance which they now showed. One after another noble Lords on his own side of the House had risen to deliver their opinions as to what the Government had done in Egypt, their sins of omission and commission, but hardly a noble Lord rose from the Ministerial side to respond; and the question was going entirely by default. He hoped by-and-bye that their Lordships would have some light thrown on the question from the Ministerial side; at present he had nothing to do but thrice to slay the slain. Nothing which had been said by his noble Friends in the previous course of the debate had been contradicted by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty in his defence of the Government. It seemed to him that the noble Lord spoke in very halting phrases, and made a very lame defence indeed. From the beginning of this Egyptian matter it seemed to him that the policy of Her Majesty's Government had been well described as a policy of alternate abandonment and hurry. Sometimes the Government were hurrying to action, and anon they were retracing their steps. After the bombardment of Alexandria, and even up to the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, they advanced gaily enough; but after that time the Government appeared to have thought that in handing over the crippled resources of Egypt to a Khedive, who was only nominally a Ruler, they sheltered themselves from responsibility; by merely declaring that they had no responsibility, they thought that they avoided the reality of that responsibility. During all that time, however, the country had known well on whom the responsibility rested. When General Hicks went into the Southern Soudan, Her Majesty's Government would not give him even the semblance of advice. They said that they avoided even advice on the matter. General Hicks went forward and met his doom like a man and a British soldier; but his doom lay at the door of Her Majesty's Government, who could give no decided opinion. They had the power of preventing that Expedition if they had chosen, and if they really believed, as they said they did, that Egypt ought to give up the Soudan. But the fiction of Khedivial responsibility was kept up, and it was even now being maintained, although all Europe knew now that it was a great pretence and a farce. In January, 1884, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs made a great change of front, and said that the Red Sea littoral was to be handed over to the Turkish troops. He also said that Khartoum not only ought to be surrendered, but that it must be surrendered. The Government threw off the flimsy disguise of Khedivial responsibility, and assumed for a moment the real responsibility which must be left on the shoulders of the Government. At this time General Gordon went out to the Soudan. And at this time the garrison of Sinkat fell. That massacre took place unavenged. It was not until too late that the Government awoke to their responsibility in this matter, and that they thought of sending out an Expedition. General Graham was ordered out to Suakin. Why was he ordered out? Was it not that the Government felt that the indignation of the English people was so great that unless something was done, not only the garrison of Sinkat, but the Government of Her Majesty, would be sacrificed? If that was not the reason, why did General Graham go out? It was true that General Graham won two great victories; but he was stopped in the mid career of victory; and those victories were changed from real victories for the British arms to unjustified massacres by the fact that they were utterly objectless. Gordon, having arrived at Khartoum, wrote on February 27 stating that the power of the Mahdi must be destroyed. "It is easy now," he said; "but it will be difficult hereafter." This warning of General Gordon was not followed up till August. The noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty tried to make out that there was no delay on the part of the Government. Mr. Gladstone said that the whole of the time between February 27 and when the Expedition went out at the end of August was employed in making preparations for the Expedition; but he left their Lordships to judge whether there was any solid foundation for such a statement as that. How could it be said that all the time between February and August was taken up in organizing an Expedition of the character that ultimately went out? The battle of El Teb was fought in February; and on the 3rd of March General Gordon wrote—

> "If I could be mean enough to try to escape I should be unable to do so."

Yet it was even now asserted by Ministers that it was open to General Gordon to escape at any time if he had chosen to do so; and they insinuated that if he did not do so, it was because of his own obstinacy.

Earl GRANVILLE: Who said that?

Viscount BURY: Mr. Gladstone.

Earl GRANVILLE: Certainly not.

Viscount BURY said, he did not attribute the use of the word obstinacy to the Prime Minister; but that was the fair inference to be drawn from his observations. The telegram from General Gordon which he had just quoted showed that General Gordon could not have escaped even if he had wished to do so. On the 16th of March last Sir Evelyn Baring, telegraphing home, said that the Suakin-Berber road must be opened. That was the first mention made of this route. It was then fully discussed, and referred to the military advisers of the Cabinet. Sir Frederick Stephenson, one of the ablest and truest soldiers that ever served England, strongly advocated the Suakin-Berber route, and gave his reasons for preferring it to the Nile Valley route. He did not complain of the Government deciding on the Nile Valley route; but he did think that since General Stephenson was superseded on the avowed ground that he preferred the Suakin-Berber route and could not be asked to assist in carrying out the Expedition up the Nile Valley, it was at least due to that gallant officer, now that the Government had at last decided on opening up the Suakin-Berber route, that some mention should be made in the House of the fact that he was the first to propose it. On the 3rd of April Lord Hartington, in the face of repeated applications from General Gordon, stated that he did not know that General Gordon wished for any troops. Yet on the 4th of April General Gordon wrote that all was up with him; that he was surrounded, and that if God did not protect him there was no one else to do so. From that date to the 19th there was a veil over the state of affairs at Khartoum. But on that day a message came to a friend of General Gordon's in England saying he was "hemmed in." Two days after, when the matter came before Parliament, Mr. Gladstone proceeded to explain what he understood by being "hemmed in," and drew a distinction between that and the town being surrounded. It was a few days before this—on the 16th of April—that General Gordon wrote those memorable words in which he said he would leave to the Government the "indeliable disgrace" of deserting the garrisons. There were also two letters—one on the 19th and the other on the 16th — which showed the idea which he entertained of his cruel abandonment by Her Majesty's Government. On the 23rd of April the noble Earl opposite sent a despatch to Mr. Egerton for transmission, in which, referring to General Gordon, he said—

> "We do not propose to supply him with Turkish or any other forces for the purpose of a military expedition, such being beyond the scope of the commission he holds and at variance with the pacific nature of his mission, and if with this knowledge he continues at Khartoum he should state the cause of his intention of so doing."

That was a distinct intimation that the Government intended to abandon General Gordon. On the 23rd of April Berber was closely invested, and on the 24th April Her Majesty's Government declared that there was no risk at Berber. That had been stated by the First Lord of the Treasury. He had said "Berber is in no danger." Soon afterwards Berber shared the fate of Sinkat, and 5,000 men were sacrificed, with the noble Commander of that place. Just at that time a debate took place in the House of Commons, in the course of which Sir Charles W. Dilke declared that the Government would send aid to General Gordon when they thought it advisable, and would not be hurried by any number of debates on Votes of Censure. They had been applied to in February for relief. They sent out in August. And this very fact showed that they had been culpably negligent. He did not for a moment say that the Relief Expedition was not hurried forward with all despatch; neither did he say that it was not successful so far as it had gone. Far be it from him, too, to say that the noble soldiers had not thoroughly well done their duty. One might find fault with the officials who planned the Expedition; but everyone who did so should make it distinct and clear that he did not include those who were under orders to go and so nobly went. The doings of Her Majesty's troops in the Expedition were beyond all praise, and demanded no praise from him, as their fame had been sung in one universal pœan. The fact, however, now remained that they were in a very dangerous position; but he would not go deeply into military details, but would merely point out that by the *laches* of Her Majesty's Government in not establishing in the early part of last year the Suakin-Berber road, the troops were now without any available base, far away to the North down the Nile. It must be difficult for them, in the present state of the Nile, to bring their provisions and supplies from their base to the forward position in which Lord Wolseley now found himself. The fact was that, like everything else that had been done, the Suakin-Berber road had been adopted too late. No greater authority on the subject of railway construction in the East existed than Sir Richard Temple, who, in February of last year, had drawn up a Memorandum on that road, in which he said that by taking an average of the time occupied in the construction of Indian military roads, it might easily be determined how long it would take to construct such a road and how much it would cost; and he said that if it were then begun—that was in February last year—and pushed on with full power and full command of money, it might be ready in nine months. The road was 280 miles in length, and the daily average of work could hardly be put down at more than a mile, and at that rate the road would be ready in nine months from this time. He even thought a few months might be added to that to allow for delay; and, therefore, if the railway, which was to be so long in construction, was only now begun, what good would it be for the base of operations for the troops during the next ensuing summer? They were told that the object of Her Majesty's Government was to chastise the Mahdi at Khartoum and to withdraw from the country. If they were to withdraw, of what use was it to make a railway, which would not be ready for nearly a year? The Government were not going to establish a stable Government at Khartoum or in the Soudan, as they had heard from the First Lord of the Admiralty.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that the noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook) had made no such statement.

VISCOUNT BURY said, the statement of the First Lord was to the effect that the one thing the Government would not do was to keep troops at Khartoum to establish a stable Government in the Soudan.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he understood the noble Earl to state exactly the contrary.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY was also understood to say that the noble Viscount had misapprehended the observations of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admirality said that the worst of all policies would be that our troops should remain for any time in Khartoum for the purpose of confirming the belief that a stable Government would be established in the Soudan.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he would call another witness as to the intention of Her Majesty's Government. On the 5th of August last year the Secretary for War stated that it was probable that General Gordon, before retiring from Khartoum, might desire to establish some stable form of government, "That, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, would be exceeding his instructions." That was very much what he understood the First Lord to say—namely, that it was not within the scope of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government to form anything like stable government in the Soudan. Part of General Gordon's instructions were to the following effect:—

> "After the complete evacuation you will take the necessary steps for establishing an organized government in the different Provinces of the Soudan,"

and, therefore, he was bound to say that the Secretary for War was somewhat imperfectly informed of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government; and as the First Lord of the Admiralty displayed the same ignorance, he would leave the Government to settle the matter of their policy between them. This ignorance of their policy only showed that the Resolution proposed by his noble Friend was fully justifiable, and fully borne out by facts; and there being no settled opinion on the part of the Government on this very important question, it behoved that House to express an opinion as to what that policy should be. He would not enter into what that policy should be, as his noble Friend had gone into it in a most thorough manner. His noble Friend had given no uncertain sound, and he was persuaded that the House would fully agree with him in the policy he had enunciated. This policy of abandonment, of which General Gordon was so cruelly made the victim, had been adopted by a Minister who, only a few years ago, fell violently foul of the late lamented Leader of the Conservative Party, because, as he said, he did not fully appreciate the Bulgarian atrocities. Worse atrocities than those had been committed in the Soudan. Twenty thousand people, at the very least, had been murdered, all garrisons favourable to this country and who acted under its protection, and that had been done by the culpable apathy and negligence of Her Majesty's Government. If no settled Government were established in the Soudan, what would be the position of our allies? The people of the friendly tribes had been told by the Mahdi that he would come and "skin" them, as they expressed it there. The declaration of retirement had been the great difficulty of General Gordon and Lord Wolseley. If the Government had recognized their responsibilities in time, the journey up the Nile would have been, as General Gordon stated, a mere picnic. The friendly tribes now knew what they had to expect; and could it be wondered at that they had been made bitterly hostile? He thought that this Motion of Censure upon the Government was fully deserved, and he was quite sure that throughout the country one unanimous voice of condemnation would be heard against their policy.

THE EARL OF MORLEY observed, that the noble Marquess opposite, in the earlier portion of the debate, referred to the preference given to the Nile route, and he wished to say a few words upon that subject. The noble Lord opposite had said that he hoped an apology would be given to Sir Frederick Stephenson by the War Office authorities for having first neglected his advice and then adopted it; but he could assure the House that General Stephenson would never claim such an apology for himself. It was perfectly true that they asked his advice, as, of course, they should ask the advice of a distinguished and gallant General who had local knowledge to give them; but the question of the adoption of the Suakin route as against the Nile route was one dependent upon time and other conditions. He was quite prepared to admit that if the railway had been completed, and Berber had been in their hands, it would have been the more certain and safe route for the troops to arrive at Khartoum than the route adopted. But let them just look at the character of the problem they had to solve, and the nature of the two routes. The Suakin-Berber route involved the crossing of 100 miles of desert with one single well. It was only in very small bodies, of not more than 300 or 400 each, that troops could have crossed the desert. But at this time Berber was not in friendly hands, both ends of the desert were in hostile hands; and, looking at these facts and the general character of the route, he ventured to think he was below the mark considerably when he said that they would have required 30,000 or 40,000 camels going backwards and forwards to support an army adequate to the occasion in the neighbourhood of Berber or Khartoum. At present, as the noble Lord said, they were adopting that route. He admitted it; but it was to be remembered that they were not now tied by time in the way they were last year, when that route was proposed. They had got the whole time before them to complete, at any rate, a great portion of the railroad before the cool weather arrived, when it would be possible to move large bodies of troops. The noble Lord doubted very much whether the railway would be open before nine months had passed. On that point he wished to give no over-sanguine estimate; he could only say that the gentlemen whom they had employed as constructors, and who had a vast amount of experience, gave them a much more favourable account of that; and they might fairly hope, before the summer was over, at any rate, a considerable portion of the road would be completed, and that that portion of the road which, though presenting the greatest difficulty for animals and men to cross, would be the easiest-made portion of the railway, would be finished at a comparatively rapid pace. It was on the distinct advice of Lord Wolseley that it was decided to adopt the Nile route. The advantages of that route were manifest for three reasons. In the first place, they had a very considerable portion of that route easily navigable. They had a base—although at a considerable distance from the sea, still it was a base—at Wady Halfa. There was also the great advantage that by following the river route each boat was able to carry supplies for its crew for 100 days. He thought that Lord Wolseley's plan, in spite of the difficulties he had had to undergo, had been perfectly justified by its success. But there was a third reason, and that was that, in addition to the military advantages, from a political point of view it was of great importance that the advance should be made along the Nile, because there was great danger of the spread of fanaticism among the tribes of Upper Egypt and Nubia, and it was eminently desirable that a Force should appear on the Nile, with a view to securing the allegiance of the wavering or disaffected tribes. They knew the great importance of Dongola, and of conciliating the allegiance of the Mudir of Dongola, and it was indispensable that a brigade should be prepared in order to advance as quickly as possible from Assouan and Wady Halfa to Dongola. Therefore, by going up the Nile, they combined with the military advantages the great political advantage of giving strength to the allegiance of the tribes among whom they passed. He wished again to assure his noble Friend that no one had the slightest idea of casting the slightest slur on his gallant friend, Sir Frederick Stephenson. But, while fully recognizing the great ability of Sir Frederick Stephenson, it was only fair to state that he had had none of the peculiar experience of the modes of passing cataracts which had fallen to the lot of Lord Wolseley, in the Red River Expedition. The whole problem was changed, and it was of no use now underrating the difficulties and dangers of the Soudan Campaign. They must face them, or they would become more grave. He ventured to think that retirement, if possible, would be accompanied with the greatest dangers, and unless a check were now given to the barbarian fanaticism which was now flooding Khartoum, it would probably in future years cause far greater difficulties and dangers than at the present time.

THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD said, the noble Earl had not yet explained why the Government had selected the Suakin-Berber route at the present time, if it were so impracticable last year.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, the Suakin route was the best with the railway.

THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD said, it was all very well to talk about the railway; but when were they to have the railway? This was the first time that a railway had been pushed forward into an enemy's country. As to the assertion that we were not tied for time, it seemed to him that we were very much tied for time. He failed to see any difference between March of last year and March of this year, except that last year we won two victories, and this year we had been obliged to retreat. Last year, however, everything was in readiness for an Expedition, but the vacillation of the Government prevented a start being made. The railway was sent out, and what had become of it he did not know; but he supposed that the taxpayers of England would have to pay for that railway, as well as the new one which was now to be laid down. He had listened to the speeches of noble Lords who were Members of the Government, and had heard them applauded by Members of the Government, but not by noble Lords behind them. The debate had been brought about by the deplorable loss which the country had sustained by the death of General Gordon. The people of this country had watched that hero's career with the keenest interest ever since he was first despatched to the Soudan now more than a year ago. Every telegram, every scrap of information had been read with an excitement growing more intense as the dangers to which he was exposed became more pressing and the wretched feebleness of the Government became more apparent. When he first heard that Her Majesty's Government had decided to send General Gordon single-handed into the Soudan, he thought that a more insane expedition never had been planned or one more likely to lead to the most disastrous complications for this country in the future. The difficulties which were in all conscience terrible enough to daunt anyone less courageous than General Gordon had been increased a hundredfold by the declaration forced from the Khedive's Government by our Ministers at home that Egypt was to abandon the Soudan. How was it possible that the garrisons which General Gordon was sent out to remove in safety could be so removed if every tribe in the Soudan was driven into the service of the Mahdi for self-preservation, acting under the impression that when the garrisons were removed, the Mahdi, being master of the situation, could deal with them at his pleasure? But there was just one chance that a man of such extraordinary resource and ability, having a knowledge of the Soudan far in advance of anyone who could possibly have been employed, might, if he was honestly supported by the authorities at home, with the *prestige* such support would give him, have been able to carry out the wishes of the Government and extricate the garrisons with safety from their perilous position. That chance might have been realized if the Government at home had been prepared to carry out as far as lay in their power the wishes of the agent they had employed, who being on the spot, and having information at his command, and a knowledge of the people he was dealing with, must have known better than anybody else what was best to be done. But how did the Government behave in this respect? Every single request which was transmitted to them by General Gordon from the first to the last had been either directly refused or the carrying out of it postponed until it was too late. It was needless for him to enumerate the requests which were made and which were refused. They had appeared in despatches, and in the public Press, and each succeeding demand, tardily published by the Government, with their reasons for its refusal, had excited among General Gordon's fellow-countrymen a feeling of irritation and disgust. The cruel, the disgraceful treatment of General Gordon would form for ever one of the blackest pages in English history. The Prime Minister the other night declared in feeling language that though General Gordon was dead, yet his example would remain as a benefit to future generations of Englishmen. But what was the use of feeling language or national monuments now that General Gordon was dead, when they would not hold out a finger in time to save him while he was alive? The Prime Minister did not say, however, what would be the effects of the example set by Her Majesty's Government in having sent this heroic Englishman to the Soudan, for the purpose of tiding themselves over a few months of Parliamentary criticism, and then having deserted him, without remorse, notwithstanding his pleadings for succour and assistance, and left him to his cruel fate. The Prime Minister the other night tried to show that, owing to the hot season, nothing could have been done to avert this terrible disaster. What was the difference between the climate of the Soudan in March, 1884, when the Government declared a Relief Expedition impossible, after having won two victories over the Arabs which would have assisted materially in opening up the route from Suakin to Berber, and the climate of the Soudan in March, 1885, when those victories of last year had been forgotten, when the Mahdi had obtained possession of Khartoum, and when the man we sought to rescue was no more? The other arguments which he had heard used by the Government had been that it was not their fault that Khartoum was lost, as it fell in consequence of treachery; and that the reason why General Wolseley's Expedition started so late last autumn was owing to the difficulty of deciding whether the Suakin or the Nile route was the better one to adopt. The latter was about the most ridiculous excuse that could well be brought forward. Did it take the Government six months to arrive at the determination that the Nile route was the best, and was it necessary to wait until the river began to fall? Then, as to the fact that Khartoum fell through treachery, and that it could not be avoided, he quite admitted that it fell through treachery—treachery of the blackest and most flagrant kind. But through what treachery? Was it alone the treachery of those cowardly Pashas who opened the gates to the Mahdi's troops? There was a worse treachery even than that. There was the treachery of the Government that deserted and deceived the man they themselves had sent into such deadly peril, refusing every request which he made, and betraying him and the town he had so gallantly defended by withholding the much-needed support which could easily have been sent in time. They were now entering upon a campaign in the Soudan which was likely to cost this country dearly. They had no information as to what they were fighting for. The Government had, according to their precedent, declared no policy. They were ruled by men who engaged in warlike operations without any definite aim, who sacrificed the blood and treasure of this country without giving a reason for so doing, who slaughtered thousands of unfortunate Arabs without any purpose, and who were at that very moment increasing the difficulties and dangers of our gallant troops in the Soudan by refusing to lay down a policy —a Government which, had it not been supported by an enormous majority in "another place," obtained on false issues by false promises and pledges, which had been broken, would long since have been discarded by the country, which they had so disgusted, misruled, and dishonoured, and thus saved this great Empire from disaster, discredit, and disgrace. A definite policy was now required; they had been too long without one. Englishmen were tired of this un-English Government, and the Party which would take up a decided line with regard to Egypt and the Soudan, who would not be afraid to take advantage of that position which our sacrifices had entitled us to, would be supported by the almost unanimous opinion of the people of these Realms.

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I do not think that any Member of the present Government will regret that this Motion has been brought forward; and we are very willing that the opinion of Parliament on the Egyptian policy of the Government during the last two or three years should be taken. For in cases of emergency, and no doubt this is one, the essential point is not who shall be Minister—the one thing all-important is that the Minister, whoever he may be, shall possess, and be known to possess, the confidence of Parliament. And I cannot conceive a situation more false, or in its results more fatal, than that which would be created by an Opposition who were able to say—"We could turn you out on a Vote of Confidence if we pleased; but we prefer, though having the majority on our side, to remain in the position of irresponsible critics." That would not be a Constitutional state of things, and it would be one under which no Government could either carry on war, or negotiate successfully. I think, therefore, that the Party represented by noble Lords opposite has done right in bringing this question to an issue; and I can assure them that we on our side ask no indulgence and no forbearance beyond that which we believe any set of men placed in circumstances of unprecedented perplexity and difficulty might claim, and are willing to bear the full responsibility of whatever we have said or done, or left unsaid or undone, not claiming for ourselves infallibility, but willing to admit that we have made mistakes, if you can show us what those mistakes are. I have no criticism to offer on the terms of the Motion made against us by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury). It is plain-spoken and uncompromising, and raises the question fairly; but I may observe that in "another place," where the fate of Ministers is more apt to be decided, the corresponding Motion does not seem to have been framed or supported in such a manner as to show any great desire to secure a victory. Things may have altered, and second thoughts may be best; but assuredly the appearance is that of a demonstration rather than of a battle. This Motion does not raise, in either of its branches—and I am glad it does not—the question whether it was wise, in the first instance, to go to Egypt at all. I can well understand that there may be, on that point, a reasonable difference of opinion among men who usually think alike. In my view, the strongest argument in favour of the course actually taken is the certainty that if we had not occupied the country and put an end to anarchy, some other Power would have stepped in and taken our place, and done so, and probably would have done it with much less concern for purely Egyptian interests, and with a much more exclusive desire of national advantage than we are ever likely to show. But that matter is settled, as I conceive, by many previous debates. There is no doubt that public opinion was at the time, and has been ever since, in favour of that occupation, and it is useless to go back to controversies which are now merely historical. I refer to it now only to say that, while I quite understand the language of those who think we ought, in 1882, to have left Egypt alone, I do not see any step that has been subsequently taken which did not follow almost necessarily from that first proceeding. And although the second part of the Motion of the noble Marquess opens a wide field of controversy, I do not gather that it is desired now to discuss the diplomatic history of the last two years as regards the annexation of Egypt. There are, no doubt, many persons who think that we ought at once, on occupying the country, to have taken the whole control into our own hands, and treated Egypt as being practically a Province of the British Empire. We have never accepted that view. In the first place, I conceive that we should have been doing what we had no right to do. In the next place, we should have utterly thrown away that good understanding with other Powers interested in Egypt which, on the whole, has been maintained during those transactions, and which, I believe, will still survive, uninjured, the present complications. And, lastly, we should have been giving the signal for a general scramble, which might very probably have ended in a European war. These reasons influenced us, and from the first —from Tel-el-Kebir, and even earlier, to the present day—we have steadily kept in view the fact that our occupation was temporary and provisional only, and that our object must be to put the Egyptian Administration in such a position that, guarded and guaranteed from external interference, it should be able to stand alone. I believe it is that determination which is the real cause of much, or most, of the opposition that we have met with. There may not be many persons who will say in so many words "annex Egypt;" but there are very many who wish matters so carried on that annexation, or something equivalent to it, shall be the inevitable end. Now, my Lords, accepting the view of our position which we took, assuming that it was our duty during our temporary occupation to do for the Egyptian Government what they would, if well advised and able, have done for themselves, what was to be our attitude in regard to the Soudan? The noble Marquess says its abandonment was a mistake—that we ought not to have pronounced in favour of its evacuation.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I said you ought not to have announced it.

THE EARL OF DERBY: I do not quite follow the noble Marquess, unless he means that, while it was right to do it, we ought to have kept the decision secret from all parties concerned, which, as far as I can see, would have been utterly impossible. At all events, we knew that the Soudan could not be held by Egypt, except at heavy cost; that ever since its acquisition it had been a dead loss to the revenues of that country; and that, even under such a zealous and capable Governor as General Gordon, order was very imperfectly maintained there. We knew that an increase of burdens on the Egyptian people meant not merely inconvenience, but starvation. In our view, after the failure of Hicks Pasha's Force, it would have been simple madness to attempt the reconquest of the Province. Therefore, all we had to do was to endeavour to save the garrisons; and we must remember that they were scattered all over the country, in places where we had nothing to do with sending them, and where it was most difficult to reach them. Then, as to the despatch of Hicks Pasha's Army, the noble Marquess complains that we allowed that Army to be sent. I quite agree that if it had been possible to have known at that time all that we know now of the state of the Soudan, that is a step which I think we should not have taken. But you must judge it, not by what we know now, but by what we knew then; and we must remember that hostilities had been going on for some years, and that the Egyptian Forces had generally been successful; and it would have been a high-handed and invidious act to interfere by force to prevent the actual Rulers of the country from attempting to suppress an insurrection in one of their own Provinces, which they were confident of being able to put down. I do not think there are many people who will contend that it is our duty to reconquer the Soudan for Egypt. It is, in our belief, a very worthless possession. To regain it at our own cost would have been imposing an unjustifiable burden on this country; to regain it at the cost of Egypt, which was already bankrupt, would have been cruelty to the Egyptian people. We determined, therefore, and I believe the great majority of the public here thought with us, to confine ourselves to the attempt to rescue the garrison at Khartoum. That was the policy of "Rescue and retire," which has been so much criticized, but which I believe to have been entirely sound. It simply meant this—that we would not endeavour to extend or to maintain Egyptian control over a country which, even if conquered, Egypt could not hold without ruin. But, my Lords, I will not attempt to deny that, in one respect, circumstances have undoubtedly altered since Tel-el-Kebir. We have learnt much—and by no possible means could we have known it beforehand—as to the position and as to the objects of that mysterious personage, the Mahdi. We were naturally inclined to believe, in the first instance, that he was a local Chief, desirous only of setting free his country from Egyptian rule, and who would be satisfied when that object was accomplished. In that view of his position, had he been disposed to allow the garrisons to withdraw peaceably, we were not disposed to quarrel with him. If it was a gain, as we do not doubt, to Egypt to be quit of the Soudan, and if the people of the Soudan wished to be free from Egypt, what ground of difference was there? And it was in that spirit that we sent out General Gordon on his mission. The objects with which he was sent out were fully set out last year. There have been various criticisms upon that mission by the noble Marquess and those who succeeded him. The noble Marquess called it a hopeless and impossible task; but, my Lords, that was not General Gordon's own view of it. He had been Governor General of the Soudan; and he knew the people better than anyone, and he himself volunteered to go. He certainly did not regard it as a forlorn hope; and we were encouraged to send him by his own description of what he was likely to be able to accomplish. We had fair ground for expecting that the insurgents at Khartoum would be content with the evacuation of their country; that they would be willing to make arrangements for the withdrawal of the garrisons; and that they would be satisfied, having got what they wanted, to remain on good terms with Egypt. I do not think that was an irrational or an unreasonable belief. Now, what has passed at Khartoum is very obscure, and I suppose will always remain so. But one thing has come out clearly. We are not dealing with a merely local disturbance. We are not fighting a Chief whose only object is to restore independence to his own tribe or country. The Mahdi is the head of a religious war—a Mahommedan crusade—and it does not follow that if we leave him alone he will leave us or Egypt alone, or even that the fire he has lighted will stop there, or be confined within the limits of Africa. The best proof is that when we were willing to withdraw from Khartoum, and when we might have reasonably supposed that he would have been glad to facilitate our retirement, he has not abated his hostility, and has not accepted any offers of peace. Well, that fact alters the situation completely. We are not bound either to defend or to attack Khartoum; but we are bound to protect Egypt from attack. We have assumed that duty as a result of our occupation; and while the occupation lasts we cannot withdraw from it. If, therefore, you ask what we are now trying to do, I say exactly the same as last year. We have not varied as to the object, though we have been compelled to change the means. We tried negotiation, while there seemed a chance that negotiation might succeed: it did not succeed, and then there was no alternative but to send out an Expedition. Surely that is the natural and ordinary course of things; and it is very idle to censure us, as some people do, for not sending out a vast and costly Expedition in the first instance, when there was fair ground to hope that the necessity for such an Expedition might have been averted. I do not think the question will be asked, whether we had a right to expose so valuable a life as that of General Gordon on an occasion of great public importance? All England applauded the courage and promptitude with which he accepted that perilous mission. But why did we applaud it? Because we knew, and all the world knew, that it was a mission that involved great personal risk. If it had been otherwise, the applause would not have been given. It is nothing new that English officers should be sent, and should volunteer to serve on hazardous missions; and, in this case, I think no one will deny that the object to be attained was worth the risk. You would undoubtedly have a right to blame us if it can be shown that we had failed in any way, or at any time, to give General Gordon that support which might have helped him. But I venture to affirm that you cannot show that. I have heard some very confident assertions that we have failed in this respect; but assertions are not arguments. ["Oh, oh!"] I want to know what request of his, if possible to be acted on, with a single exception, have we refused or declined to comply with? The exception which I make is his desire that Zebehr Pasha might be sent out to help him. That is the sole instance of a refusal. We may have been right or wrong in deciding not to send Zebehr—if we had been thinking only of our own responsibility we were undoubtedly wrong—but we were governed by considerations of a very different kind. We knew that General Gordon had seen but little of Zebehr since the time when they were opposed to one another in the Soudan. We knew that the very generosity of his nature might lead him to rely with undue confidence on assurances of reconciliation and promises of support. We could not shut our eyes to the fact that those who had far better opportunities of knowing Zebehr than General Gordon had believed him to be untrustworthy, and thought that if employed by us he would betray his employers, and in that single instance we overruled General Gordon's judgment; but it was in the interest of General Gordon's safety and success, and by the advice of those who had the best means of judging of the character of the man whom he proposed to us to employ. It is said that he at one time asked for Turkish troops to be sent to him. That is true; but, as a matter of fact, no Turkish troops were available, or could have been sent to him within such limits of time that they would have been of any use. It is natural that, with the public grief for General Gordon's death, there should have been mixed a desire—as there always is in such cases—to make somebody responsible for the disaster which we all lament. And the popular charge against us is—and it has been echoed in this House — that, by undue delay in sending out an Expedition to rescue him, we sacrificed General Gordon's life and the lives of the garrison whom he went to save. A graver offence, if you could prove it, it would be difficult to bring against any set of public men. If it were justified, I, for one, should regard a Vote of Censure and removal from power as an inadequate rather than excessive expiation. But where is the proof? We know generally, though not precisely, what it was that caused the fall of Khartoum. We know that it was the work of treachery in the garrison itself. We have no reason to doubt the authenticity of that telegram, of very recent date, in which General Gordon spoke of the length of time that he should be able to hold out. We know that, as regards ammunition, he was abundantly provided. We had a telegram from him, in September, stating that he had then provisions for four months; and, since that date, we heard of a very large capture of provisions and supplies which must have replenished his stores for a considerable time. So far as I know, there is not the shadow of a proof that the want of supplies had anything to do with the fall of Khartoum. Now, my Lords, as to the date of the Expedition, I need not point out that to send out a force of sufficient strength for the purpose during the hot weather was simply impossible. The river would not have been navigable, and the climate destructive. The sole question at issue, therefore, is, whether, supposing it had been in our power to send out the relieving force under Lord Wolseley a month earlier, that month would have made any difference in the result. Where is the evidence that it would? As far as it is possible to judge, the treachery of the garrison was an incident that might have occurred at any period of the siege. Probably—though I admit all is conjecture — it had been long planned; and, although the noble Marquess ridiculed and discredited the theory, I see nothing improbable in the idea that the final act was precipitated by the very knowledge that a relieving force was on its way and near to Khartoum. Reference has been made to telegrams from Gordon in which he assumes that he has been deserted. My answer is that the communications were often interrupted; and, in the absence of news, General Gordon at times may have thought so; but I deny, in the most unqualified manner, that anything was said or done, or left unsaid or undone, here that could point to the belief that he was not to be rescued if necessary. Naturally, we did not choose to launch out into an enterprize of that kind till we were assured of its necessity. Who would? But the idea that it might be necessary was never absent from our minds; and I say, with confidence, that the intention of leaving Gordon and his party to take their chance, making no effort to relieve them, was never at any moment entertained. It is hardly necessary to make that assertion, because, obviously, no Government could have acted on a policy of that sort without insuring its own destruction — to say nothing of other motives. But I am asked—"Could you not have sent out a small force before the hot weather set in?" Of what use would a few hundred men have been? There was no large force to send; and the 200 or 300 men who have been referred to would, in all probability, never have reached him. Reference is made to that telegram, of the 14th of December, in which it is said—"This would not have happened if you had kept me better informed as to your intentions." I do not like to criticize a document so pathetic; but what does it refer to? Probably—it is only guesswork — to communications which failed to reach him, as we know they repeatedly did. And how that letter is to be reconciled with later documents in an opposite sense I do not see. I do not like to speak too confidently; but the absolutely conflicting character of the telegrams from Khartoum is obvious —it has long been a source of perplexity —and till we know the facts more accurately it is impossible to build upon them. Another question has been asked —why, after the defeat of Osman Digna near Suakin in the spring, did you not order an advance to Berber by that route? The reasons against taking that course seemed to us conclusive. Only a small force could have crossed the Desert owing to the want of water; the season was getting late; the feeling of the tribes was entirely unknown; and to send so small a force into a country where they were liable to attack, at any moment, by enemies of infinitely superior force, seemed to the Government to be too rash a proceeding to be justified as a military operation. We have been told to-night, in a sort of triumphant tone, that we could have used the Suakin-Berber route last year, and that this is shown by the fact that we propose to use that route now. I do not pretend to be a judge of military operations; but it seems to me there is all the difference in the world between sending out a small force into a country full of enemies whose strength is unknown — which would have been the case last year—and sending it out to meet another force, already on the spot, which will make a junction with it. If we are asked why we chose the Nile route in preference to that by Suakin, we answer that we acted after full deliberation, and after taking the opinion of the best military authorities; and we say further that, so far as the operation itself is concerned, the choice of that route has been justified by results. The doubt was whether Khartoum could be reached in the cold season. Well, Khartoum has been reached in the cold season, reached in ample time to have relieved the garrison if that garrison had not been betrayed, as it might have been at any moment since the siege began. I do not know whether it is necessary to go back to the question of General Baker's defeat, which we discussed last year, and for which, of course, the noble Marquess holds us responsible. The answer which I gave then I give now— that the defeat of a disciplined force of 3,000 or 4,000 men, though not very good troops—that is admitted by everyone—by 1,200 Arabs, half-armed, was not a contingency for which any man could be blamed for not having foreseen. We know now—we did not know then—the desperate fanaticism of these Arabs, and I do not think the Government should be charged with rashness, even though the Expedition was unsuccessful. As to the Expedition of General Graham, and the assertion that it was useless, and that, in making it, we were guilty of merely useless and vindictive slaughter, the answer is, we should probably have lost Suakin had it not been for the success gained by that force. Passing from what is done, and considering what remains to do, what is our object, and what is our policy? That is the question which is repeatedly put to us, and ingenious phrases have been invented to indicate that if we do not intend to make Khartoum and the Soudan permanently British, or place it under British protection, all that we are doing is mere objectless slaughter and massacre. I do not agree in that; and I think it is easy to define in general terms what we want, and what we intend, though details are not at present possible. We have taken on ourselves the duty of protecting Egypt from attack while we occupy it. We do not propose to occupy it permanently, though it is impossible now to fix a precise date for our withdrawal. On that point we are pledged to this country, and pledged to Europe; and if a contrary policy is adopted it will not be by us. But it is clear that, with a fanatical Army and Chief threatening it from Khartoum, Egypt cannot be safe; and we are bound to secure the Khedive from the danger of an irruption from that quarter. We do not say that Khartoum and Berber ought to be held by this or that Chief; but we do say that they must be held by some Power which will not be systematically and on principle opposed to the maintenance of peace, and the independence of Egypt. Khartoum in itself is not our concern; but Khartoum must be made incapable of doing mischief to its neighbours, and if in that process the civilization of the Northern Soudan is promoted, that is a result which we are glad of, though it is not primarily what we aim at. Whether we should have gone into Egypt three years ago, if all the results which have followed had been foreseen, is a question which may be reasonably asked; but we have done it—we have taken certain responsibilities on ourselves; and as, on the one hand, we will not unnecessarily enlarge them, so, on the other, we shall not shrink from any cost or any labour—and I do not believe the English nation desires us to do so—that may be necessary to enable us to maintain our pledges, and to keep good faith with those who depend upon them. With regard to another point, it is a little premature, I think, to ask whether we will keep permanently a railway which is proposed to be laid down for military purposes, or what steps we shall take for its defence. Once let us restore order in the Northern Soudan, and I should have no fear as to the safety of the road if it continues. Nor do I believe that there is the slightest need for that policy of indefinite occupation which has been pressed upon the Government, and which we have always disclaimed. Once break the power of this military fanatical leader, and the local tribes and Chiefs will want very little assistance and very little support, whether from England or Egypt, to enable them to hold their own. So much for the future; as for the present, though, no doubt, the situation is grave, is there anything to cause any despondency? We have lost distinguished officers and brave men, and that is a loss which we deeply deplore. We are involved in heavy expenses, and that is also matter of regret. But our arms have not been discredited; and no one can affirm that nothing has been done for Egyptian administration, except those who know nothing, or care to know nothing, as to what has really passed. As to this coming vote, I do not affect a doubt what it will be. It is a foregone conclusion. I regret to think that the present Government is in a minority in your Lordships' House; but we have the satisfaction of being well assured that the verdict of this House will not be the verdict of the other branch of the Legislature, and we believe it will not be that of the country.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: My Lords, if any testimony were needed to prove the culpability of Her Majesty's Government in going to Egypt, the testimony of the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Derby) would suffice. I will not enter into any historical controversy, because I feel, by their conduct in the past, that they are not to be trusted with the very important issues which have at present to be decided. There can be but one conclusion gathered from what he has said, and that is that the Government had no right to go into Egypt, because they evidently had no idea whatever of what they would do when they got there. Just look at what the noble Earl has said as to the reason why the Government did not make greater improvements in Egypt. He said their position was so temporary, and that they had to be very careful not to give the impression to Foreign Powers that they were trying to make Egypt a Province of England. Then, again, as to the Mahdi, what was the excuse the noble Earl made in reference to their dealings with him? He said that if they had had any experience about the Mahdi, as they now have, they never would have got into that position. I venture to say that out of the noble Earl's own mouth the Government is condemned. What right had they to bring British Armies into Egypt if they had so little knowledge of what they would do when they got there? It seems to me that every word of the noble Earl's speech is only calculated to increase the apprehensions of the country. The country, my Lords, is sick of words, and is longing for something solid, and the noble Earl tells us that what they are doing now is only what they were doing last year, and the Prime Minister has stated that he would proceed upon the old principles upon which his Government is founded. Such are the words of which the country is so weary and so sick. The country sees with apprehension 20,000 of her sons shut up in the Deserts of the Soudan, and the country wants to have some assurance that these vague expressions and empty phrases may be explained. It is an easy matter to treat, in the light and jaunty way in which the noble Earl has treated it, the whole matter connected with the sad and grievous and distressing case of General Gordon; but I would ask your Lordships to go into that case a little more carefully, so that you may feel whether or not the Government is to be trusted with these greater obligations for the future. When the Government sent General Gordon on his mission, they ought to have felt that they were taking a step of the utmost gravity. When the Government sent Gordon on his perilous expedition it is only natural to suppose that they ought to have taken every conceivable precaution for his safety. There was at that time no praise too great for him. The Prime Minister said that he was the only man who understood the situation and the country, and other Ministers spoke of him in similar terms. But I cannot find in the Papers one trace of such careful provision. It seems never to have occurred to the Government that this Expedition might have failed, that Gordon might have been betrayed, or that Lord Wolseley might find himself in the Desert in the midst of hosts of treacherous foes. How could they show the honesty of their speech regarding him? When they refused the repeated requests of this man, who alone could be the judge of what was good and desirable for the safety of this distant part of the Soudan, one would have supposed that they would, at least, have suggested some counter-proposals. For this I look in vain through all the Papers. I can find no trace of any counter-proposal from the Government. Instead of affording him the assistance he requested, I do, indeed, find one single suggestion, and that is, that the Governor General of the Soudan, responsible for 30,000 lives scattered over this district, responsible to the English Government and to the Khedive to bring away his garrisons, that this gallant officer and high-minded gentleman should have run away. I believe the reason why no move was made by the Government was, that they were waiting for an answer to that unworthy suggestion; for it was not until three days after his telegram, stating the impossibility of such a proceeding, that an Expedition for his relief was proposed. He had given Her Majesty's Government every warning as to what was transpiring; but they shut their ears and eyes to all that was going on. Yet the Government professes to be surprised and astounded at the turn events have taken. But does the Government know nothing of the propagandism that has for some time been going on in the Mahommedan world, of the missionaries that have been going about in all directions in Mahommedan countries, of the ferment that has taken place within the last few years in the great cities of the East, resulting in the massacres of Jeddah and Cairo? Everyone who has studied the Eastern Question knows that this epoch is one at which Mahommedans have been expecting a great deliverer, who should restore to them their predominance over the Western nations. It was strange that the Government should be so blind to a movement of Mahommedan fanaticism coming from the centre of Africa at this time; but the fact is that by the blindness and madness evinced in their taking no notice of these warnings, they have gone the very best way to set up the Mahdi themselves. The more we look into the case, the more we see that the Government has been totally deficient in foresight and knowledge; and I cannot imagine anyone, having regard to their conduct in the past, looking with equanimity and a light heart upon the conduct of the grave operations in which we are now engaged in the Soudan being in their hands. With regard to the undertaking on which we were now embarked, our right policy would be to announce that we do not leave the Soudan until we have established quiet; that we shall not leave Egypt until the people are able to stand alone; and if they do it, we must make it quite clear that no other Power interferes there besides ourselves. A great deal has been said about the desert character of the Soudan. I cannot but think that great misrepresentation has got about on this subject. So far from its being a mere desert place, inhabited by wandering tribes, there are in it 15,000 Christians and 40,000 Egyptians, while there are a number of commercial houses, some in the hands of Natives and some of Europeans. It was a region where commerce was spreading, and likely to spread. Sir Samuel Baker had said that the Soudan will be the granary of the world, and that Khartoum will be the richest commercial city in Africa. He has also stated his opinion that if the Soudan were in the hands of England, she would be independent of America for her corn supply. In Sir Samuel Baker's opinion, the possibilities of that region were immense, when it passed into civilized hands. Would it not be a fit occupation for England to open up to civilization the great district which seemed to have drifted into our hands, and which would offer so rich a field for our commerce and manufactures? But behind the question of the policy to be pursued by this country in the Soudan is the more immediate question whether it is possible for a Government, vacillating, uncertain, and ignorant as they have shown themselves, to take up and carry out a new and vigorous policy. They are hampered by past engagements to Foreign Powers, by engagements at home, by distracting factions in their midst, and it is impossible for them to decide upon and to carry out any definite line of policy. I see dangers to our Colonies, dangers from Russia and other Powers, and dangers in South Africa; I see Ireland needing a firm and bold hand, and a distinct policy to be adopted for our Navy. I ask whether it is possible for a Government like this to carry the ship of State safely through these troubled waters? The only possible inducement for those who sit on this side of the House to dislodge the Government in a moment like this is the deepest and gravest sense of duty. No man in his senses could wish to take Office at this juncture; on the other hand, if no man can be found on those Benches to assume that responsibility, then I say that the Conservative Party would be false to its history and false to the country if they declined the grievous but most honourable task. Those who sit on the Conservative Benches must take their full share of responsibility; and if they are really called by the absolute demands of the country to take this heavy task upon them they will succeed on this one condition—that they tell the country plainly what their policy is, so that they do not let any ambiguity arise, such as exists at present, but proceed with firmness and honesty on their course, and then, I believe, they will be supported even by their opponents.

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*the Earl of Camperdown.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at Twelve o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 26th February, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Post Office Sites * [72]; Hyde Park Corner (New Streets) * [73]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (No. 2) * [74].

Second Reading—Private Bill Legislation [25], *debate further adjourned.*

NOTICES.

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EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.

NOTICE (MR. HENEAGE).

MR. HENEAGE: As an Amendment to Lord George Hamilton's proposed Amendment, to move to leave out the word "Government," and insert the word "Opposition."

NOTICE (MR. C. B. M'LAREN).

MR. C. B. M'LAREN: As an Amendment to Sir Stafford Northcote's Motion on Egypt and the Soudan, to move to leave out all the words after the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to insert the words—

"This House continues to support Her Majesty's Government, in the confident belief that in the affairs of Egypt they will act in accordance with the principles of foreign policy upheld by the First Lord of the Treasury at the period of the General Election of 1880."

PARLIAMENT—NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — RULE 1 (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

NOTICE (MR. SEXTON).

Mr. SEXTON gave Notice that, in the event of the regular Motion for going into Committee of Supply being made to-morrow, he would move an Amendment expressing regret at the action taken by the Speaker during the Sitting of the House on Tuesday—first, in directing Mr. William Redmond to discontinue his speech under the Standing Order on continued irrelevance and tedious repetition; secondly, in informing the House that the Motion of the Prime Minister had been adequately discussed, and that it was the evident sense of the House that the Question should then be put; and, thirdly, in Naming Mr. O'Brien on the ground of disorderly interruption; and setting forth that these acts of the Speaker constituted an excessive application of the several powers vested in him by the three respective Standing Orders.

QUESTIONS.

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VACCINATION ACTS (LEICESTER AND OTHER TOWNS).

Mr. PICTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he has had his attention drawn to the fact that, in the town of Leicester, there are now upwards of four thousand parents threatened with prosecution, on account of their conscientious refusal to allow their infant children to be vaccinated; whether a similar difficulty in enforcing the Law is experienced in Keighley, Dewsbury, Derby, Eastbourne, and other places; whether these places have remained practically free from smallpox, while London, Birmingham, and several other districts, reported as well vaccinated, have repeatedly suffered from epidemic visitations of the disease; whether resistance to compulsory vaccination shows, on the whole, a marked increase since the last inquiry into the subject by a Committee of this House; and, whether, under these circumstances, the Government will institute a fresh inquiry by Commission, or by a Committee of this House, into the working of the Vaccination Acts?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: We are aware that in Leicester, Keighley, Dewsbury, and the other towns specified there are a large number of persons who are in default under the Vaccination Acts on account of the non-vaccination of their children. In these towns, and in some three or four others, where there has been no recent experience of small-pox epidemics, there is, no doubt, on the part of some of the inhabitants; a strong anti-vaccination feeling. But although these places have for some years past been practically free from small-pox, the same may be said of many other towns. London, it is true, has suffered from severe epidemics, and small-pox has been prevalent in Birmingham; but in London especially epidemics are dependent on a number of conditions besides the universality of infantile vaccination. More to the purpose than a proposal to compare small-pox incidence in particular towns is a comparison between the incidence of small-pox upon the vaccinated and upon the unvaccinated when small-pox becomes epidemic in a town. We have no evidence of any general increase in resistance to the Vaccination Acts. The last Returns show no falling-off as regards the proportion of children vaccinated, less than 5 per cent of the children born being reported as unaccounted for. The whole subject was fully considered by a Select Committee of this House in 1871; and we do not think that there would be any advantage, at the present time, in a further inquiry being instituted by a Commission or Committee of the House.

EXPLOSIVES ACT—DYNAMITE EXPLOSION NEAR LARNE.

Mr. GREER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that the disabled schooner *Essequibo*, now lying in Larne Harbour, contains a quantity of dynamite; whether two fatal accidents have already been caused by a portion of this dynamite; and, whether he intends taking any, and what, steps to have the dangerous cargo removed?

Mr. J. HOLMS: My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty has asked me to answer this Question. I am informed that this vessel, formerly used as a dynamite magazine, is lying in Lorne Lough, and has long been abandoned. The tide flows into and out of the hulk, which does not in any way interfere with the navigation or fairway of the harbour. Her cargo seems to have been removed in 1875; but it would appear that some nitro-glycerine had previously exuded from the dynamite, and may to some extent have saturated what is left on board. I understand that two men lately removed an old pump from her without any authority and took it on shore. When striking it with a hammer to break it up the men were killed through an explosion of nitro-glycerine which was in it. I am in communication with the Home Office on the subject.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS —PERSONAL EXPLANATION (MR. G. RUSSELL).

Mr. LEWIS had given Notice of the following Question:—

"To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been drawn to a Letter, dated 13th February, purporting to have been addressed from the Local Government Board by the honourable Member for Aylesbury, the Secretary of that Board, to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, requesting them to make a grant of land to the inhabitants of Fulham (for which district that honourable Member had announced his candidature), and to the fact that this Letter was published in all the evening papers as an official Letter, without waiting for an answer from the Commissioners; and, whether he gave any sanction to this proceeding?"

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: At the request of the Prime Minister, I will, by leave of the House, make a brief personal explanation with reference to the Question which stands in the name of the hon. Member for Londonderry. The Prime Minister knew nothing about the circumstances of this Question till his attention was called to them by the Question. On the morning on which Earl Stanhope's letter from the Ecclesiastical Commission appeared in the daily papers, I received a visit from a gentleman resident in West Kensington, who had taken a prominent part last year in regard to this piece of ground. This gentleman knew that during Office hours I was sure to be found at my desk; and, therefore, he called upon me at the Local Government Board. He drew my attention to Earl Stanhope's letter, and asked whether I could do anything to extend the boon to West Kensington. I immediately wrote the letter to which the hon. Member's Question refers. I admit that it would have been better if I had struck out the words "Local Government Board" at the head of the letter, and written instead my private address, 18, Wilton Street; but I omitted to do so through inadvertence. I can assure the hon. Member that, in all further Correspondence on this subject, I will take care that what he wishes to be done shall be done.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—RED SEA LIGHTS.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the importance of placing a lighthouse on Abu Ail Island, which is off the north-east end of Jebel Tukar Island in the Red Sea; and, whether he will take steps to promote the construction of such a lighthouse?

Mr. J. HOLMS: My attention has for some time been directed to the necessity for a light in the Channel between the two Islands named in the hon. Member's Question; and I have been, and am still, in communication with the Foreign Office on the subject. The present aspect of affairs on the coast of the Red Sea is not altogether favourable to progress in a matter of this description; but I shall lose no opportunity of continuing my endeavours to promote the proper lighting of the vicinity of Abu Ail.

NORTHERN LIGHTS COMMISSIONERS—THE ORKNEY AND SHETLAND ISLANDS.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether the Trinity House authorities have as yet reported on the scheme of the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners for lighting the Orkney and Shetland Islands; and, whether, considering the desirability of relieving the navigation in the English channel by lighting up a passage round the North of Scotland, the Trinity House authorities will, in the coming summer, visit the localities, with the view of coming to an early decision on the subject?

Mr. J. HOLMS: The Elder Brethren of the Trinity House inform me that they intend to visit the Orkney and Shetland Islands in the course of the ensuing summer, before reporting on the very extensive proposals now before them for additional lights there.

MERCHANT SHIPPING — ELECTRIC COMMUNICATION WITH LIGHT VESSELS.

MR. LEA asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, If telegraphic communication has been established between the Sunk Lightship and the shore; and, if the experience of its working is so satisfactory as to induce its extension to other lightships or to lighthouses?

MR. J. HOLMS: The experiment of connecting the Sunk Lightship with the shore by electric cable commenced last December, and is to continue for 12 months. If at the end of that period it has worked, and is working, satisfactorily, the Trinity House are to take over the cable from the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, who are not to be paid before the cable is taken over. It will be well to await the result of the first 12 months' working before considering the question of extending the experiment to other stations.

PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) BILL—LEGISLATION.

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Government intend re-introducing "The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill;" and, if so, when?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Prime Minister has already stated that the Government cannot make any announcement as to their legislative proposals until progress has been made with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill; and though they fully recognize the great importance of the subject referred to in this Question, it must be comprehended, with others of an equally pressing and important nature, in that general statement.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—MURRINTOWN MEETING (PROCLAMATIONS).

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will explain to the House the reasons which the Government had for the suppression of the meeting that was to have been held at Murrintown, county Wexford, on the 8th of this month; whether Lord Maurice Fitzgerald, of Johnstone Castle, was one of the persons who gave information to the Castle that the Murrintown meeting would cause disturbance; and, whether he will state the names of all the persons who were instrumental in procuring the proclamation of the proposed peaceable meeting?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not prepared to state the names of any persons who were in communication with the Lord Lieutenant with reference to the Murrintown meeting. That meeting was prohibited by His Excellency on grounds which satisfied him that the holding of it would be likely to endanger the public peace and safety. Among these grounds, and one of the most important, was the character of the placard convening the meeting, which was in these terms—

> "A monster meeting will be held in Murrintown, on Sunday, February 8, for the perfection of all the local organisations, and to prove to the enemies of the popular movement that the people are still as united and as determined to strike down oppression, to abolish landlordism, and to win for all the toiling classes their just rights, as in the palmiest days of the Land League. Up farmers! Up labourers! Up tradesmen! Union is strength. Your cause is the same—The abolition of rent. What is rent? A tax upon the industries of the people! A tax by which the labourers' pockets are picked! A tax by which those who toil not, nor do anything to increase the material prosperity of the country, swill, guzzle, eat, and fatten upon the wealth produced by the honest and tortured toilers. Now's the day, and now's the hour! We have the men to lead; we have the men to follow. Come forward ye hesitating and timid, and show yourselves. Knaves and traitors stand aside. Home Rule we are going to have, and the land for the people, too. Then every farmer and every labourer can look round his farm or plot, and say—'This land is mine, and no man dares turn me out!' The land is the people's! Away with landlordism. Away with rent. God save Ireland! Hurrah for Parnell!"

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: In consequence of what I conceive to be the highly unsatisfactory answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I give Notice that I will take the earliest opportunity of urging upon the right hon. Gentleman, and the Government in Ireland generally, the extreme desirability of putting down the practice of land-grabbing in that country.

MR. BARRY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that, instead of one meeting, three meetings were held a short distance from Murrintown; and if he is aware whether any breach of the peace resulted from them?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not imagine that there was any prospect of an immediate breach of the public peace; but it was believed that the holding of such a meeting, especially as it was convened in such terms as I have read to the House, was certainly likely to disturb the peace and quiet of the neighbourhood.

MR. BARRY: Does the right hon. Gentleman consider the supposition in the minds of half-a-dozen people should override the opinion of an entire county?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not say so.

MR. HEALY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the paragraphs of the placards which he has read were copied almost textually from the speeches of a Cabinet Minister named Chamberlain?

[No reply.]

INDIA—EAST INDIAN RAILWAY COMMUNICATIONS—THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. JACKSON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he can state what steps, if any, have been taken to give effect to the recommendation of the Select Committee on East Indian Railway Communications; and, whether any contracts have been entered into for the making of new lines of Railway?

MR. J. K. CROSS: An agreement has been entered into with a Company for the construction of the Bhopal, Gwalior, and Cawnpore line and certain branches, in all about 605 miles. Communications have also been opened with another Company for the construction of the Calcutta-Nagpore line; but the state of the Money Market has hitherto prevented a definite arrangement being made.

HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION—BREAKWATERS AND HARBOURS IN IRELAND.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been directed to the Report of the Select Committee on Harbour Accommodation last year, in which, referring to the new method of constructing piers and breakwaters in solid monolithic walls of concrete, they say—

> "They are unanimous in declaring that the new system is far preferable to the older system of rubble or pierre perdue foundation;"

whether it has been reported to the Treasury by the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland that the foundations of the breakwater now being constructed at Arklow have given way, and the superstructure cracked through in several places; whether the breakwater is being built on the new or the old system; whether the ship and boat owners addressed an unavailing protest to the Board of Works against the plans of the engineer before the contract was entered into; whether it is the case that the Wicklow Breakwater has been constructed on the new system, and is a decided success; what is the sum already expended at Arklow; would it be possible now to finish the work on the new system; and, how is the extra cost caused by the defective plan and construction to be provided for?

MR. HIBBERT: The Board of Works now use the monolithic system of construction wherever possible; and this was the case at Wicklow. The nature of the foundation at Arklow, and other circumstances, rendered this system inappropriate there; and a different method of construction was adopted, not, however, that condemned by the Select Committee. The objection of the boat-owners was to the general arrangement of the pier and breakwater, and has been fully considered. The two recent severe storms have caused a slight subsidence of some of the concrete blocks, which is of no structural importance, and has been remedied at a trifling cost. The expenditure on the pier, to date, has been £17,534, and no excess is expected on the total amount sanctioned. To change now the method of construction would be costly, and otherwise undesirable.

MR. KENNY asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will give the House a Return showing the total number of piers and harbours constructed or extended in Ireland for the past ten years, under plans and specifications supplied by the Irish Board of Works; the number which have fallen into disuse owing to the defective manner of construction; piers which have given way in structure, and upon which it has been or is necessary to expend additional sums of money for purposes of repair, and the sources from which such additional sums have been derived?

Mr. HIBBERT: If the hon. Member will refer to the terms of a Return to be moved for by the hon. Member for Donegal, to which I have assented, he will see that the information he desires will be supplied by it, so far as it can be given.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—THE CLERK OF THE ROSCREA UNION.

Mr. MAYNE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that the clerk of the Roscrea Union, acting as returning officer, refuses to permit the National candidates to be present at the examination of the voting papers at elections for Poor Law Guardians in his Union, giving no reason to them for his so doing, but merely a point blank refusal; whether Article 20 of the Local Government Board's Circular, dated 16th January 1863, directs that clerks of Unions, before excluding either candidates or their proposers from the examination of voting papers, should be prepared to show some urgent reason for taking a step which "would seem to be unnecessary and unreasonable;" whether this gentleman has furnished the Local Government Board with any urgent or sufficient reason for his so excluding the National candidates; and, whether, in the absence of any such urgent reason for their exclusion, the Local Government Board will direct this returning officer to admit such of the candidates and their proposers as desire it to be present at the examination of the voting papers at the present and future elections?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No complaints on this subject have recently reached the Local Government Board, who, in March of last year, pointed out to the Returning Officer what his duty is in such cases? The Board have no reason to suppose that the Returning Officer acts in opposition to their views as there given; but if it is shown that he does so, they will be prepared to give the case further consideration.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — DISTRICT MEDICAL OFFICERS ACTING AS LAND AGENTS.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is usual or legal that the dispensary doctor of a district should be a land agent in the same district; and, whether, in the event of any instances being supplied him of such a state of facts, he will, as President of the Irish Local Government Board, cause steps to be taken to remedy it?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: As a medical officer of a district is not bound to give his whole time to the duties of his office, it would not be illegal, though it is not usual, for him to act as a land agent. If, however, it were shown that a medical officer undertook work of any kind that interfered with his official duties, the Local Government Board would take such steps as appeared necessary to secure due attention to the sick poor.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—INQUIRY AT EDENDERRY, KING'S COUNTY—MR. GEORGE DUNNE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the Poor Law inquiry recently held by Dr. Burke at Edenderry, King's County, Mr. George Dunne, Commissioner for taking affidavits, was examined as a witness; whether, on that occasion, he swore that one Behan was a monthly tenant of his at a pound a month, and that at the last payment Behan paid six pounds together for six months' rent; whether the counsel for the other side handed to the inspector four half-yearly receipts for rent given by Dunne to Behan, dated May and November in each year; whether the evidence and receipts are still in the hands of the Local Government Board; and, whether the matter has been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor or other Government official with a view to a prosecution?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts are substantially as stated in the Question, and Mr. Dunne added in his evidence that he accepted the rent from Behan in sums to suit his convenience. There was no conflict of evidence as to the fact of Mr. Dunne accepting half a-year's rent at a time from Behan, who was rated as the occupier of the house, and was allowed to vote; and the only difference of opinion appears to be as to whether Behan should be regarded as a yearly or a monthly tenant. There is, therefore, nothing in the case rendering it necessary to bring it under the notice of the Lord Chancellor, or any other Government official, with a view to a prosecution.

ARMY (NUMBERS)—THE 3RD BATTALION RIFLE BRIGADE.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is not a fact within the cognizance of the War Office, that out of 735 rank and file of the 3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade, on their way to garrison Gibraltar, 254 men have never been through a course of musketry; and how many of the 735 rank and file have not completed one and two years' service respectively?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I regret to have to repeat that I cannot give details as to the constitution of individual corps. I may, however, remark that the battalion in question is not going to the Soudan, but to Gibraltar, where musketry drill and practice can be carried on for recruits or other soldiers quite as well as at home.

EGYPT—WAR IN THE SOUDAN—THE ARMY AT KORTI.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the Secretary of State for War, What preparations, if any, are being made by boats or otherwise to maintain the communications and supplies of the Army at Korti during spring and summer?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The maintenance of communications on the Nile during summer is a matter for Lord Wolseley to arrange in conjunction with Sir Frederick Stephenson. Any requisitions which the Generals may make connected with the subject are receiving, and will continue to receive, immediate attention.

FRANCE—ALLEGED MEETING OF DYNAMITERS IN PARIS.

MR. GREGORY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been directed to a statement in *The Times* and *Standard* newspapers of the 24th instant, of a meeting of conspirators in Paris, with the avowed object of destroying buildings and sacrificing human life in this Country; and, whether he has any reason to believe such statement to be correct; and, if so, whether he can give the House an assurance of the friendly offices of the French Government in the detection and arrest of the gang?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: No, Sir; the information I have is that these sensational paragraphs are not well founded.

NAVY ESTIMATES—SERVICE IN EGYPT—PAY AND ALLOWANCES.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, When the Estimates for the pay and allowances of 1,000 men, Officers, Seamen, and Marines for Service in Egypt, referred to in page 11 of the Navy Estimates, will be presented to the House, and why the sum required is not included in the Navy Estimates for the coming year; and, whether this additional Estimate will make provision for any other charges falling upon Navy funds for services in Egypt?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The pay and allowances for 1,000 men for Service in Egypt will be provided for in a special Vote which will be laid on the Table in a few days, at the same time as the similar Vote for the Army. It was thought desirable to confine these charges in Estimates to ordinary Naval Services, with the addition only of expenses connected with the Army of Occupation and the transport of the Force in Bechuanaland.

NAVY—TIME-EXPIRED MEN.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If the Government have the power to retain time-expired men in the Navy, whether Seamen or Marines, and whether it is their intention to exercise that power; if it is, will some addition be made to the pay of the men during the period of their additional service, and a subsequent increase of pension be accorded to them proportionate to that prolongation of service, recommendations to that effect having been made by competent officers who, at the request of successive Boards of Admiralty, have considered and reported on the subject?

MR. CAINE (who replied) said: The Commanders-in-Chief on Foreign Stations have power to retain the services of time-expired seamen in the Navy in any emergency until such emergency shall have ceased. There is no intention to exercise such power at present; but, should it be exercised, extra pay of 2*d.* a-day would be given, and the additional time served would count for pension, in accordance with the Regulations. At home there is no power to retain the services of time-expired seamen, except by a Royal Proclamation. By law, time-expired men of the Marines can be retained on Foreign Stations for such further time, not exceeding two years, as shall be directed by the Commanding Officer. Should such power be exercised, the additional time served would count for pension, in accordance with the Regulations. The right hon. Gentleman is probably aware that it is open to certain classes in the Navy—petty officers of the seamen class, certain artificers, leading stokers, and stokers—to re-engage voluntarily for a third term of service. The Regulations provide for an increase of pay and pension in such circumstances; 157 men have re-engaged since 1880 under the Regulations.

EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Standard of Education in the Queen's Colleges will be in the hands of Members?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, in reply, said, the Report on the subject was only finally signed on the 23rd instant, and was presented on the following day. Its distribution is now merely a question of printing.

EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PARSONSTOWN MODEL SCHOOL—SUICIDE OF THE MASTER, MR. JOHN BUTLER.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. John Butler, late head-master of the Parsonstown Model School, committed suicide by shooting himself with a rifle on Sunday, 7th December, 1884, a few days before the time fixed for the results examination of his school; whether any investigation has been held by the Commissioners of National Education regarding the statement in the newspapers that "apprehension as to this examination had preyed on his mind;" whether any threats of dismissal, reprimand, or other form of punishment had been held out to him by the Commissioners or their officers in reference to this or any previous examination; whether it is the fact that all Mr. Butler's predecessors in the head-masterships were Catholics; and, whether, in departing from the usual line of appointment, events have justified the wisdom and foresight of the Commissioners?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Butler committed suicide on the 7th of December, 12 days before the date appointed for his results' examination. The Report on the school for the previous year had been unfavourable; and he had been warned that if the next Report were not generally satisfactory the Commissioners would have to consider the propriety of removing him. The Commissioners have received a full Report of the case from their Inspector. It contains no reference to such a cause of the suicide as that stated in the Question; but it points to the fact, of which the Commissioners were not previously aware, that Mr. Butler had been in a lunatic asylum. Mr. Butler's predecessors had been Catholics; but the great preponderance of the pupils in the school were Protestants, and a teacher of this persuasion was selected in accordance with a Regulation made in 1878, that the teacher, as a rule, shall be of the religion of the majority of his pupils. The Commissioners have no reason to be dissatisfied with the operation of this Rule.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS — MAGHERACLOGHER DIVISION, DUNFANAGHY UNION.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the election of a Poor Law Guardian, in March 1884, for the Magheraclogher Division of the Dunfanaghy Union having been set aside, the relieving officer held a new election in July 1884, and allowed a vote to John Williams, petty sessions clerk, Bunbeg, though warned that John Williams had not been in occupation of the qualifying premises for eleven years, and this July election having been also set aside, a second new election was held last month, at which John Williams, petty sessions clerk, again tendered a fraudulent vote, which was again, in the face of a protest on the spot, received and counted by the returning officer; what explanation of these proceedings is given by the Local Government Board; what notice the Government will take of the conduct of the petty sessions clerk; and, whether the returning officer in question will be permitted to act in that capacity in the forthcoming annual election of Poor Law Guardians for the Dunfanaghy Union?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that Mr. Williams did vote on both the occasions specified; and the Returning Officer, on being referred to, states that Mr. Williams was allowed to do so as he appeared to be, on each occasion, the rated occupier of premises entitling him to vote. The Local Government Board have no evidence before them to the contrary, and have no reason to believe that the action of the Returning Officer in connection with this vote was such as to render him undeserving of confidence.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ARMY EXPENDITURE.

MR. BUCHANAN asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it will be within the scope of the proposed Select Committee on Army Expenditure to consider the financial relations of the Home and Indian Armies, and the amount and details of the Home charges, in connection with the Indian Army, which are thrown on the Indian Exchequer?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): It will be in the province of the Select Committee to decide what items of Army Expenditure it will take up and discuss. I should question whether the details of the Home charges falling on the Indian Exchequer were within the proposed Reference; but this will be a matter for the Committee.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS — CONSERVATIVE "RELIEF" TICKETS.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked Mr. Attorney General, If his attention has been called to the fact that tickets, of which the following is a copy, are being largely distributed by the Conservative Association in Birmingham:—

> "Small Heath Conservative Association.
> Relief for the Unemployed.
> The bearer is entitled to goods to the value of sixpence upon presenting this ticket to
> Mr. ———
> Grocer."

and that these tickets are stamped with the name of the Ward Conservative Association which issues them, and with the name and address of the Secretary of the Association; and, whether this proceeding is a violation of the Corrupt Practices Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, the only information that he had on the subject was a copy of the ticket that had been sent to him, and which appeared to have been issued. He was very unwilling to express any opinion in anticipation of matters that might come up for legal decision; but he thought everyone would agree with him that any connection between political organizations and free gifts of money or food was to be regretted, and ought to be avoided if possible. If any Association, Liberal or Conservative, had asked his advice on such a subject, he would have certainly suggested that there were grave doubts as to the legality of the practice. If any candidate were to accept the services of an organization concerned in such proceedings he would run considerable risk.

ARMY — HOME BATTALIONS (NUMBERS).

SIR HARRY VERNEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will consider the propriety of increasing the efficiency of the Army by filling up the Home Battalions of Regiments, in India or elsewhere Abroad, to the strength of say 800 men, which would supply the drafts made from the Battalion, without too much weakening it?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The subject of increasing the low-strength battalions has of late engaged considerable attention. When the Army Estimates are distributed, the hon. Baronet will see that all the low-strength battalions have been raised to an establishment of 600 rank and file, which, with a depôt of 50, is regarded as a sufficient strength to supply the draft without unduly weakening the Home Battalion.

THE LUNACY LAWS—LEGISLATION.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he has noticed the following statement in the last Report of the Lunacy Commissioners:—

> "The large annual addition to the number of insane persons under care has produced in some quarters an impression that insanity itself is much on the increase. On examination, however, of the figures now under consideration, it will be found that the increase is almost entirely due to accumulation of chronic cases, so that the community at large would not appear more liable than formerly to be attacked with insanity;"

whether this accumulation of chronic cases has been used by the Commissioners for a series of years to account for the continuous increase of numbers; whether the registered insane in the United Kingdom, including Ireland and Scotland, have nearly doubled within a comparatively brief period, being in 1862 55,525 as against 103,660 at the date of the last Returns; and, whether, in view of the great increase of numbers, as shown by these figures, and of the emphasis laid by the Commissioners on—

> "The imperative necessity of making the accommodation for such accumulated cases keep pace with the requirements,"

and considering the unsatisfactory state of the Lunacy Laws generally, he will consent to the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the whole subject of lunacy and lunatic asylums before further legislation is carried out?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER, in reply, said, the Secretary of State had not had his attention specially drawn to the point raised by the hon. Member, and had not yet been able to ascertain whether the increase of chronic cases had been used in the manner suggested. The Lord Chancellor was about to introduce into the House of Lords a Bill to amend the Lunacy Laws. The matter had been so fully gone into by a previous Committee that it was not necessary now to appoint another one.

Mr. W. J. CORBET: Will the Bill extend to Ireland?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I am not in a position to answer that Question.

THE GENERAL ARMY RETURN.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, When the General Annual Return for the Army for 1884 will be issued?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The number of regiments on field service increases the difficulty of preparing this Return; but every effort is being made to complete the "Preliminary General Annual Return," to which, I presume, the hon. Member refers, by the 1st of April, the date fixed for its yearly appearance. There is no probability of the final Return being ready earlier than in past years.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether the noble Marquess would furnish a statement showing the effective strength on the 1st of January?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he would see whether that could be done.

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND)—CO. DONEGAL.

Mr. LEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If only four out of the one hundred and two miles of tramway and light railways projected and brought before the Grand Jury of the county of Donegal have been passed by the Privy Council; if the result is similar in the other districts of the West of Ireland, to benefit which the Tramways and Light Railways Act was chiefly passed; and, if the Act, being thus practically useless, will the Government undertake its early amendment?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware of the exact mileage of the tramways and light railways that have been projected in County Donegal under the Tramways Act of 1883; but it appears that three schemes, covering in all 33 miles, came before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council from that county, and that only one of these, a line of four miles in length, passed the Committee. Of the other two, one was rejected because the estimate was considered unsatisfactory; and the other because it was proposed to tax an area that could not benefit by the line. I find that in the four counties of Galway, Sligo, Clare, and Kerry, schemes for 239 miles came before the Privy Council, and 99 miles were passed. It cannot be said, when over 100 miles have been approved in the counties I have named, that the Act has proved "practically useless." Some of the schemes that have been rejected will again be brought forward, and perhaps, with experience, the difficulties will be overcome. The matter is one of great importance; and the Government will carefully watch the operation of the Act, both in the working of schemes already passed, and with reference to new proposals.

MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL—LEGISLATION.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If he will state what his intentions are with regard to the Medical Act Amendment Bill?

MR. MUNDELLA: This matter is at present under consideration; but I am not yet in a position to make any definite statement upon it.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—JUDICIAL RENTS.

MR. BARRY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that grave and widespread dissatisfaction exists in Ireland at the judicial rents fixed by the Land Commissioners; and, whether, in view of the continued depreciation in the value of land in Ireland, and the increasing severity of foreign competition, he will take any steps to amend that section of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," which fixes the judicial rent for a term of fifteen years?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware that such dissatisfaction as that implied in the Question of the hon. Member exists in Ireland at the judicial rents fixed by the Land Commissioners; and there is no intention on the part of the Government to take any steps to amend the section of the Land Act referred to?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he has not heard of several deputations of tenants applying to landlords for reductions in the judicial rents?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is all the world over dissatisfaction with rent. I do not suppose there is anywhere in which that dissatisfaction does not exist; but the hon. Member's Question referred to widespread dissatisfaction existing all over Ireland with the judicial rents.

MR. BARRY: In consequence of the extraordinary reply of the right hon. Gentleman, I beg to give Notice that I will call attention to this matter at the earliest opportunity.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS COMMISSIONERS—THE KELSICK SCHOOL, AMBLESIDE.

MR. W. LOWTHER asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the stipulations of the Act of Parliament, which requires that an Education Scheme should remain upon the Table of the House sixty days, have been complied with as regards the Kelsick School, at Ambleside, the Scheme having been laid upon the Table of the House on the 23rd October, notice of objection having been given for the 17th November and 9th December; and, whether, though Parliament was adjourned on the 6th December, there is not still a period during which the Scheme may be considered as lying upon the Table of the House?

MR. MUNDELLA: The scheme relating to this school was laid upon the Table of both Houses of Parliament on the 23rd of October last; and I am advised that, having lain not less than two months during the same Session of Parliament, the conditions of the statute have been fulfilled, and that I have no further discretion in the matter.

AFRICA (WEST COAST) — REPORTED REVOLT ON THE GOLD COAST.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether there is any truth in the report that the natives have revolted at Quittah, on the Gold Coast, and that the Governor was severely wounded; and, whether he can state to the House what has occurred there?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The report to which my hon. Friend refers has only appeared in German newspapers, and conveys a very exaggerated view of the matter. There has been nothing more than a very serious police affray. On the 17th of January a party of Houssa police, under the command of District Commissioner Campbell, were attacked some little distance from Quittah by a body of the Awoonah tribe. One of their Chiefs was being taken away by the police on account of his action on the previous day in heading a body of these same Natives who had stopped a smaller body of police who were escorting a prisoner to Accra. The Houssas had to use their arms in self-defence, and the District Commissioner was badly wounded.

ARMY—CHELSEA HOSPITAL—TRANSFERENCE OF THE PENSION WORK TO THE WAR OFFICE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is still in contemplation to remove the pension work from Chelsea Hospital to the War Office; and, if any change is to be made in the present arrangements connected with Chelsea Hospital?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There is no immediate intention of making the change referred to. It is dependent on the question of accommodation, which is unlikely to be settled until the new War Office is built.

NAVY—NEW DESIGNS FOR SHIPS.

Sir EDWARD J. REED asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will be good enough to state what facilities will be offered to those Members of Parliament who may desire to see the drawings of Her Majesty's Ships of the *Admiral* class, which are now under construction, and for which Votes are asked in the Navy Estimates of the present year?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Arrangements will be made to enable Members of Parliament to see the drawings of the *Admiral* class at the Admiralty. An officer will be in attendance ready to offer the necessary explanations at any time which hon. Members may appoint by letter to the Controller of the Navy.

Sir EDWARD J. REED asked, Whether the experiments upon models of ships, which were conducted for the Admiralty by the late Mr. W. Froude, are being continued by his son, Mr. R. E. Froude; and, if so, in what place, at what annual expense, and under what conditions, also under what Vote and Sub-Vote of the Navy Estimates their expense is to be found; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House an annual Report upon the results obtained, together with such of Mr. Froude's Reports as may be useful to naval architects and men of science generally?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: The experiments are being continued by Mr. R. E. Froude at Torquay, at an annual cost of about £2,000. The expense is chargeable to the experimental item of Vote 10, Section 2.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—OCCUPATION OF MASSOWAH BY ITALY.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the occupation of Massowah and the other operations by Italian troops on the west coast of the Red Sea have the assent or approval of Her Majesty's Government; and, whether any Correspondence has passed between the Foreign Office and the Italian Government on the subject of such operations; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House?

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, Whether the Italian occupation of Massowah is adverse to the claim of Abyssinia to an independent outlet to the sea at that place?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Prime Minister will reply to a Question on this subject; but I propose, in the course of debate to-morrow, to make a statement on this subject, as requested by my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). This will be a more convenient course than to reply within the narrow limits usually assigned to the answer to a Question; but I may at once inform my hon. Friend that Papers will be laid without delay. The Italian Government have stated their intention to respect the Treaty between England, Egypt, and Abyssinia, and to do all in their power to facilitate Abyssinian trade.

SPAIN—COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS.

Mr. TOMLINSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What questions of policy prevent Her Majesty's Government from negotiating with the Government of Spain with the view of relieving the importation of British goods into the Spanish Antilles from the adverse differential treatment in respect to duties to which it is now subjected?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am afraid that my hon. Friend has misunderstood the reply which I gave on Monday. I then stated that whether

Her Majesty's Government entered into negotiations with Spain respecting the admission of British goods into the Spanish Antilles was a question of policy; and it was not my intention to convey that Her Majesty's Government were prevented by questions of policy from entering on these negotiations.

PARLIAMENT—THE STANDING COMMITTEES ON LAW AND TRADE.

MR. RAIKES asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is his intention, during the present Session, to propose the revival of the Standing Committees on Law and Trade?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that this would depend on the measures the Government decided to proceed with; and they could not make up their minds on that point until some progress had been made with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. Ample Notice should be given of any proposal to revive the Committees.

EGYPT—THE MILITARY EXPEDITION —LORD WOLSELEY'S INSTRUCTIONS.

MR. ONSLOW asked the First Lord of the Treasury, How it is that the instructions sent to Lord Wolseley defining the relative position of himself and General Gordon, and which were promised to be laid upon the Table as soon as it was felt that it could be done without practical inconvenience (November 10th, 1884), have not as yet been circulated to Members?

MR. GLADSTONE: There is no objection to lay the Papers on the Table.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—OCCUPATION OF MASSOWAH BY ITALY.

MR. GOURLEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the Italian Government has despatched to the Red Sea littoral, on the Soudan side, three Expeditions, consisting of about five thousand men, besides torpedo boats for Coast attack; and, whether those Expeditions are intended to co-operate with the British Troops now on their way to Suakin in rescuing some of the Egyptian garrisons; if not, can he inform the House, without prejudice to public interests, whether the Expedition has received the sanction of the British Government, as well as that of the so-called European Concert?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the latter part of this Question, which asks whether the Italian Government has acted with the sanction of the British Government, I have to say that the Italian Government is an independent Power, and does not require the sanction of the British Government to any measures which it may feel it to be its duty to undertake. With respect to communications with other Powers— what the hon. Gentleman terms "the so-called European Concert"—I am not in a position to say what communications may have been made to other Powers. I need not enter into the particulars of these Expeditions, whether they are accurately given by the hon. Member or not; the point of the Question is, whether the Expeditions are intended to co-operate with the British troops now on their way to Suakin in rescuing some of the Egyptian garrisons? My answer to that is that Italy is in the best relations, the most cordial relations, with this country; but that there is no alliance or plan of military co-operation between the two countries.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether these Expeditions have received the assent of the Turkish Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have already said that I am not cognizant of the communications that may have taken place between the Italian Government and the other Powers.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Are we to understand from the right hon. Gentleman's reply that no communication has been received by Her Majesty's Government from the Government of Turkey?

MR. GLADSTONE: I would rather have Notice of that Question; but what I have stated is strictly correct.

FRANCE AND CHINA—THE HOSTILITIES.

MR. MAGNIAC asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that the French Government have intimated to the German Government its intention during the pending hostilities with China to treat rice as contraband of war, and vessels carrying rice as a carrying of contraband; whether any similar intimation has been addressed to Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, whether they will lay it on the Table of the House; whether Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that this intimation is in accordance with International Law; and, whether they intend to recognize its being enforced on British vessels laden, or partly laden, with rice?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government do not know whether such a notification has been made to Germany. The French Government have officially notified to Her Majesty's Government their intention of treating rice as contraband of war during the existing hostilities between France and China. Her Majesty's Government, after consultation with the Law Advisers of the Crown, consider that they cannot assent to the right claimed by the French Government to declare rice generally contraband of war, and they will inform the French Government accordingly.

EGYPT—MR. WILFRID BLUNT.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF gave Notice that to-morrow he would ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether on the 23rd of April 1884, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt addressed to him a letter, in which there occurred the following passage:—

> "Since then I have most opportunely received information which leads me to feel certain that, if properly approached, not only could there be obtained terms from the besiegers of Khartoum, which should include General Gordon's safe return from Khartoum, with such of his companions as might choose to accompany him, but that a general pacification of the Upper Nile might at the same time, and by the same means, be effected;"

whether, this letter having been submitted to the Cabinet, an answer was returned to Mr. Blunt on the 30th of April, in the following terms:—

> "Mr. Gladstone desires me to thank you for your offer to act as mediator in the Soudan, of which, however, Her Majesty's Government are not able to make use, inasmuch as it must already be known throughout that region that they, in common with the Government of Egypt, have no other desire than to promote the evacuation of the country, and the restoration of its liberties;"

whether, on Christmas Eve, 1884, Mr. Blunt, together with the President of the International Peace and Arbitration Association, and an Egyptian gentleman in full possession of the Mahdi's views, called on him, but were refused admittance; and, further, if he can state the reasons for which Her Majesty's Government, knowing Mr. Blunt's intimate experience of the Arab tribes, peremptorily dismissed his proposals, without first examining the proofs and details of the allegations he had made that it was possible, by peaceable means, to deliver General Gordon and his companions from the hands of the Mahdi and his adherents?

Mr. GLADSTONE: As my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) is engaged in an important discussion in "another place," I would rather not call upon him to-morrow to go through all these details.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: It is desirable that the House should have a distinct answer before the division.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I will give as full an answer as I can from my own knowledge; but it may not be a complete answer.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—PROCEDURE ON THE VOTE OF CENSURE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to put a Question to the Prime Minister—I do not know whether he will have any objection to answer it; but it would be a great convenience to the House if it can be answered—whether he has any opinion as to the course to be taken with respect to the voting on the Motion which stands in my name? I will explain in one moment where the difficulty lies. I have given Notice of a Motion which I have brought forward, and the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) has moved to omit my words in order to add other words. The Prime Minister announced that he intended to oppose both the Motion and the Amendment. The Question I have to ask is, whether it is the intention of the Government, in the first instance, to vote for the retention of my words, in order that the House may afterwards pronounce an opinion upon them for or against; or whether they intend to vote in the first instance against the retention of my words, in which case the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle would become the substantive Motion, and might lead to a considerable number of Amendments?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think there will be no dfficulty in dealing with the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman if the usual course is pursued. The usual course is for a Party giving Notice of a Vote of Censure to abide by it. But I found this morning that there was a second Vote of Censure proceeding from the same Party and the same Bench. I quite understood the course we should take in voting; but as the right hon. Gentleman raises a new point, I will consider it before to-morrow's debate.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: There can be very little doubt as to what my noble Friend's (Lord George Hamilton's) Amendment means. It is to meet the case of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle becoming the substantive Motion without the House having another course before it.

MR. GLADSTONE: My intention certainly was to vote against the Motion "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question;" but I will further consider it.

PARLIAMENT — THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE — SUSPENSION OF MR. O'BRIEN.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to know whether the Government will allow the Motion for going into Committee of Supply to be made in the ordinary way on Friday night, so that the Motion of which I have given Notice in respect to Mr. Speaker's action in Naming Mr. O'Brien on Tuesday may be brought to an issue?

MR. GLADSTONE: The Government are not prepared to interfere with the ordinary course of procedure.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that it is not intended to give precedence to the Motion of the hon. Member?

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not think we have any option in the matter. My duty to the right hon. Gentleman, and to the House, is to persevere in going on from day to day with a Motion which is in the nature of a Vote of Censure.

MR. HEALY: I wish to ask you, Sir, a Question upon a matter of Order in relation to an entry on the Votes, affecting the Journals of the House, which appears in the Votes at page 134, in the following words:—

> "Mr. O'Brien, Member for Mallow, having been Named by Mr. Speaker for abusing the Rules of the House, by disorderly interruption,"

and so on. Can you inform me, Sir, which of the Rules of the House the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) abused, and what was the nature of the disorderly interruption? Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, you will further inform me whether the new Standing Order, No. 12, is not in these terms—

> "That, whenever any Member shall have been Named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House, immediately after the commission of the offence of disregarding the authority of the Chair;"

and also if the Rule does not go on to say—

> "or of abusing the Rules of The House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the Business of the House, or otherwise."

That appears to be the Motion which ought to have been made; but the entry in the Journals is—

> "Mr. O'Brien, Member for Mallow, having been Named by Mr. Speaker for abusing the Rules of the House, by disorderly interruption."

The words in the Standing Order "or otherwise," simply refer to a breach of the Rules of the House, and do not give the Chair any distinct authority to Name a Member for disorderly interruption. I wish to ask which is correct—whether the entry in the Journals is correct, or the statement which you made in the House, that you suspended the hon. Member for Mallow for disregarding the authority of the Chair? At any rate, the latter is the statement which appeared in the newspapers on Wednesday; and the offence, in every report which I have seen, was for "disregarding the authority of the Chair," and not for "abusing the Rules of the House by disorderly interruption."

MR. SPEAKER: I have no difficulty in answering the Question of the hon. Member. I consider that the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) both disregarded the authority of the Chair, and also abused the Rules of the House by disorderly interruption—which is clearly covered by the words of the Standing Order "or otherwise."

MR. HEALY: May I call your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that the words "or otherwise" in no way justify your ruling? The words are these—

> "That, whenever any Member shall have been Named by Mr. Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the Whole House, immediately after the commission of the offence of disregarding the authority of the Chair, or of abusing the Rules of The House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the Business of The House, or otherwise."

That is to say, that there must be an abuse of the Rules of the House in one way or another. And, therefore, if your ruling is correct, there must be some other Rule in existence which is altogether different from that which I have read. There is a Rule against wilful and persistent Obstruction, and against any disregard of the authority of the Chair. Before a Member can be suspended he must abuse that Rule or some other. It is evident, therefore, Sir, that if your ruling is good there must be some other Standing Order; and I beg to ask what other Rule exists upon the matter?

MR. SPEAKER: I have given my ruling. I have explained the construction which I put upon the Standing Order, and the House is in possession of my reasons.

MR. HEALY: But I wish to ask you by what means you arrived at your decision that Mr. O'Brien ought to be suspended for "disorderly interruption?" I want to know whether the ruling comes within the Rule of Privilege, as I understand it does? When a Member challenges a Minute which appears in the Journals of the House for inaccuracy—because, Mr. Speaker, I am supported in that assertion, not only by the recollection of my hon. Friends, but by all the reports of your remarks which appear in the newspapers, that you suspended Mr. O'Brien for "disregarding the authority of the Chair." There is, no doubt, a distinct authority for that in the Standing Order; but I ask you when, and where, and how—[*Cries of* "Oh!"] That is "disorderly interruption," for which the hon. Members who resort to it are liable to be suspended. I wish to know how I am to challenge the entry made by the clerks in the Journals of the House, and whether I am not entitled to do so at once?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member objects to an entry in the Journals with reference to the proceedings of a previous day, he has only to give a Notice of Motion in the ordinary way.

MR. HEALY: Again I ask you, Sir, whether you are correctly reported in the use of those words? ["Order!"] I must remind hon. Members that this is a matter of taking away the rights of the elected Representatives of the people; and any power which Mr. Speaker has in this House is delegated from me and the likes of me, as well as from you (the Liberal Benches) and the likes of you. I beg to ask you, Mr. Speaker—and I do so with great respect—whether you are correctly reported in the Journals of the House to have used these words—

> "Mr. O'Brien, Member for Mallow, having been Named by Mr. Speaker for abusing the Rules of the House by disorderly interruption;"

or whether you are correctly reported in *The Times*, that you Named Mr. O'Brien for "disregarding the authority of the Chair?"

MR. SPEAKER: I do not accept the distinction drawn by the hon. Member. I Named Mr. O'Brien for disorderly interruption, which I think brought him within the Standing Order, by which power is given to me to enforce the authority of this House.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: May I ask the Prime Minister whether, as regards the Resolution of which Notice has been given by my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), seeing that it relates to the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair, he will afford the earliest opportunity for bringing it before the House?

MR. GLADSTONE: I see no reason whatever why I should deviate, in any respect, from the usual course of Public Business in order to afford an opportunity for the renewal of a scene such as that which we have recently witnessed.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: May I ask whether there has ever been a single instance where the conduct of Mr. Speaker has been impugned in which an opportunity was not immediately given for vindicating it?

MR. SPEAKER: The course now proposed—namely, to proceed by Notice—has been repeatedly followed when the conduct of the Speaker in the Chair has been challenged. In fact, that is the ordinary and proper course.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.—RESOLUTION.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [23rd February],

"That an humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them to assure a good and stable Government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."—(*Sir Stafford Northcote.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the first word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi,"—(*Mr. John Morley*,)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. CHAPLIN said, the debate in which the House was now engaged closed on Tuesday night with a speech, as powerful as it was searching and remarkable, from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). Both sides of the House—and he believed he might say the country as well—were much indebted to that right hon. Gentleman for his efforts to elicit further information from the Government. They were still, however, completely in the dark as to the ultimate objects of this war. They remained at present entirely ignorant of the ultimate aims which the Government were proposing to themselves. He could not say that he absolutely agreed with every one of the opinions expressed by the right hon. Member for Ripon upon the great variety of topics which he raised; but he could say that, for the most part, he entirely endorsed the views which fell from the right hon. Gentleman; and it would be his endeavour also upon this occasion to induce the Government even yet to throw some fresh light upon the situation. Perhaps, however, the House would allow him, in the first place, to say a word or two upon the Motion of his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition, which was more immediately before them. That Motion consisted of two parts—it censured the conduct of the Government in the past, and it indicated, in no indefinite degree, what, in the view of the Opposition, should be the policy to be pursued in Egypt and in the Soudan in the future. It complained, in the first place, of a vast expenditure of money and of life without any adequate or beneficial result. Well, they had spent out there already, as far as he could gather, sums which might be estimated at anything between £10,000,000 and £20,000,000; and the lives which had been sacrificed already must be numbered at something between 40,000 and 50,000, at the least, during the period within which the right hon. Gentleman had held sway and authority in Egypt. They included, unhappily, the lives of many gallant countrymen of our own, and among them that of England's greatest hero, whose prowess and whose name, whose noble and heroic life, had months ago become a beacon and a household word in every home and by every fireside wherever the English tongue was spoken and where civilization ruled, and for whom a nation and an Empire were mourning as one man to-day. And what were the results? The Prime Minister told them the other night that the kourbash and the *corvée* were abolished. [MR. GLADSTONE: No.] He begged pardon of the right hon. Gentleman; but he certainly believed he did say so.

MR. GLADSTONE: I hope the hon. Gentleman will be more careful in speaking upon these things. What I said was that an important step had been taken towards abolishing the kourbash and the *corvée.*

MR. CHAPLIN, continuing, said, then they were evidently to understand that even that result had not been achieved.

MR. GLADSTONE: No; I did not say so.

Mr. CHAPLIN: As a matter of fact they were not abolished. Their use might be diminished—he believed they were—but they were not abolished, as a study of the latest Blue Books laid upon the Table would disclose. But he was quite willing, with the utmost generosity, to make the right hon. Gentleman a present of his statement, whether they were abolished or were only diminished, if he thought that that was at all an adequate return for the expenditure of £20,000,000 and 50,000 lives. He was afraid that the condition of Egypt now for many months had been something which was little removed from bankruptcy, ruin, and general, if not complete, disorganization; while in the Soudan what they saw was chaos and anarchy and rebellion, with a whole desert up in arms against us, and in the midst of this was planted a gallant, a small, and scattered band of British heroes, who—although he did not like to take a pessimist view—were impotent, he greatly feared, to do more than to maintain themselves until fresh succour should reach them from these shores. That he believed to be a not inaccurate or exaggerated description of the position of the present, directly resulting from the policy of Ministers in the past; and they were there to-day, speaking, as they believed, the sentiment and feeling of the country, to demand a reckoning at the hands of those who had brought these things to pass. Now, why was it the Government had failed in Egypt and in the Soudan so completely as they had done? Because their policy in both had ever been a policy of inconsistency and vacillation, of indecision, of delay, and of retreat. It began in Egypt with the threatened withdrawal of the troops. "Retire and retreat as soon as possible" was their policy at that time; and that had been the tone and spirit of their actions ever since. So much for their policy in Egypt; and now he wanted the House to consider why the Government had failed so completely in the Soudan. They had failed in the Soudan because almost from the very first, after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, and after they had assumed the great responsibilities which they deliberately took upon themselves in Egypt, they adopted an attitude with regard to the Soudan by which they sought to separate and disassociate entirely the interests of Egypt from affairs in the Soudan. That was an attitude which every impartial person who was acquainted with the subject, either in Egypt or in England, could have told them, and would have told them, was impossible and ridiculous. From the first their policy was to ignore the Soudan altogether. Was that not so? He challenged the right hon. Gentleman opposite to contradict it. Like ostriches, they buried their heads in the sand, and imagined that because they declined to interfere with the affairs of the Soudan, the Soudan and its affairs would never interfere with them. They divested, or attempted to divest, themselves of all responsibility for the Soudan; and the Prime Minister repeated more than once that the affairs of the Soudan were entirely beyond the sphere of the political and military operations of his Government. He remembered being at Cairo, not long after the time when the unhappy General Hicks started on his fatal expedition, and having there a conversation with a distinguished Englishman; and he asked him this question—"Is it really possible that any English Government can sanction the departure of an English General upon an expedition so difficult and so dangerous as this is reported to be without giving him any assistance or support whatever?" His friend replied—"My dear fellow, what is the use of talking about the English Government; their policy is to ignore the Soudan altogether; they will have nothing whatever to do with it; they do not know where it is; I do not believe they have ever heard of it; they are not even aware that there is such a place in existence; and, what is more, you may be certain they never will so long as they can possibly avoid it." Now, that was an illustration of the way in which this Government had habitually attempted to evade their just responsibilities, not only in Egypt, but in all parts of the world. This attempt of the Government to avoid their legitimate and necessary responsibilities—necessary because of the position they had assumed in Egypt—was followed by prolonged indecision and delay on their part; and indecision and delay had produced their natural and inevitable results. The very first of these was the actual necessity of the war in which we were now engaged; for the movement which might have been suppressed with ease at first had now developed into a revolution and a general uprising of the Desert, which would tax all our resources to control and subdue, and which, if not subdued, would endanger the very safety and security of Egypt, with everything which that involved in the interests of England and of Europe. That was the first, and perhaps the main result, of Ministerial indecision and delay. But another would be found in the exceptional difficulties which were presented by the war in which we were now engaged; for those difficulties were chiefly due to the delay in the despatch of the Expedition. A third result was also occasioned by delay, and was probably the most melancholy of all. The Expedition only reached its destination just in time to be too late to rescue Gordon, or to save Khartoum; and a fourth result was what he must describe as, in his opinion, the hazardous position of our Forces on the Nile to-day. He might be asked—"Why is it that the Opposition never expressed their disapproval of the policy of non-interference on the part of the Government before?" His answer to that question would be—"We did express that disapproval at the earliest opportunity after the Papers were presented to us, and after policy of the Government was officially before us; and we have declared that disapproval over and over again." The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) made a very remarkable statement last Session on this question, which really deserved the attention of the House. He referred to the celebrated Report of Lord Dufferin, and said that that Nobleman described and that the Government acknowledged, the policy of non-interference as soon as Lord Dufferin's despatch was officially laid upon the Table; and he also made this further statement—that the Opposition, because they took no hostile measures at the time, must be held to have acquiesced in the policy of the Government. But he denied that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War stated the case rightly, and repudiated the conclusion which he drew. How did he support it? By the quotation of a single paragraph in Lord Dufferin's Report, which ran as follows:—

> "Colonel Hicks, a distinguished retired Indian officer, has been engaged by the Egyptian Government to join the Commander-in-Chief of the Soudan as Chief of the Staff. A few retired European officers accompany him, who, perhaps, will be able to inspire the troops with confidence. Both Colonel Hicks and his companions have entered the Egyptian Service on their own responsibility, nor have either Sir Edward Malet or myself been concerned in the arrangement."

That was the quotation the noble Marquess made, and upon which he based his absolutely unreasonable proposition that the Opposition had acquiesced in the policy of the Government. What were the facts of the case? The policy of the Government was one thing, and the policy of Lord Dufferin, as indicated in the despatch, was a totally different thing. The policy of the noble Lord and of his Friends in the Soudan was first non-interference, and afterwards abandonment. The policy of Lord Dufferin pointed to an exactly opposite conclusion. The subject was so important that he would read one or two more quotations from Lord Dufferin's despatch. They were as follows:—

> "Some persons are inclined to advise Egypt to withdraw altogether from the Soudan and her other acquisitions in that region; but she can hardly be expected to acquiesce in such a policy. Possessing the lower ranges of the Nile, she is naturally inclined to claim dominion along its entire course; and when it is remembered that the territories in question, if properly developed, are capable of producing inexhaustible supplies of sugar and cotton, we cannot be surprised at her unwillingness to abandon them. . . . A plan should be carefully considered for the future administration of the country. . . The first step necessary is the construction of a railway from Suakin to Berber. . . . . The completion of this enterprize would at once change all the elements of the problem. Instead of being a burden on the Egyptian Exchequer, these Equatorial Provinces ought to become, with anything like good management, a source of wealth to the Government. . . . . It would be wise upon the part of Egypt to abandon Darfour, and perhaps part of Kordofan, and to be content with maintaining her jurisdiction in the Province of Khartoum and Sennaar."

Did that point to a policy of non-interference? From the beginning to the end the despatch of Lord Dufferin, instead of recommending such a policy, teems with suggestions for the regeneration of the Provinces of the Soudan; and how the noble Lord could have quoted from it in support of such a policy he could not understand. He was grateful, however, to him for giving him the opportunity of referring to the despatches, because it bore directly on what was really the main question before them—namely, what should be our policy in the Soudan in the future? Now, there were three policies before us. The policy of the Opposition, the policy of the hon. Member for Newcastle, and that of the Government; and while two of them were clear and intelligible, the third was scarcely worthy of being dignified with the name of a policy. He would take the policy of the Opposition first. His right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition would seek to establish a stable Government in Egypt and in those parts of the Soudan which were necessary to its security. The Prime Minister said that the Opposition had not defined them. That was true; but he was not aware that it was incumbent upon them that night to define their boundaries precisely. That was a matter, possibly, for experts—at all events, for the most anxious and careful consideration hereafter. At the same time, he was not disposed to quarrel very greatly with the interpretation which the Prime Minister placed upon the Motion, that they must include Khartoum and all to the East of Khartoum. There, to some extent, he differed from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). Now, there might be much, perhaps, to be said against that policy. It had not been said at present. The Prime Minister objected to it; and why? Because it would establish a British Government over aliens—a Christian Government over Mussulmans. The right hon. Gentleman might use exactly the same language with reference to India at this moment. Whatever might be said of the proposals of his right hon. Friend, they constituted a clear and intelligible policy, and the Conservative Party supported it for this simple reason—namely, that a stable Government in those parts of the Soudan was absolutely necessary to the well-being and to the tranquillity of Egypt, and the tranquillity of Egypt was necessary to the interests of England and of Europe. He had said that there were three policies before them. He ought to have said four, and the policy of the right hon. Member for Ripon was the fourth. The right hon. Gentleman had taken exception to the interpretation which was placed by the Prime Minister upon the Motion of his right hon. Friend with regard to the area proposed to be included in the Soudan on the ground that it was unnecessarily wide. The right hon. Member for Ripon had asked why the whole of the Eastern Soudan should be necessary to the security of Egypt? The answer, he was afraid, must be that unfortunately it was so, and that it was essential, at all events, to the peace of those parts of the Soudan which were necessary to the security of Egypt. The right hon. Member for Ripon proposed another alternative—namely, that we should get a grip upon the Nile by holding Berber and the railway from Berber to Suakin. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman so far. That much was necessary, of course; but how were we going to get our grip upon the Nile, and to keep the railway by holding Berber, and by holding that alone? They must look upon this matter from a practical point of view. The railway would be 280 miles in length; and he had been told that it would take 30,000 men to hold Berber and to guard the line along its whole length. How were we going to protect such a length of line against hostile tribes to the North and to the South unless they were subdued, and the tribes, at all events in the South, would never be subdued unless we held Khartoum? The tribes could travel easily great distances through the Desert. Nothing could be easier for them than to cut the railroad at any point at which it might be undefended; and his strong belief was that for the safety of the railroad only it would be absolutely necessary to hold Khartoum and probably Kassala as well. Moreover, he could not conceive anything less likely to conduce to the peace of the Soudan than to have two opposing Forces—the English or Egyptian Forces at Berber, and an unbroken Force of the Mahdi at Khartoum. His own opinion was that so serious was the enterprize in which we were now engaged that no half-measures would suffice; and he could not help expressing the opinion, with all deference and respect, that the plan of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) was not sufficiently practicable to be likely to lead to a permanent solution of the question. He now came to the policy of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), who was a thorough-going reformer; and, judging from his speech the other night, he would like to introduce a Reform Bill for the Empire without delay which would reform it out of existence altogether. The hon. Member stated that we had already undertaken responsibilities which were long past the limits within which they could be properly discharged. But how and in what quarter would the hon. Member propose to reduce them? Would he give up India? He supposed the hon. Member belonged to the "Perish India" school. Would he begin by abandoning the Colonies at a time when they were showing such noble attachment and loyalty to the Mother Country? Politicians of the hon. Member's stamp ought to give the House some idea of the ultimate objects which they had in view. But he was certain of this—that the hon. Member's views, whatever they might be, were entirely alien to the sentiments and feeling of the people of the country and the Empire of which, he supposed, with the exception of the hon. Member for Newcastle, they were all so proud to belong. As to the Soudan, there was no possibility of mistaking the hon. Member's intentions. He saw not the slightest obligation to establish, and probably no object in establishing, a stable Government in the Soudan. On the contrary, he would leave it to the people of the Soudan to work out their own deliverance for themselves. That would include, he presumed, the immediate withdrawal of our Forces on the Nile. He supposed the hon. Member would at once countermand the second Expedition. [MR. JOHN MORLEY: As soon as practicable.] That policy was clear and intelligible, though he need not say he entirely disapproved of it, and foresaw very considerable difficulties in its execution as well. But what were they to think of the proposals of the Government, which appeared to be absolutely purposeless and absolutely unintelligible? What was the object of the war in which we were now engaged? The House was still as much in the dark on that point as they had been when this debate commenced. That was a question which had been pressed upon the Government from all sides of the House, and it was a question which he hoped would continue to be pressed until they got the information they had a right to demand. Was it the intention of Her Majesty's Government to establish a stable Government in the Soudan? No. That was the policy of his right hon. Friend, which the Prime Minister repudiated altogether. Was it for the relief or the rescue of Lord Wolseley and his Forces? No; the Prime Minister said he took no pessimist view whatever of their position. Then, was it to be a war for *prestige* or revenge? He declined altogether to be a party to any such proceeding. "No," said the Prime Minister; "we must overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum." Well, and afterwards—what then? The Prime Minister was dumb; absolutely dumb. [MR. GLADSTONE: No, no!] No; not absolutely dumb, because the right hon. Gentleman had given them the other night a shadow, a glimmering, of a half-formed purpose and intention to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon had already referred. The sentence in which the policy of the Government was propounded was a model of ambiguity, and was characteristic of the Ministry. It ran thus—

> "What we say is that we are not prepared at the present moment to say that there is no obligation on us to leave behind us an orderly Government, and we cannot say now at a stroke without going further that we will abandon at once and for ever the idea of doing anything for the establishment of a Government there."

Quite irrespective of all Party considerations, there was no man in that House who did not feel that at this moment the Empire was in a position of very considerable danger, and that we were in the face of a national crisis of no inconsiderable dimensions; and he appealed to hon. Members on both sides of the House to say whether, under circumstances similar to these, there ever had been such a statement put forward by a Prime Minister before? It came to this. The right hon. Gentleman would not pledge himself to anything; and at a moment when the whole country was hanging on his lips to know what the policy of England really was to be, all he vouchsafed to say was that he would not absolutely pledge himself to do nothing after he had broken the power of the Mahdi. What the House wanted to know was this. Was he going to do anything at all, and what was it to be? If he repudiated the policy of establishing a stable Government in the Soudan, which was the policy of the Opposition, would he establish any kind of Government at all, and what kind of Government was it that he proposed to leave behind him? The fact was that the right hon. Gentleman did not appear to know himself, or, if he did, he was too much afraid of his Radical supporters to say what it was. In the face of a crisis such as this, this was trifling—trifling with Parliament, trifling with the people; and he hoped that the House of Commons would at last put down its foot and mark its sense and condemnation of this never-ending weakness and irresolution which had brought us to the present terrible state of things. Whatever might be thought of the original policy of the Government in the Soudan, nothing could excuse, nothing could condone, nothing, as far as he knew, could even qualify the conduct of the Government towards General Gordon after they had sent him to Khartoum. It was difficult on Monday night even to listen with ordinary patience and courtesy to the speech of the Prime Minister on that point. It was pitiable to hear his lame excuses for an absolutely indefensible position. They were torn to shreds by his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson), and he would not enter upon them again to-night; but he made this assertion in defiance of the statement of the Prime Minister—he affirmed that there was nothing to render impossible the despatch of Lord Wolseley's Expedition for the relief of Gordon two months at least before it started; that it could have been despatched; that it ought to have been despatched; and that no one, he believed, was more disgusted than Lord Wolseley himself at the delay of the Expedition, and that the fruits of that delay were being reaped by our Forces on the Nile at present. That was his assertion, and if there were any Member of the Cabinet who would get up in his place and dispute it, he challenged him to grant a Committee of Inquiry, and so disprove it. The Government told them that Gordon fell because he was betrayed. He replied that their long and unpardonable delay—their inaction—was the blackest and cruellest treachery towards him; and more than this—he said that on them, the English Government, must rest for ever in the first place the disgrace, the dishonour, and the guilt of the life and of the blood of that noble and heroic man. But, great as was the guilt of their conduct towards General Gordon, and although he believed that in the country it would be the last straw that would break the camel's back, it was only one among the innumerable array of their misdeeds. An hon. Member said the other night that we were menaced at this moment from almost every quarter. Unhappily, that was true to-day; but it was not true as long as Lord Beaconsfield was Prime Minister of England. It was not pleasant, at a time like this, to be reminded, as day by day hon. Members walked through the Lobbies into that Assembly, that they had in their very midst at the moment he spoke the agents of revolution and disorder, the foes and the implacable enemies of all society and all civilization in the world. And what about Ireland? Ireland was part of the United Kingdom. Was Ireland a source of strength or a source of weakness to the Empire at a moment like the present? After 15 years' experience of the policy of the Prime Minister in Ireland, there could not be a doubt that Ireland was never more discontented with the English rule, or more bitterly opposed to the English connection, than she was to-day. Some of her Representatives—even Members of that House—had not scrupled quite recently to speak in public in terms of exultation over the difficulties with which the Empire was surrounded. It was impossible to deny that, in our hour of need, she was a source of weakness rather than of strength to the Empire to-day. How did we stand abroad? France alienated and cold; Germany and Prince Bismarck, whose relations with this country under the Government of Lord Beaconsfield were friendly and cordial in the extreme, and which might be so as he believed again, but for the right hon. Gentleman, were barely civil to us now—indeed, he might say positively rude. And as for Russia, he did not even like to dwell upon the position of Russia on the Frontier of India at this moment. Now, what he wished to submit—and, whatever the House might think, he was not submitting it from Party considerations—was that all these things had followed upon five years of the rule of the right hon. Gentleman.

They were the outcome—the natural and inevitable outcome—of the madness of the Mid Lothian campaign. We were paying the price of that campaign to-day, and a heavy reckoning it was. These were some of the consequences in which he and we were foundering and floundering — perhaps the right hon. Gentleman might remember the expression—in which he and we were foundering and floundering to-day. The only bright spots which he saw in the political horizon were the heroism of our troops in Egypt on the one hand, and the significant and spontaneous outburst of loyal attachment on the part of our Colonies on the other. This incident alone, as gratifying and remarkable as it would become historic, ought in itself to give courage and determination to any English Government worthy of the name. What was to be done to recover a position which was the legacy of Lord Beaconsfield, and which had been so cruelly squandered by the present Prime Minister? Two things, in his opinion, were absolutely essential. The first was to get rid of the Prime Minister and recover the friendship of our Allies in Europe. The second, to increase, and to largely increase, without delay, the Military and Naval Forces of the country, which, if all we heard were true, were too sadly deficient at the present time. In the present position of the Empire, and as a matter for its safety, that was a question which he regarded as being an immediate and primary duty for whichever Party was to rule this country in the future. And now he must apologize to the House for the length to which he had detained them, and he had only this one more word to say. He was told that the Motion of his right hon. Friend was a weak one. Well, it contained no bad language, he admitted. He was not there to say that, if he had had the drafting of it, he might not very probably have used worse words instead. But that it was a weak one was not his opinion. It placed before the country a distinct, a great, a courageous, and an honest policy. Let there be no misunderstanding as to the meaning and the purpose of the Motion of his right hon. Friend. It meant, in his judgment, neither more nor less than this—that the Opposition were pledged to a policy which differed little from the establishment of a Protectorate in Egypt and in the Soudan for an indefinite period of time. That might be a wise or an unwise policy; in his opinion, the course of circumstances had made it an inevitable policy. But that it could be truly described as a weak policy he utterly denied. Let it not be supposed that the Opposition, representing, as they did, a great historic Party in this country, had entered lightly on this course, or pledged themselves to a policy such as this without much and anxious consideration. They were guided by motives which could not be mistaken. No man in his senses, no Party in their senses, could desire of their own accord to take Office at a moment like the present, and succeed to the desperate and appalling heritage which the right hon. Gentleman would leave behind him. But so great, in their opinion, was the peril of the Empire under the continued guidance of the right hon. Gentleman and those who sat around him, that they regarded it as their bounden duty to the nation, at whatever cost it might be to their Party and themselves, to compass the dismissal of this Government, if it were possible, and if necessary to take their places in the Councils of the Queen. In this great crisis of their country's fortunes they were neither afraid nor unprepared to do so. He knew not what might be the course which would be taken by the majority of the House on that occasion; but he did know this—that for the votes which would be given upon this question they would all of them have shortly to give an account to the great tribunal of the nation. And sure he was of this—that whatever the result of the division in this House to-morrow night, not many months — it might be not many weeks — would pass before the accumulated errors of the Government, their craven conduct and imbecile purpose with regard to Egypt—above all, their treachery to Gordon and their black betrayal of that gallant hero—would meet its righteous and its just reward in the deep and bitter execrations of an outraged people and of an indignant nation.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, the hon. Member who has just spoken claims to be a prominent Representative of patriotic principles; and, in a period confessedly of great difficulty and anxiety in this nation, what he proposes to an English House of Commons and to the English people is that they shall dismiss a Prime Minister, who is Prime Minister upon this title, and upon this title alone—that he has received the confidence of the people; and for what reason? To disarm the hostility of Foreign Governments. That is the patriotic policy of the Conservative Opposition.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I said he should be dismissed in order that we may recover the Allies whom his mistaken policy has estranged.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: That comes to much the same thing. The English people are to dismiss a Prime Minister to recover their Allies. I am old enough to remember that exactly the same thing used to be said many years ago about another Prime Minister—also the head of the Liberal Party. Attacks were made year after year upon Lord Palmerston because he was unpopular with Foreign Governments, and it used to be said in those days—"Dismiss the Minister in order that you may recover the alliance of Austria, Germany, and France." But, Sir, there was pride enough in the House and in the country to reject that species of patriotic appeal. I doubt whether an appeal of that character is likely to strengthen the position of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire. Passing from that eminently patriotic argument, which does not conduce much to the dignity of the House—[*Ironical laughter.*]—well, I am entitled to my opinion that to dismiss the person who is Prime Minister, and who commands a majority in this House, in order to please foreign nations, is not a very dignified or patriotic course. Now, Sir, it is somewhat difficult in this debate to answer what I was going to call the triangular, but what are rather the multi-angular, arguments by which it is beset. I shall have something to say later to the argument—the powerful argument—of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). But I must say that, while differing a great deal from what the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire has said, I must thank him in one sense, as he will shorten my speech in the debate, for he has said a great deal of what I intended to say in answer to my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon. I am obliged to the hon. Member for having fired his shot into the steel armour of the right hon. Member for Ripon. I may excuse myself for taking part in the debate on the ground that I have never addressed the House on the Egyptian Question since it commenced. There is one topic which I should like to mention. I was perfectly satisfied—I think we were all perfectly satisfied—with the statements made by the Prime Minister on the subject of General Gordon. I think hardly any man who has had what I cannot help calling the misfortune of responsibility in these transactions—whatever harsh terms may be used in debate—I think no fair-judging man will think that we do not feel as strongly on this subject as you do. Therefore, I do not think it necessary to notice any harsh language which would attribute to us any intentional disregard or neglect of the interests or the life of that illustrious man. I take no notice of such a word as "treacherous," which has been employed in this debate. But one charge you are entitled to make, which we are bound to answer, and that is, that we have committed errors of judgment, and that, if we had acted sooner, we might have prevented that great catastrophe. Now, if you say, by the light of recent events, that we were wrong in sending Gordon to the Soudan, I am not prepared to deny it. Unquestionably, knowing what we know now, no power on earth would induce me to consent to that step. But before you censure us on this head, consider what the circumstances were in which we were placed. Hicks Pasha had been defeated. We had determined that the Egyptian Government should evacuate the Soudan, which they agreed to do, though not willingly at first; and they asked us to provide them with an officer—that, I think, was the phrase—to assist in the evacuation of the garrisons. Well, the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) said we did not know where the Soudan was. But there was one man who did, and it was Gordon, whom we consulted. Now, I am not endeavouring to shield ourselves from any responsibility under Gordon's name. I refer to him to show that we took what means we could to obtain information. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire has said—"You ought not to have attempted to evacuate the

Soudan;" and he has read some passages from Lord Dufferin's Report. But there is a greater authority than Lord Dufferin on the question of the Soudan. I have great respect for Lord Dufferin, but he had never been in the Soudan; but General Gordon had been there, and knew it better. Now, I am not putting the responsibility of the evacuation of the Soudan on Gordon; that responsibility is all our own. But when we instructed Gordon to evacuate the Soudan, what did he say? At the beginning of last year there was laid upon the Table of Parliament a Memorandum by General Gordon, which was received on February 1. It is Egypt, No. 7. General Gordon there says—

> "Though it is out of my province to give any opinion as to the action of Her Majesty's Government in leaving the Soudan, still I must say it would be an iniquity to reconquer these peoples, and then hand them back to the Egyptians."

MR. CHAPLIN: Without what?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Without guarantees of future good government. [*Opposition cheers.*] Wait till you have heard the rest. Gordon then adds—

> "It is evident that this we cannot secure them without an inordinate expenditure of men and money. The Soudan is a useless possession—ever was so, and ever will be so."

You have our opinion, and this is the justification of our opinion—

> "Larger than Germany, France, and Spain together, and mostly barren, it cannot be governed except by a Dictator, who may be good or bad. If bad, he will cause constant revolt. No one who has ever lived in the Soudan can escape the reflection, What a useless possession is this land? Few men, also, can stand its fearful monotony and deadly climate. . . . . Therefore, I think that Her Majesty's Government are fully justified in recommending its evacuation, inasmuch as the sacrifices necessary towards securing good government would be far too onerous to admit of such an attempt being made. Indeed, one may say it is impracticable at any cost."—(Egypt. No. 7 (1884), p. 3-4.)

Therefore, if the policy of Gentlemen opposite is declared by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire in the speech he has just made, it is a policy which is denounced in the words of General Gordon which I have just read. General Gordon adds that the Soudanese will never be oppressed by men coming from lands so remote as Circassia, Kurdistan, and Anatolia. I hope my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon will remember that passage when I come to ask him some questions. That was the opinion of General Gordon; but there was another distinguished man, alas! also dead, General Stewart, who made his observations upon this Memorandum. He said—

> "I quite agree with General Gordon that the Soudan is an expensive and useless possession. No one who has visited it can escape the reflection, What a useless possession is this land, and what a huge encumbrance on Egypt."—[*Ibid.*]

Well, I understand that the policy of Gentlemen opposite is, if they cannot make the Soudan a huge encumbrance on Egypt, they will make it a huge encumbrance on the English people. And that is the issue as regards the future we have to decide. General Gordon, I say, went out fully accepting the policy of the evacuation of the Soudan, and fully convinced that it was possible to accomplish it peacefully. It may be asked now—"Why did not you send him at the head of a British Army?" Why, that never entered into our contemplation, nor into his. If that was wrong it was quite open to you to have condemned that policy, because we stated that General Gordon had gone on a distinctly peaceful mission. We may have been entirely mistaken in that. I believe we were mistaken; I now believe it was never possible to have entered the Soudan except at the head of a great British Army. These may have been errors; but they were errors not of people ignorant of the Soudan, not of people who did not know what it was, but they were errors of specialists. This is one of the great difficulties which I see in the situation with which we have to deal, that it is the men who have known the East best who have been found most mistaken in the circumstances which would arise from time to time. You cannot doubt for a moment that General Gordon, with his great knowledge of those countries, did believe it was possible to extricate those garrisons by peaceable means. He not only thought so when he left England, but he thought so when he reached Cairo, and for some weeks after he reached Khartoum. You will find from his earlier letters from Khartoum that he was still satisfied that his mission would succeed. I was rather surprised at the remark that we changed the character of General Gordon's mission after he started. Well, it was true that the character of his mission was changed, and that he had authority from the Khedive. But it was inevitable really, when you come to think of it. How could a man deal with the Egyptian garrison at Khartoum, with men who were subjects and servants of the Khedive, how could he resettle the Soudan and make arrangements in what was regarded as an Egyptian Province, without being clothed with the authority of the Khedive? Unless we had sent him out purely as a British Agent, to deal with a country that we intended to annex, it was inevitable that he should be clothed with the authority of the Khedive. Under the Firman of the Sultan Egypt had authority over the Soudan; and, therefore, how could we do otherwise than have General Gordon clothed with the authority of the Khedive? Another charge against us was made with fervid eloquence by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), who said—"You refused everything Gordon proposed." The first criticism upon anything Gordon had proposed did not come from us. Just before he entered Khartoum he issued a Proclamation which was attacked from the other side of the House; he issued a Proclamation referring to the toleration of slavery, and the attack did not proceed from these Benches. As to the formal proposals made by Gordon to us, what were those that were refused? Are they such as you think we ought to have supported? If so, I will ask you why you do not say so? His first proposal was that we should send out Zebehr. I did not hear of any great enthusiasm for that proposal at the time it was made. Our refusal was not based upon any indication that the appointment would have been made the subject of a Vote of Want of Confidence. I would not have been a party to sending out Zebehr. We had his character from Gordon himself. Gordon said the country could not be governed except by a Dictator, who might be good or bad. What sort of a Dictator would Zebehr have been? In my opinion, he was a man, according to Gordon's own showing, whom it would not have been right for the English people to have invested with influence or control. But there were other conditions. So generous were the impulses of Gordon that he believed of men better than they deserved; and if we had sent Zebehr I do not believe Gordon would have been safe. That is the justification of my opinion on the subject; and, therefore, for no reason do I think Zebehr ought to have been sent. There was another reason to which the Prime Minister referred. If we had consented the House of Commons would not have allowed Zebehr to be sent. Therefore, it would have been an idle step and a mischievous step to have sent out Zebehr to Khartoum, for to have had our authority revoked would have made the situation much worse than it was before. At the same time, it was suggested that we should send Gordon 2,000 or 3,000 Turkish troops. Were we right, or were we wrong, in refusing to send Turkish troops to Khartoum? Again I say that if we were wrong, I am not aware that anyone endeavoured to point it out. Then, we cannot order Turkish troops about as we might the English Militia. Turkish troops could have been sent only upon terms to which the Turkish Government would have agreed. Perhaps the Turkish Government would not agree to their going to Khartoum unless they were allowed to go elsewhere if they thought fit. You could not have sent Turkish troops to Khartoum unless you intended to make the Turks masters of Egypt. Is that your policy? If so, let us understand it. It is a definite policy, and let us know whether it be one that the House and the country will adopt. For one, I am not willing to place Egypt in the hands of Turkey. I do not think the Turkish government of other countries is one which would justify England in placing further territories under Turkish control. But does anybody think that 2,000 or 3,000 Turkish troops could have settled the Soudan or destroyed the Mahdi? The hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) may think so; but when we considered the difficulties that had to be encountered by General Graham with 4,000 British troops at Suakin in dealing, not with the Mahdi, but with Osman Digna, of whom comparatively little was then known, how can it be asserted that 2,000 or 3,000 Turkish troops could have marched to Khartoum and settled matters? It was utterly impossible. What lies at the bottom of the whole of this catastrophe? Is it not that we have not realized the immense amount of military force and military resistance to be encountered, and the great difficulties to be overcome? That is true; but the responsibility is shared by those who have an intimate knowledge of the East, and of the Soudan in particular. You would not have believed it if you had been told beforehand that there was in the neighbourhood a man who would hold his own in two pitched battles with 4,000 British troops. General Gordon, before he entered Khartoum, desired to commend himself to the Soudanese by telling them that he had been sent by the British Government to avert the sending of Turkish troops. Having declared that he was there to prevent the sending of Turkish troops, could we have agreed to Turkish troops going a few weeks after? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin condemns us for having rejected these two things. I say we should not be condemned.

MR. GIBSON: I said you never complied with a single request.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will show why we did not comply with the requests I refer to. It is said that we ought to have despatched a small force of Cavalry, less than 500, after General Graham's victories, from Suakin to Berber. I say that of all things that would have been most unjustifiable. Would anyone, after the experience of the battle of Abu Klea, now say that a handful of Cavalry should have been sent across a desert more waterless than the desert between Korti and Metammeh? How do we know what the men would have met at Berber; and does any man now, in the light of recent events, believe that if a few hundred men had gone to Berber they could have marched to Khartoum? I do not think so, and I am willing to state that as my reason for not having consented to the proposal. We had then had some experience of the mighty power of the tribes of the Desert, and we had fought the battle of El Teb, and after that to send the troops across 250 miles of almost waterless desert was not justifiable. That was the ground on which we could not accept the proposal. No responsible Government would have been safe in dealing with this matter except with a very considerable force, well organized. It may be asked—"Why not have sent General Graham's Force?" But you cannot send a force without transport. Is it known how 30,000 or 40,000 camels can be got together, and what time and measures it requires? We had no military means of doing it; and I appeal to any military authority as to whether it would not have taken weeks and months to transport a force of 4,000 men from Suakin to Berber? You could do it by railway, or by a gigantic transport; but either course would have taken a considerable period. That is why we did not take any of those courses to which I have referred. Then, what could we do? We could make preparations for an Expedition in the manner I have described, which, with adequate transport, would be able to convey a considerable force to the relief of General Gordon, and that we did. [*Cries of* "Too late!"] I say that the course we did adopt was to organize an Expedition which alone we considered safe to send, and to equip it with the necessary means of transporting it to Khartoum. Much has been said as to whether the best route for the Expedition was from Suakin to Berber, or by the Nile. I do not profess to offer any opinion upon that subject myself. I was bound to be governed, and was governed—and I consider myself to be justified in being governed—by military opinion. It was decided by the Military Authorities that at the time the Expedition was sent the Nile was the preferable route; and that, as far as I am concerned, was the justification for settling upon that route. Now it is said that all the circumstances to which I have referred have thrown us into the hot season, in which to send any force at all was highly dangerous and almost impossible; and therefore it was that the delay took place which retarded the advance of Lord Wolseley. Then it is said we were too late. Yes, Sir, too late—unhappily too late—because General Gordon had died, I think, two days after we were in the neighbourhood of Metammeh, close to Khartoum. But does that show that we had altogether miscalculated the time? Our calculation was founded on the military relief of Khartoum and the military leader. If there had been a military leader and he had been able to make his plans as before, what proof is there that we should not have been in time? If Gordon had been able to hold out a week or 10 days longer, it is quite certain that Sir Herbert Stewart's Force would have been at Khartoum. I say we were not too late; and I am entitled to say so. It is a consolation for us to think that, had it not been for the treachery of Ferhat Pasha, Gordon would have been saved. You say that treachery was the thing which might have been expected. Yes, it might, just as much the day after Gordon arrived at Khartoum as on the day on which he died. There was no period when he was not exposed to treachery. That is what I have to say in reference to this unhappy event; and when you censure us I think you should, and I am sure the nation will, consider what were the circumstances before us in which we had to act, and the ground of the action which we took. This is a thing which wrings our hearts as much as any person's here, and whatever censure you may think we deserve that we must bear. But the question before the House now deals with much larger matters even than that. This Motion deals with the future. The question is addressed to us from the Benches below the Gangway in the able speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). "Holding the opinions you do, and having made the declarations you have made, why do you go to Khartoum?" That question is to be answered, and answered most distinctly. I have heard complaints of vagueness and uncertainty in regard to our answers. I do not think those complaints are just. Certainly I have a clear conception in my own mind of why I have consented to the Expedition to Khartoum, and I will endeavour to state it frankly to the House. I would never have consented to go to Khartoum with the intention of annexing or occupying the Soudan, or any part of it, for Egypt or for England. I never would have consented to go to Khartoum for the mere purpose of vengeance for the death of Gordon. We should have shown very little appreciation of Gordon's character if we did—it would have been a very ill monument to his memory. The only reason, in my opinion, that justifies our going to Khartoum since the death of Gordon—the primary object was the saving of Gordon, and there were secondary objects referred to by the Prime Minister—is that that is the only manner in which the evacuation of the Soudan can be safely accomplished consistently with the safety of Egypt. [Mr. COURTNEY: Oh, oh!] I know my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard has got another plan. He thinks we may calmly and quietly retreat. I do not hold that opinion. The fact is that a retreat of the British Army before the Mahdi and his Forces is hardly likely to be either calm or quiet. But then, I should like to ask, where are you going to stop in this retreat? When you leave Berber the Mahdi will go to Berber, and when you leave Dongola the Mahdi will go to Dongola; and I want to know where you are ultimately going to resist, because he may advance to Assouan or to Wady Halfa, and Cairo may be in danger. Therefore, for the safety of Egypt, I do think it is absolutely necessary that the military power of the Mahdi should be broken at Khartoum. That was the view of General Gordon himself before the Mahdi gained the great military position he has now acquired. For he said that if this overshadowing military power of the Mahdi is broken at Khartoum the people will have some chance of governing themselves under their own Sultans. That was his view of the matter. And what has interfered with the people governing themselves under their own Sultans? Nothing else than the overshadowing military power of the Mahdi, which Gordon told you was compelling an unwilling people to submit. I confess I arrive at the conclusion I have stated with the deepest reluctance and repugnance; and nothing but the danger to Egypt by leaving the Mahdi in military possession of Khartoum would have ever induced me to agree to such an Expedition. Therefore, inasmuch as the policy of the Government has been to get rid of these Egyptian entanglements, both in the Soudan and in Egypt Proper, at the earliest possible period consistently with the safety of Egypt, we were obliged to undertake a Military Expedition. That is the answer the Government have to make to the question raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). And now I come to the very different point of view of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). My right hon. Friend has dealt with us by the Socratic method of interrogation. Like a Grand Inquisitor, he says—"I have a number of questions to ask you, and you are bound to answer them." But I will ask him a question in return. Are the questions which he has put to us such as any responsible statesman has a right to ask, or any responsible Government a right to answer? I will ask, if my right hon. Friend were placed in a different position—if, instead of being one of the most distinguished Members of the House of Commons, he happened to be a candid friend and supporter of the German Chancellor in 1870, and when Prince Bismarck thought that Germany was in danger from France, and that the best method of repelling that danger was by crossing the Rhine, my right hon. Friend said to him—"Yes, you are going into France; you are going to Paris; but I will not support you unless you tell me what you are going to do when you get there. If you do not tell me whether you are going to annex Alsace and Lorraine, to proclaim the German Empire at Versailles, to ask an indemnity of many milliards, I will not support you at all, but I will give my vote to the Opposition," what answer do you think Prince Bismarck would have given him? I am afraid not so polite an answer as we have given. Now, could any responsible Government engaged in an operation such as this pledge themselves or the country to the settlement they may make after operations which must depend largely on circumstances which they cannot control? Fancy asking Napoleon the day before Austerlitz what were the terms he was going to make with the Austrians? These are questions which it is most unreasonable to ask, and which, in my opinion, it would be most improper to answer. You cannot tie yourselves beforehand to any definite plan of settlement of this description. It would be most wrong to bind the country to any such thing. All you can do is this—to say that if success attends your arms there are certain directions in which you will endeavour to make a settlement advantageous to the countries concerned. That is the only answer in the case I have supposed Prince Bismarck would have made. It was said that the German policy was "butcher and bolt." If Prince Bismarck was asked how much he meant to "bolt" he would answer—"I am going to secure Germany against the attacks of France. If fortune favours my arms I will make a settlement which shall best conduce to that end." And then he might be told that that was a vague and unsatisfactory answer. My right hon. Friend has given me an opportunity of testing his demands in another way. He has given hostages to fortune. He has got a plan of his own. Would my right hon. Friend forgive me if, in the highest good humour, I retort on him. He says—"Do not go to Khartoum; there is a better policy, a different plan altogether. You ought to hold Berber, not by British troops, but I hope it will be held as the outpost of Western civilization on the Nile." My right hon. Friend has a great objection to stating a policy by negatives. He objects to a statement of the Prime Minister because it had "ifs" in it and "negatives." But I observe that this plan of my right hon. Friend depends entirely for its success upon a negative proposition, because this outpost of Western civilization is not to be held by British troops. Then by what troops? Clearly not by Egyptian, after what happened to Hicks Pasha's Army, and with the Mahdi in full force at Khartoum. You would require 30,000 men to hold the railway to Berber, and if they are not to be British troops, who are they to be? You who complain of vague and indefinite proposals put forward your own proposals in terms which no man can understand. When you propound in a grave national crisis an alternative plan, why do you not propose it in terms which shall be clear to everyone? If you intend to have Berber maintained as an outpost of Western civilization with the Mahdi in full force at Khartoum, I venture to say that there are no troops in the world except British troops who can hold it. Why does not the right hon. Gentleman accept the responsibility of saying that he is willing to extend the British Empire to Berber, and to create for us new responsibilities of enormous dimensions? My right hon. Friend does not propose to break the force of the Mahdi; he wants to have an outpost at Berber. But the best military authorities say that if you want to take an offensive and defensive position Berber is not the one to take, and that nothing justifies our going to Berber except the intention of going to Khartoum. That is fatal to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. But I want to understand this Berber plan of his. He catechizes us very strictly, and he refuses to give us his support unless we answer his questions. But he is going to give his support to right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and he asks them no questions. Why, that celebrated blank cheque is already drawn. My right hon. Friend's name on the back of any instrument makes it a very negotiable security; but I should like to know what assurances he has received that his plan is accepted by the Opposition? The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire has just denounced it as quite impracticable. My right hon. Friend says to us—"Answer my questions and adopt my plan, or I will vote against you, and put into Office a Government which is equally unlikely to adopt it." My right hon. Friend's plan violates two declarations made by General Gordon—namely, that there is to be no annexation of the Soudan, and that if Egypt is to be quiet the Mahdi must be smashed.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I want to avoid a misunderstanding. I did not say that I was against breaking the power of the Mahdi; but I put forward my plan as a simpler plan than that of the Government. But declaring "a minimum" does not preclude one from agreeing to further measures if they can be shown to be desirable.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: My right hon. Friend said—"This is a better policy than to march forward and break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum." Therefore, his plan, which is to remain at Berber, was an alternative plan. The right hon. Gentleman is a man of great authority in this House, and he knows very well the consequences to which his actions may lead. Of course, he contemplates, in connection with the policy which he has announced, the possibility, and even the probability, of its leading to a change of Government. I can assure my right hon. Friend that personally I shall enter no protest against such a result; but there are only two things which, in my opinion, could justify a change of Government in the present grave condition of the country. One would be a total change of policy. Now, is there to be such a change? The Prime Minister has said that we have not changed our policy. We have declared that as soon as we can do so consistently with the safety of Egypt we intend to evacuate the Soudan and Egypt. Is a different policy from that to be adopted upon a change of Government? My right hon. Friend has not asked, and Gentlemen opposite have never defined, their policy upon this matter. I do not say that they are bound to do it as an Opposition; but on the very day when they become a Government they will have to do it. Yes; before we change the Government we must form some conception of what the change is likely to lead to. Now all that we hear is—"Why do you say you are going to leave Egypt and the Soudan? Why do you not recognize more fully your responsibility?" What does this mean? It means, I suppose, that there is to be something in the nature of a complete annexation, protectorate, or influence—I do not care what you call it—that there is to be some more intimate and protracted and permanent responsibility on the part of England over Egyptian affairs. Now, if a vote of this House should place you in Office, you know very well that the majority would not be composed of people who entertain that opinion. You may have a majority, but it will not be a majority inclined to go further in the direction of responsibility; and, therefore, from the day when you take Office, you will be in a position in which it will be impossible for you to carry on the Government. Surely my right hon. Friend does not wish, in the present condition of the country, to have a change of Government with a change of policy, and that the new Government should be crippled and paralyzed from its very commencement by the absence of the power which alone could enable it to carry out its policy? If I thought that the Opposition agreed in our policy, in the policy of terminating, at the earliest period, the responsibilities in which we are already involved in Egypt, and that the House believed that by better administration, by some more efficient Executive, they could better accomplish that purpose, there is no man who would surrender his seat to them to-morrow more gladly than I. But you talk of a definite policy, as shown in your Resolution! Why, could there be a policy more indefinite? When you talk of establishing a stable Government in

Egypt, do you mean an English Government? If not, what sort of a Government do you propose to establish there? I have at least as much right to ask that question of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) as he has to ask the questions which he has put to us. But if we go further in the direction—I will not quarrel with words—of annexation, if you exchange English for Egyptian Government, your proposition must be that the sacrifices which England has made entitle her to claim exclusive administration and influence in Egypt. Is that your proposition? If it be, it is one of the most perilous and important propositions that this House has ever been asked to accept. I say that the policy you advocate, if it were wise, is impossible, and that, if it were possible, it would be most unwise. What are the conditions under which we find ourselves in Egypt at the present moment? We went to Egypt, having made the solemn declaration to Europe that we did not intend to do what you now ask us to do. We made that declaration in the name of the English Crown, and with the authority of the British Parliament. You have never challenged the propriety of that declaration. That declaration we have never altered, and you have never endeavoured to alter it, and you have never propounded to Parliament any protest against it. To anyone who now seeks to alter the conditions contained in that declaration, I say, "You are too late." We have bound ourselves by the obligations contained in that declaration; and how do you know that Europe would release you from them? Do you mean that you would release yourselves from them against the will of Europe by force of arms? It is not merely an Egyptian, it is a European, difficulty which faces you on that point. I could say a great deal more on this part of the subject, but it is necessary that I should be brief; and, therefore, I will pass on to another difficulty. I say that even if you attempted it you could not administer Egypt. You have referred to what you call the analogous case of India. But, even if the case of Egypt were analogous to that of India, I hold so high the responsibilities of the English administration of India that I am not willing to create another India. Do not let hon. Members opposite think that I belong to the "Perish India" school. I am like a man who has got a great and noble estate and does not want to ruin it by mortgaging it. It is, however, a mere delusion to suppose that the cases of India and Egypt are analogous. You cannot administer Egypt as you do your Indian Provinces. In India you have the field to yourself, and you have nothing to fear from European interference. But Egypt is a great deal more in Europe than in Africa for political purposes. Every European Power has its own particular interests in that country. It has its financial and its judicial rights, its International Tribunals, its Consular Tribunals, and its right to put its finger in every pie. Could you administer Bengal for a day in such circumstances? You would be met by these rights at every turn, and you could not get rid of them unless you expelled Europe from Egypt. You may depend upon it that every month that you remain in Egypt longer than you need will involve you in more and more responsibility. By adopting such a policy as that advocated by hon. Members opposite, you will find yourselves made the subject of the intrigues of politicians and of stock-jobbers. But, moreover, you will have to encounter English prejudices in your administration of Egypt. How are you going to administer a country in which slavery exists? Slavery does not exist in India, but it does exist in Egypt. Then, again, the position of the police in Egypt is one very alien to our ideas. These are a few of the great difficulties we should have to encounter in administering Egypt. But the greatest and the most insuperable difficulty that you will have to meet in carrying out your policy is the determination of the English people that what you propose to do shall not take place. I have watched their feeling upon this question, and I am sure that there is a growing determination on the part of the English people that they will not submit to the sacrifices which a permanent occupation of Egypt would entail upon them. I do not believe that this country approves the policy enunciated by the right hon. Member for Ripon that we should hold the route from Suakin to Berber and from Berber to Cairo. Depend upon it that if the existence of this Government is terminated, it will be not because we have done too little in Egypt, but because we have done too much there. And what will be the prospect of the Government which may succeed us? If it makes any change at all in our policy, it will merely be to go deeper into the Egyptian entanglement; and I venture to say that the task they will take upon themselves they will find it impossible to perform. If they should attempt to carry out such a policy, they will find that they will have to make an ever-increasing demand for men and money upon the country—a demand which will meet with an ever-increasing opposition. If the right hon. Member for Ripon will allow me to say so, his scheme for making Berber the outpost of Western civilization will be swept away like chaff before the wind by the public opinion of this country. For my own part, I adhere firmly to the declarations which the Government made when they first entered Egypt—namely, that they did not go there for the purpose of permanently occupying the country, and of maintaining an exclusively English power and influence there. If since that declaration was made the House of Commons have changed their minds upon the subject, if they are inclined to adopt another policy which means nothing less than the annexation of Egypt and the Soudan—because the subject has grown much more serious as the debate has proceeded—at least let the House of Commons and the country understand the gravity of the decision at which they are arriving. If this be the case, the House of Commons are right in changing the Government. For my own part, I shall vote against the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman, as I do not accept the policy which I understand that Resolution enunciates; and, whether in Office or out of Office, I shall offer to such a policy my most strenuous resistance.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: Two things must be perfectly clear from the speeches delivered from the Treasury Bench. The first is that the right hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down is overwhelmed with the difficulties of the situation, and that he does not see his way to disentangle himself out of those difficulties. The second point, which is equally clear, is that the observations of all the right hon. Gentlemen who have spoken from the Treasury Bench are out of touch and harmony with the feeling of the country and of this House. The feeling of the country is one of mingled shame and indignation; but the Members of the Government neither feel that shame nor share that indignation. I doubt whether those who listened to the speech just concluded ever heard a more lame and feeble defence for the long course of neglect of General Gordon. The right hon. and learned Gentleman began by saying that the Government were wrong in sending General Gordon out, and that if they had only conceived how events would turn out, nothing would have justified them in sending him out. He said that General Gordon's mission at first was a pacific one. The Government thought that by that pacific mission he could accomplish the objects he had in view, and that his earlier letters from Khartoum showed that that was likely to be the case. But the subsequent letters of General Gordon had soon afterwards made it clear, by the right hon. and learned Gentleman's own confession, that his opinion on that point had undergone a change. That indication ought at once to have put Her Majesty's Government on their guard; for they must have known, from the character of the man, how great the danger was. So great was that danger, that no one but a hero like General Gordon would have undertaken it, and a hint of danger from him ought to have been sufficient to warn the Government of its magnitude. But nothing was done. Then we come to the request of General Gordon. He dared not send Zebehr, because, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman alleged, he was afraid of the House of Commons.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I said I believed that was the opinion of the House of Commons; but I did not share that opinion.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: At all events, the right hon. and learned Gentleman said that we could not send Turkish troops without their coming to the conclusion that they were to be masters of Egypt. Then there was General Gordon's application for troops to go to Berber and Wady Halfa. But none of these requests were acceded to, although the Government must have known that he would not have made such demands unless he was in danger. Again, General Gordon said—"Let General Graham come on to Berber." General Graham had slaughtered thousands of the inhabitants in the districts in which he was fighting; and why was he sent there? Was it for the purpose of slaughtering these Natives, and then retiring? If that is so, the judgment of your policy has come down on your heads, for Osman Digna is as powerful an enemy to you now as he was before the sanguinary engagement at El-Teb. Well, the Government would not send General Graham to Berber, and they had not a single thing to suggest in favour of General Gordon, while they were negativing everything he proposed. At last, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary remarked, there was nothing to be done but to send out a great Expedition; and this, he added, was done. Yes; but the charge against the Government was that the Expedition was despatched too late. The Prime Minister had stated that the House of Commons, by a large majority, affirmed what should be done. As a matter of fact the majority was only 28, though I will not now dwell on that circumstance; but I wish to remind hon. Members that the majority was gained because of the promises made during the debate in May last. As far as Gordon was concerned, they were bound to offer him every help they possibly could. This was acknowledged by the Prime Minister himself in the speech which he made. If ever there was a man who ought to have been rendered secure by the Government which sent him out, that man was General Gordon. But I undertake to say that in the history of this country there never was an agent sent out by the State to whom less support was given, and whose demands were less encouraged, or met with more opposition at the hands of the Government who sent him out, than General Gordon. In the course of that debate in May you entered into a solemn covenant with General Gordon. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: No.] Why, the Prime Minister himself said—

> "On reasonable evidence of danger we shall endeavour to use the resources of this country for his protection."—(3 *Hansard*, [288] 73.)

Unfortunately, in estimating what was danger Her Majesty's Government took into consideration the character, the genius, and the supreme power of that particular man; and what would have been danger to another they thought would be no danger to him. The Prime Minister laid down two conditions. One was that there must be a proved necessity, and the other was that the object must be attainable. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) said, during the debate in May—

> "We must be satisfied that such an Expedition is necessary to secure the safety of General Gordon, and we must be satisfied of the practicability of that Expedition if sent." —[*Ibid.* 233.]

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) said it seemed to him that the necessity for an Expedition was proved even at that time; and the Government cannot get out of the responsibility which they assumed in the debate last May. The Government had been fully warned in time what would be most likely to happen at Khartoum if they did not succour Gordon. But, in spite of those warnings, they neglected the considerations of Gordon's rescue. They even allowed months to pass before they could make up their minds whether to adopt the Nile route or the route from Suakin to Berber, completely ignoring the fact that it was a very different thing to rescue a man who was thousands of miles away to a person who was only a few hundred miles off. What happened to General Gordon? He was assailed by famine, sword, and treachery. The Government had been warned of the famine over and over again. General Gordon himself announced how long his supplies would last, and those supplies were exhausted. They were warned of treachery, and Gordon fell by treachery. He fell by the sword, because there was no one there to succour him. Now, the only treachery — if treachery there was—was the treachery of Her Majesty's Government. If ever a man was betrayed, Gordon was betrayed, not by these men in Khartoum, but by the Ministers of the Crown. During all that long time every favourable rumour which came from Khartoum was made the most of; every warning and dangerous symptom was minimized to the utmost. The Government refused even to make preparations for the rescue that was requested, and the Expedition was only sent out when it was too late. Does the House remember the words of the Secretary of State for War on July 8, two months after the great debate, in which he said—

> "We have already stated that it is not our intention to despatch an Expedition to the relief of General Gordon, unless it is clearly shown that that is the only means by which General Gordon, and those dependent on him, can be relieved. We have at present received no information which could make it desirable that we should depart from that decision."—(3 *Hansard*, [290] 512.)

At that time, therefore, the Government had not made up their minds whether an Expedition, if it should be necessary, was to proceed by way of the Nile, or from Suakin to Berber. One of the gravest charges against them is that they ought to have been in readiness before. Thus, the words became at last applicable to them—

> "Too late, too late; ye cannot enter now."

The silver cord and the golden bowl are broken; the honour of England is stained; and the Government are responsible for all this to the country. I refer to the past, not only on account of the extraordinary circumstances of the case itself, but because I am afraid that as it has been in the psat so will it be in the future. I will refer, not to a written document, but to the statement made in writing in words which cannot lightly be altered. What was the policy of those words—"The evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt and its restoration to freedom?" but first there is to be action against Osman Digna, making a railway from Suakin to Berber, and overthrowing the Mahdi at Khartoum. But what is to be gained by that policy, which can only be carried out at an enormous expenditure of life and treasure, an expenditure which has been placed no higher by anyone than by the Prime Minister himself? The Government have undertaken to do that in the face of the country; and when it is accomplished they propose to scuttle out of the Soudan, leaving the people to what is called their natural freedom. You will have killed a great many. You are not leaving a good impression behind you; and you are not likely, therefore, to do much for the security of Egypt by simply smashing the Mahdi. The Government have spoken of the future—that slavery and the question of a good and settled Government at Khartoum were matters which involved the deep consideration of the Government. Is that so, or is it not? Are these questions put forward seriously, or simply as makeweights, in order to induce the country to accept your policy at the present moment? If the latter, they have no right to appear. If you do not mean to carry them out, you have no business to mention them. The right hon. Gentleman said the only thing is to get rid of entanglements. Are you really going to make this railway? No one has spoken more strongly of its advantages than the Earl of Dufferin himself. When you have made it, what are you going to do? Are you coming back by the first express train? If so, you are entering upon an extravagant expenditure for no purpose whatever. That is a policy which I can never support. I can perfectly understand the policy of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). It was a great mistake ever to have gone there, and the sooner you come back the better. But first to murder and fight and spend money and blood, and then to leave all your friends, is a policy which I cannot understand, and which I will not support. How, if these men help you and bring provisions, can you leave them to the tender mercies of their enemies? A policy more stupid and purposeless it is impossible to conceive. Then we on this side are told—"But you have no policy of your own." I should have thought that the words of the Resolution itself shadowed out a policy. It is perfectly clear that none but those who have officially been cognizant of what has been going on the last two years can give the details of a policy. You have destroyed the Egyptian Army; you have destroyed the power of the Egyptian Government and made its Ministers your puppets. You know Egypt cannot stand alone. As to the policy of the hon. Member for Newcastle, it is clear that if followed to its legitimate conclusion it would invite other nations to step into our places. Thus we have been forced into this peculiar position by the policy of the Government, so that it is clear that for our own interests—and, indeed, for the interests of the world—we must stay. Then we have India to think of. I cannot help observing the deep interest which foreign nations show to add their names to the guarantee of the money which is to be borrowed. This anxiety on their part, which shows a political interest on the part of foreign countries, is a matter about which we ought to be on our guard, and watch with great care. There must be stable and good government in Egypt; and, no doubt, for a long time English influence must be large in Egypt. Surely, the policy which is shadowed out in this Resolution is as clear with respect to the Soudan as it is with respect to Egypt. The Resolution says there must be stable and good government in those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to the safety of Egypt. No one has warned you to take care what you do in the Soudan more than General Gordon himself. You are always willing to quote Gordon when he supports your views; but not in the contrary case. It is all very well for you to say—"Well, then, you mean us to conquer the Soudan." Nothing of the kind. Why should we do anything of the sort? The Prime Minister says—"At all events, you wish England to exercise power over the whole of the Eastern Soudan." Why so? The Resolution says nothing of the kind. You want a stable Government in so much of the Soudan as must necessarily have such a Government for the safety of Egypt. The right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) thought the minimum might be to make a railway to Berber and to occupy it. That is certainly a minimum which I do not think will produce the results we desire to attain. It may be necessary to go to Khartoum; but I cannot go into the details of a policy—all that is matter to be considered afterwards. The broad outline of a policy is there. That is a sufficient answer to the Home Secretary's Bismarck, a name by which the right hon. Gentleman may, perhaps, be known for some time. I cannot congratulate him upon the way in which he got out of the dilemma in which he was placed. If we wish for freedom and good government in Egypt and the Soudan, the only way to attain them is to recognize and to act up to the responsibilities which the Government have put upon our shoulders, to act as we would for ourselves until the time comes for the people of these countries to act for themselves. That will never be without our intervention. It has been said that the terms of the Resolution are weak, and that there ought to have been a much stronger expression of the indignation that is felt by the country. I believe it is according to precedent; and it will be judged by its fruits if Her Majesty's Government have to give up their Offices. There is intense shame and indignation all over the country, which, but for that, would be satisfied with a Resolution in the usual terms. No Party has the right to bring forward such a Resolution if it does not mean business; and my right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote), and those who act with him, are prepared to take the consequences if the vote is in their favour. If they were not, they would be unworthy of their position. No one could envy the cares of Office now when there are entanglements all over the world. In the last four years Government have sowed the seeds of mischief, which it will take long to remedy. But a Party must make sacrifices for the country. I believe the present Government cannot escape from their entanglements, and that if they remain in Office their acts will still be "too late," and national disaster will be the result. I believe that with a change of Government alone one-half of the difficulties that give us so much trouble will disappear. The present Government cannot get out of their difficulties with Foreign Powers, because of the acts they have done and the declarations they have made; so that whatever they do in the future they will not be able to disentangle themselves. It was for that reason that the Resolution was placed on the Paper; and I can assure hon. Members and the country that though the Resolution may appear to them to be weak, it will be strong enough for their purpose. And those are very much mistaken who think that we brought it forward without a determination to take the responsibility involved in its adoption.

MR. P. H. MUNTZ said, it was not often of latter years that he obtruded himself upon the House; but if ever he had had any doubt about the danger of meddling in Egyptian affairs, that doubt had been removed by the Home Secretary. Little did hon. Members think of the entanglements they had got into since they approved of the present action of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt. They had now 25,000 men, or shortly would have that number, in the Desert, and were spending several millions a month. It was very easy to go to war; but what had been done in Egypt had not been called war. The Government had discovered some new-fangled name for it. It had begun by the Dual Control, a very innocent but stupid attempt to meet the wants of the bondholders. The Dual Control resulted in extortion and mismanagement, which led to a military mutiny, because the officers were defrauded of their pay. It was, no doubt, a bondholders' question, and for their sake all the blood and treasure had been expended. And now Great Britain was going to war for the sake of persons who went in for large interest—7 per cent on £100, for which they paid only £50. He did not blame the bondholders; but if they went in for high interest, which the Duke of Wellington said meant bad security, they ought to be allowed to take their chance. In 1877 our Consul General in Egypt informed the Marquess of Salisbury that Ismail Pasha told him that it was impossible to pay the interest upon the bonds; that the pay of the Army was in arrear for 12 months, and that of the Civil servants for 18 months; and that there would be an insurrection unless he was allowed to use the interest on the bonds for the service of the State. The Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan) said the day before yesterday that the Dual Control was the beginning of the imbroglio. But Arabi's rebellion broke up the Dual Control, and then was the time that we might have got rid of it. Some Members of the Government had said that we were obliged to interfere to protect the Suez Canal, though Lord Wolseley said, in the House of Lords, there was no fear of that, because it would not have been interfered with by Arabi so long as it was not used for warlike purposes. We began with the bombardment of Alexandria, and wound up the first campaign with the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. Now we had another Army in Egypt in great difficulty, and in considerable danger, and it would have to remain six months before it could do anything. The Motion before the House was meant to turn out the Government. He was not prepared to advocate that at all; but he thought they had a right to demand that Her Majesty's Government should give the House what they had not yet given—some reasonable outline, not of their military, but of their general policy—something clearer than the House had hitherto had from them. Knowing the country as he did, he was sure the people would not be content to go on spending millions of money and sacrificing a large number of valuable lives unless they knew what they were looking for. They must have something definite and clear before their minds. His vote would depend upon what further explanation the Government might make; and it was with a view to obtaining further information that he had made those few remarks.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER: Sir, in common with many others, I have been disappointed with the Motion before the House; but from what I know now I am perfectly satisfied with the proposals of the Conservative Party. It is not necessary to use strong language in order to bring Members of the House face to face with the enormous blunders committed by Her Majesty's Government during the past few months. It has been said that we were riding to be beaten; and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), during the unfortunate and disgraceful episode of the other evening, said that it was useless discussing the Motion, because the Conservative Party did not wish to carry the Vote. I can, however, tell the hon. Member that we are perfectly in earnest about it, and that the Conservative Party are prepared to take Office if the Government sustains defeat and is condemned, as it deserves to be. True, the Conservative Leaders recognize the grave disadvantage of such a position, and the awful legacy they would inherit; but we are accustomed to think of the welfare of the country before the interests of Party, and our Leaders are prepared to adopt the only manly and honourable course in such a crisis. If Her Majesty sees fit to call upon them they will accept the cares of Office, and do their best to redeem the terrible past. I trust that, before the conclusion of the debate, one prominent man will declare the policy of the Conservative Party. I believe that policy will be a firm and vigorous one, such as is recommended by the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). It is rumoured that a few Conservatives will absent themselves from the division on account of a private grievance; but I believe they will do nothing of the sort. I will say this—that if any Member of the Conservative Party allows any private grievance, however great it may be, to interfere with his plain duty to his country he deserves to be execrated by every loyal patriot in the land. But some say—"What is the use of debate? The result is a foregone conclusion." I dispute that altogether. I contend that if the servile majority, who have directly assisted Her Majesty's Ministers to bring about the appalling events of the past few months, continue their fatuous allegiance, they may, indeed, be described as mere pawns, humbly willing to be moved about the political chess board, as a few distinguished players think fit; but I will not believe so badly of them. The Prime Minister complained in his speech on Monday that the debate was a mere repetition of the discussion of last year. He said—

> "There is not an act which the right hon. Gentleman has alleged against Her Majesty's Government, but what was in full cognizance of the House when it debated this question last year."

That may be true. We are dealing with the same actions, the same insane policy; but there was this material difference—then we could only warn, entreat, and prophesy; now we can point to the results of neglected entreaties, to prophecies literally fulfilled. Then at that time the Franchise Question was the all-absorbing topic. Ministers believed that the distribution of votes to the urban population would serve as a cloak to cover a multitude of sins. Their servile followers said—"Perish, Egypt; perish, Gordon. Nothing must imperil the franchise." I will do the urban population the justice to believe that they would gladly have gone without votes for two—aye five—years to have saved the gallant Gordon, to have saved all those noble men the victims of Ministerial incompetency. Now, I must congratulate the Prime Minister on one thing—the marvellous *sang froid* with which he defended a perfectly indefensible policy. As far as I can make out, the sum and substance of his speech was, he repented him not one jot of his former sins, and was determined not to lead a new life for the future. I cannot help thinking that the Prime Minister made a serious mistake in not promptly accepting the mild terms of the Resolution—especially after the gentle, almost caressing, way in which he was treated by the respected Leader of the Opposition. He would have done better had he bent his back beneath the blow, and even offered the other cheek to the smiter. Now, Sir, it will be my object to show that the death of Gordon, and of the brave men who made such heroic efforts to save him, was directly attributable to the wilful perversity of Her Majesty's Ministers in refusing to look plain facts in the face. That these noble men have been sacrificed, and all this ruin and misery caused by what the Marquess of Salisbury has called the squabbles of a Cabinet and the necessities of keeping a Party in power, cannot be doubted by anyone who looks at the facts. While I am aware that it would not become me to detain the House beyond reasonable limits, I will try and concentrate my remarks on what I conceive to be two very important points in this grave question. My contention is that Gordon's mission was spoilt, and all the lamentable consequences have occurred, from the unwarrantable interference of the wiseacres of Downing Street, who thought they knew more than the man on whom they had cast all the burden and responsibility. Now, let me ask first, what was the opinion of the Government of the man whom they sent out to extricate them from difficulties of their own creation? On February 12 of last year the Prime Minister stated that General Gordon was selected because, to use his own words—

> "He is a man whom I look upon as by far the highest authority on the subject."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 715.)

The Lord Chancellor, on February 12, declared that General Gordon—

> "Because of his vast knowledge of the country and great influence over the Tribes and Chiefs was better able than any other man to say by what means a policy of conciliation and pacification might succeed."—(*Ibid.* 615.)

The President of the Local Government Board, on February 14, said—

> "He was better able to form a judgment than anybody else. He will have, I make no doubt, any support which he can need in the prosecution of his mission."—(*Ibid.* 967.)

On February 19, Earl Granville said the Government took upon themselves—

> "Responsibility for anything General Gordon does."—(*Ibid.* 1291.)

Now, what were Gordon's instructions?

I have summarized his duties from official despatches. Briefly, they may be taken as follows:—1st, to withdraw the troops, Civil *employés*, and Europeans from the Soudan; 2, to report on the best means of securing the safety and good administration of the Red Sea Ports; 3, to advise how best to counteract the stimulus given to the Slave Trade by evacuation; 4, to establish an organized Government in the different Provinces of the Soudan for the maintenance of order and the cessation of all disasters and incitement to revolt; 5, to restore public tranquillity on a sure basis; 6, to establish justice and order; 7, to maintain the security of the roads open to commerce. With these instructions, Gordon received a despatch from Sir Evelyn Baring. After describing the object of his mission, Sir Evelyn Baring concluded—

> "But the Egyptian Government has the fullest confidence in your judgment, your knowledge of the country, and of your comprehension of the general line of policy to be pursued."

And again—

> "In undertaking the difficult task which now lies before you, you may feel assured that no effort will be wanting on the part of the Cairo authorities, whether English or Egyptians, to afford you all the co-operation and support in their power."—[Egypt, No. 6 (1884), p. 2.]

Now, how was this support and co-operation given? By refusing every single request which General Gordon made. Those requests may be briefly summed up as follows:—In the first place, he asked that he might negotiate personally with the Mahdi. The Prime Minister failed the other night to make out that the Government were not responsible for the refusal of this request; and we have it on record that Sir Evelyn Baring distinctly refused to allow the negotiations in question, and that in this he was encouraged by the Ministers at home. In the next place, he asked for Zebehr; but the Government refused this request, notwithstanding his earnest desire. In the next place, the Government refused to send troops to Wady Halfa, although General Gordon's request that this might be done was backed by Sir Evelyn Baring, Nubar Pasha, General Stephenson, and Mr. Clifford Lloyd. Then the Government refused to send troops to Berber to open out that route; and, lastly, the Government refused to allow General Gordon to escape with the *employés* and the garrison from Khartoum. I am prepared to prove all these assertions from official sources. I will now take two of these refusals upon which I will dwell for a moment, because of their vital importance to the question. First, refusal to send Zebehr, whereby the Government deprived General Gordon of the possibility of executing his mission pacifically; secondly, the refusal of the Government to secure Berber, whereby they compassed the ruin and death of General Gordon. When Gordon realized how huge, how overwhelming was the task he had undertaken, aggravated as it was by the insane policy of the Government in declaring their intention to abandon the Soudan, he saw that he could not accomplish his task alone. Therefore, after deep and anxious thought, he declared that Zebehr was the one man who could help him out of the difficulty. Now, remember that Colonel Stewart strongly supported this request. Sir Evelyn Baring thrice impressed on the Government the absolute necessity of granting that request, and further suggested that Zebehr Pasha should have an allowance of £50,000 a-year for a certain time. He said—

> "I believe that General Gordon is quite right when he says that Zebehr Pasha is the only possible man. I can suggest none other, and Nubar Pasha is strongly in favour of him."

Thus Gordon, Stewart, Baring, and Nubar Pasha—all the ablest men on the spot—were unanimous as to the absolute necessity for sending Zebehr; but Downing Street was inexorable, and this is the way in which the Prime Minister carried out the resolution which he expressed on February 12, that they would do nothing to interfere with Gordon's schemes, which alone promised a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. It is true that many persons disapproved of Gordon's wish that Zebehr Pasha might be sent to him. Undoubtedly many Members of the Conservative Party were opposed to it; but why? Because the Government, with their usual love of concealment, never fairly explained the situation, or the reasons why Gordon urged the appointment of Zebehr. Had the Government put this House in possession of the facts of the case, the appointment of Zebehr Pasha would, I believe, have been approved. I believe there is, indeed, little doubt that the Prime Minister was at first inclined to grant General Gordon's request. What, then, was the reason the request was refused? The Prime Minister let out the reason on Monday, when he said—

> "Then came the recommendation to send Zebehr; but it is well known that if, when that recommendation was made, we had complied with it, an Address from this House to the Crown would, before 24 hours were over, have paralyzed our action."

This is, indeed, the secret of most of the blunders of the Government—their continual fear of being turned out. Now, it has been charged against the Conservatives that they would have endeavoured to turn the Government out on this question; but had General Gordon's despatches been produced, I am convinced that they would have given the Government their support. Let me remind you of an incident that shows the temper of the House at this time. I refer to the now celebrated Manifesto of Gordon as to the non-interference with slave-owners. On the 25th of February the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) asked Questions as to this; thereupon the hon. Baronet the Member for Harwich (Sir Henry Tyler) interposed, and, amidst the cheers of hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, asked if it would not be better to let Gordon carry out his dangerous mission in the way that seemed best to him? The Prime Minister said that he strongly concurred in the general sentiment expressed in the truncated Question of the hon. Member for Harwich, and added—

> "I understand that likewise to be the decided feeling of the House." — (3 *Hansard*, [284] 1873.)

I am perfectly well aware that, on the face of it, the appointment of Zebehr appeared to be objectionable. He had, no doubt, been a man of bad character, and a great slave hunter; but we might have known that Gordon would not have recommended his appointment without good reason. When Gordon said that the appointment of that man was a necessity, he ought to have been sent, even if that statement had stood alone. But General Gordon also gave reasons for thinking that Zebehr Pasha was improved. He pointed out that Zebehr was much civilized by his residence in Cairo, that it could be made worth his while to keep his contract, and that his slave-hunting proclivities would be effectually stopped by the evacuation of Bahr-Gazelle and the Equatorial Provinces. As to putting an end to slaveholding, that was necessarily a work of time; for just as in England, in 1833, immediate emancipation was denounced as confiscation—a view supported by the Prime Minister—so it would have been there. But be that as it may, the Government, backed by Earl Granville, were inexorable; and I contend that by refusing to allow Zebehr to go, they prevented Gordon, once for all, from carrying out his pacific mission. I have dwelt at some length on this matter, because I think it is one of the crucial points of the whole case. I contend, secondly, that the Government are directly responsible for Gordon's death by refusing to open the road to Berber and to secure the place. On February 27 Gordon implored that this road might be opened to Berber by Indian Moslem troops. At first, I admit, Sir Evelyn Baring was opposed to this; but afterwards he saw the necessity for it, and stated that Sir Evelyn Wood and General Stephenson said it was possible. On March 24, Sir Evelyn Baring wrote—

> "General Gordon is evidently expecting help from Suakin, and he has ordered messengers to be sent along the road from Berber to ascertain whether any English force is advancing. Under present circumstances, I think an effort should be made to help General Gordon from Suakin . . . General Stephenson and Sir Evelyn Wood . . . are of opinion that the undertaking is possible."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 186.]

So that at this time the Government knew that Gordon was in urgent need, and would not help him. But now they pretend that they thought he was in no immediate need; and because the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) chose to formulate a new meaning for the verb to "hem," Gordon was left to perish. If he had been "surrounded," I suppose help would have been sent; but because, according to the right hon. Gentleman, he was only hemmed in, therefore he was left to die. I have looked out the word to "hem" in an original copy I have of *Johnson's Dictionary*. I find it means "to cross the edge of cloth by a double hem, to enclose, environ." Therefore, it strikes me that "hemmed in" is even a more confining expression than "surrounded."

It is impossible for the Government to say that they were not warned as to the importance of keeping Berber. Over and over again, both in this House and in the Press, they were urged and entreated to take advantage of our victories over Osman Digna, and to secure Berber; but, forsooth! the Government would not submit to Press dictation. When Berber fell, and his communications were cut, there was no hope for Gordon; and what makes the matter worse is that the reason the Government gave for not keeping the road open after El Teb and Tamasi was that it was too hot for troops. But if it was then too hot for the troops already there, and in some degree acclimatized, what is to become of the young unacclimatized fellows sent there now? I will not attempt to go further into this melancholy history; but I cannot help contrasting the way in which the Prime Minister spent his autumn, and the way in which Gordon spent his. The Government went scouring about the country, delivering orations at every railway station, hamlet, and town, haranguing mobs about their benevolent intentions with regard to the rural householders, while General Gordon was struggling day after day against starvation and ruin within, and savage foes without, and waiting in vain for the relief that never came. God grant that he may now know that thousands of English hearts were burning with indignation, thousands of strong English arms were longing to brave all the terrors of the Desert if only they might save him, and were restrained only by a Ministry that valued their own political position before the life of that noble hero. Nothing in the Prime Minister's speech was more weak than his reasons for not sending the Relief Expedition earlier. We were told that the choice of route required the most careful and prolonged consideration; but surely the Government might have found out, without much investigation, that the Nile route was more practicable at high Nile than after it began to fall. At any rate, they might have commenced their preparations earlier. What was it that happened on August 5 that they did not know before? Why, they found their Party had become exasperated, and that they must take steps to relieve Gordon or quit Office. The result was that, having put off action to the very last moment, this step, like every other taken by them, came too late. Now, in conclusion, let me ask the Home Secretary, who has enlightened us to-night with a speech that would make us think he knew every square inch of the Soudan—let me ask him, is it not a fact that Her Majesty's Government are now committed to undertake every single thing which they declared no human power should make them undertake? Are they not committed, so far as this Government can be committed, to anything? Is it not a fact that they are committed to take Khartoum? Is it not a fact that they are committed to smash the Mahdi, who is heading a people struggling to be free—and rightly struggling for freedom—according to the Prime Minister? Is it not a fact that they are committed to smash Osman Digna for the third time? Is it not a fact that they are about to storm Berber, when a year ago General Gordon stated that 200 Hussars were all he required to secure him there? Is it not a fact that they are about to make a railway to Berber, which they think will take six months to complete, but which Lord Wolseley tells us will be nearer 12 months? Is it not a fact that we entreated them over and over again last year to make this railway; and that as late as November I put a Question to the Secretary of State for War urging him to make it as a means of retreat for our Army when the Nile had fallen? Is it not a fact that they are about to send 5,000 Indian troops from India to Egypt, when last year General Gordon implored that 200 or 300 might be sent? Is it or is not a fact that the difficulties now are ten times greater than they were last year; that the Mahdi's Forces, flushed with success, are ten times as numerous; that a doubting belief in the Mahdi has turned now to a firm belief in his divinity; that religious fanaticism threatens Egypt with destruction, and threatens trouble throughout the whole Mahommedan world, if not promptly checked? Is it not a fact that only a year ago General Gordon said the rebellion was only a trumpery affair, which he could put down with 500 Turkish troops, or any other troops sent him? It may be true that 2,000

Turkish troops would not have been enough; it may be true that the Home Secretary, in his over-weening self-esteem, thinks he knows more about the Soudan than General Gordon, who spent years there, and knew the tribes intimately; but I am justified in thinking—and I know many here will agree with me when I assert—that in the estimation of the people of England General Gordon's opinion will be taken before that of the Home Secretary. I ask, can any right hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench opposite contravene these facts I have put forward? I ask hon. Members who sit opposite whether, in the face of these facts, which cannot be controverted, they will still pin their faith and give support to a Government which has brought about this state of things? I earnestly trust—I earnestly believe—that the result of this division will be very different, indeed, to that in the division after these same facts had been debated last year.

MR. CARTWRIGHT said, he hoped the Government would, in regard to certain points, give some information which might relieve the difficulties of mind under which he and many other hon. Members who sat on that side of the House were labouring as to the vote they were called upon to give. The Resolution submitted to the House fell under two heads. First there was the retrospective portion, but he would say nothing about that. The point of importance was the second head of the Resolution that dealt with the question of the hour. In the course of the debate he had heard some remarks which seemed to show certain misapprehensions of what he considered to be the character of the struggle in which we were engaged, and of the policy to be adopted. He had heard it called a struggle against a people who were fighting for their liberties. He ventured to say that this was not a struggle of nationalities. It was a struggle on one side for Western civilization against a wave of very militant Islamism; and the issue would not only touch England closely, but also, at many points, the interests of the Western communities and of the Western world at large. The question we had to consider was how we were to solve that problem? He heard to-night, what he must consider so far, an authoritative statement from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt) that we were about to be engaged in a struggle that would involve us in this — that we were to go and, to use a phrase which had become current, try to "smash up" the Mahdi at Khartoum. He (Mr. Cartwright) was bound to say that that would be a task of no ordinary magnitude. If it were to be entered upon, he hoped that all it involved and all it was likely to bring upon this country would be distinctly laid before the constituencies. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said that we were to go to Khartoum for the purpose of putting down the Mahdi; but he did not inform the House what we were to do with Khartoum after the Mahdi went out of it. The Mahdi well knew what his interests were, and if he chose to retire to Obeid, were we to follow him thither; and if he escaped us, was this country prepared to go beyond there into the Equatorial regions? They had been authoritatively told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) that the railway from Suakin to Berber was being constructed for military purposes only, but also was to be a broad-gauge line, so that its construction would have the character of an abiding and a permanent line. The proposal to build such a line he looked upon as being perfectly ridiculous, if the line was to be abandoned after the campaign. When they made, in a region like the Soudan, a monument of Western civilization like this railway, was it wise, was it proper, was it expedient, on the termination of the war, to allow it afterwards to be handed over to the use of savage barbarians? He called attention to this, because, in the last few years, we had had instances of action that were somewhat spasmodic and emotional. The Expedition of General Graham to Suakin resulted in feats of arms which were glorious for our military renown, but which were attended the next day by a retreat; so that the enemy was stronger a few days after than they were a few days before. Were we to have the same thing at Berber? He hoped the Government would have a clear and distinct answer to this question. He could not forget that, though they had heard to-night that there was to be no annexation of the Soudan either by England or by Egypt, Parliamentary Papers had just been issued, which showed that there had been an idea of making an Egyptian Prince the Ruler of that country. There was much difficulty in ascertaining what was to be the real scope and limit of this great enterprize, the goal of which was Khartoum at present, but which might soon become Obeid. Therefore, anxious as he was to give his vote in support of Her Majesty's Government, he hoped they would condescend, through some responsible Minister, to give the House assurances that they were not pledged to an Expedition the magnitude of which was illimitable, and the results of which it was absolutely impossible to forecast. Above all, he hoped there would be a guarantee that we were not about to engage in Expeditions only attended by feats of arms and by slaughter and butchery, and which might prove as fruitless as the Expedition of General Graham to Suakin and the battle of El Teb. The House ought to know whether we were going to introduce into that country some form of orderly government. He would again express his respectful hope that the Government would take into consideration the difficulty in which some of their supporters were placed with regard to the vote which they were about to give. He was far from desiring to support the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote); but, as at present advised, he would say that if he were not provided with better light as to the intentions of the Government, and as to the scope and end of their action, he should be prepared to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley).

Sir ROBERT PEEL said, he deeply sympathized with the hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) in the difficulty in which he was placed. The humble appeals which the hon. Member had made to the Government would, he hoped, induce them to relieve the anxiety of the House and the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt) had ridiculed the suggestions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), which he considered impertinent and declined to answer. Then the right hon. Gentleman sneered at India; but was good enough to admit that the Government had experienced failures and made some mistakes. Made some mistakes—why, good God! their hands were deep in blood. They were ankle deep in it. The request of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon was a very legitimate and reasonable one—namely, that he was not prepared to support a policy, which pledged us to breaking the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, without receiving some more definite declaration of the policy of Her Majesty's Government than had yet been obtained. The Secretary of State for the Home Department, in referring to the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), actually had the audacity to compare the present Government in regard to foreign affairs with that of Lord Palmerston. The idea of comparing the policy of Lord Palmerston's Government, which secured us peace and the respect of Europe, with the present Administration, which had plunged us into war broadcast, and had made us contemptible in the eyes of other countries, was too absurd. Then the right hon. Gentleman had smothered the House with long extracts from Gordon's despatches, tending to prove how wrong the Government had been in the past. But that was not what the House required. The House wanted information with respect to the new departure of the Government which had been announced by the Prime Minister. What hon. Members wanted to know was, whether this new departure would strengthen, not the hands of the Government—for neither himself, nor, he supposed, anybody else, cared a row of pins about the Government—but the hands of the country in the eyes of the world. Do not let us be left any longer in ambiguity about this matter; but let the country be frankly told what the Government really intended to do. Let them enlighten the House as to their new departure. There was no doubt of the character of the indictment of the policy of the Government after the speeches of his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition, the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and the right hon. Member for Ripon. But there had been some remarkable speeches also from the Benches opposite below the Gangway. The hon. Member for East Cornwall (Mr. Borlase) was so thorough a supporter of the Government that he said the Prime Minister was entitled to the honours of a Roman triumph. The hon. Member had forgotten the words of Gibbon, who said that many of those to whom a Roman triumph had been decreed were "condemned to everlasting infamy." Then the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) announced himself as speaking on behalf of the "democracy of organized industry." That was a beautiful phrase. No doubt, the hon. Member knew where it came from. It came from Tom Paine's *Age of Reason.* The hon. Member for Leicester ridiculed the policy of the Government, but then went on to say that he intended to support the policy which he had just ridiculed. The junior Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), whose Colleague's speech the other day he (Sir Robert Peel) read with admiration, proposed an Amendment which reminded him of one described by Sheridan as being like a mealy potato with pickled onion, because it at once condemned and shielded the Government. What would the country think of hon. Members who could denounce and yet support the Government? It was pleasant to think that there were Members of an advanced Party, who could maintain an air of independent Radicalism by speaking one way, and an air of independent respectability by voting another. It was clear from the speeches delivered by the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for Ripon and the Secretary of State for the Home Department, that the Government were miserably drifting into a hopelessly defenceless position. It seemed so difficult to arouse them to a sense of their situation, that it was natural the Opposition should try their hands at something better, and should declare a policy which this direct Vote of Censure manifestly though tacitly implied. ["Oh, oh!"] It was constantly asked of the Opposition—"Why do not you declare your policy; let us know what you mean, and we will shape our course accordingly?" This was said by the miserably weak Government of 1839-40; and the late Sir Robert Peel replied—"When I am called in I will prescribe, but not till then." The consequence was—to use an expression not unfamiliar to the House—out they went. The Leader of the Opposition had done quite right in not waiting for Papers, and in pressing manfully to the front, for the country was in a state of dismay and agitation. It was impossible for any honest politician not to be surprised at the enthusiasm which the most moderate attacks against the Government engendered outside the walls of Parliament. Wait for Papers, indeed! Did not we know enough? In the opinion of the country, General Gordon had been done to death; the "Christian hero" of the Prime Minister had been the scapegoat of political exigencies, the victim of political indecision; and he, for one, in common with other hon. Members, had seen, what he was ashamed to allude to—the humiliating spectacle, on Monday night last, of the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department attempting to ride off from responsibility on the back of the traitor who betrayed Gordon. To make the case worse, the affidavits of the two anonymous Egyptian Colonels, to which the Prime Minister had referred, to the effect that no human power could have saved Gordon, reminded him of the affidavits quoted by the President of the Board of Trade in regard to the Aston Riots. By the irony of fortune there had just come to hand a letter of Gordon's, dated the 14th of December, in which he said—

> "All is now up; I expect a catastrophe in ten days' time. It would not have been so if your people had kept me better informed as to their intentions."

This clearly proved that the Colonels' affidavits were worth no more than those of the President of the Board of Trade. Was this a moment for joy and congratulation, as the Marquess of Ripon said it was at Liverpool? In the view of a vast number of people there had been most defective strategy in all these proceedings of the Government. The situation was this. Instead of relieving Gordon, all their efforts were directed in relieving Wilson, who had gone to relieve Gordon, and now in relieving Buller, who had gone to relieve poor Stewart. Yet the Marquess of Ripon, fresh from honours won in India, could speak of this as a moment for joy and congratulation. ["No, no!"] He would quote the report of the speech from *The Times.* Lord Ripon's words were—

> "There are circumstances in the troubles of the Soudan upon which we must all congratulate ourselves."

He contended that there were no such circumstances. The Prime Minister said his policy now was to smash the Mahdi, and then make a friend of him. Smash the Mahdi, indeed! He should say the Mahdi was much more likely to smash Her Majesty's Government. But while all this was going on, it was something pitiful to hear the appeals *ad misericordiam* to the Opposition not to venture to censure the Government at the present moment. If ever there was a time when they should censure the Government it was the present. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. J. K. Cross), the other day, said that—

> "This is not a time to criticize and censure the action of the Government; we can only hope for the best."

That was exactly the hand-to-mouth policy which the Government had been pursuing. They had been hoping for the best, and always getting the worst of it. But there was one Member of the Government who had come to the rescue, and there was such a mawkish sentimentality about his speech that it was impossible not to refer to it. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Farrer Herschell), speaking at South Shields immediately after he heard of the fall of Khartoum, of the death of Gordon, and of the retirement of the British, said—

> "He was not for one moment going to say that Her Majesty's Government had not made mistakes;"—

the Home Secretary had said as much that night, so that the statement had been confirmed—

> "this was an erring world, where everybody made mistakes; and to suppose that they had got infallible Ministers was to suppose that they were not going to get human beings whom they could understand."

That was the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General; and he would defy anyone to understand the human beings, as the hon. and learned Member called them, who were now Ministers. There was one omission which struck him in the speech of his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote). He (Sir Robert Peel) thought it was hardly fair to omit stating that, in all the blunders and butcheries in which the Government had been mixed up in Egypt, they had really many other things to look to. They had been studying, for instance, the political philosophy of one of their Colleagues, with whom they had been in correspondence, and they had been engaged upon the greatest Constitutional change since 1688, undertaken with the view of strengthening the influence of the Radical Party. But, putting on one side those matters, there could be no doubt whatever that the situation of affairs at the present moment was deplorable. There was a universal spirit of distrust and dissatisfaction prevailing in almost every part of the Empire; and, what was much worse, there was a total loss of respect on the part of the other Powers of Europe towards England. Never, since the time of the First Napoleon, were the relations between France and this country more strained than now. He was one of those who complained of the treatment of Turkey in this matter. His opinion was that it would have been in the interests of Europe if the Prime Minister, instead of constantly attacking Turkey, had followed the policy of Lord Palmerston and had really taken that country into his confidence. ["No, no!"] That, of course, was a matter of opinion; but he (Sir Robert Peel) had followed the policy of Lord Palmerston for many years, and believed it to be, upon the whole, a right policy. He wished to refer to the position of Italy in this matter. Three Expeditions had left Italy for Massowah; and, in the Italian Chambers, Signor Mancini had stated distinctly—"We are not going to Massowah by Treaty, but by understanding with England." He considered that this was a serious matter, for who could say that such an invasion of Turkish territory by Italian troops might not lead to a European war? What had the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) said in that House upon the subject? The noble Lord had been questioned upon the matter more than once, and he had stated that there was no Treaty or arrangement between the two countries with respect to the occupation of Massowah; that Her Majesty's

Government had no information as to the intentions of the Italian Government, but that they had reason to believe that the Sultan had not assented to the occupation of Massowah. He could not conceive any situation more unfortunate than for a Minister to make a statement in the House of Commons upon this matter directly contrary to that of the Prime Minister of Italy. It was impossible to reconcile the two statements. The Italians had more than once attempted to take Massowah; and, in 1880, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs wrote a despatch to Sir Augustus Paget at Rome, and that despatch showed that, since the year in question, the policy of the Government upon this point had changed, because Her Majesty's Government in 1880 considered that the Egyptian Government held Sovereignty over Massowah and that part of the country, and protested against the exercise of any right of Sovereignty on the part of Italy.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Is it Assab or Massowah?

SIR ROBERT PEEL: Assab.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: You said Massowah.

SIR ROBERT PEEL said, that what he had said was the Sovereignty of the country of which the bay formed a part. Lord Granville, in 1880, protested against the occupation of a part of the coast which belonged to Egypt. Now, he (Sir Robert Peel) believed that that occupation was likely to lead to fanatical outbreak among the Mussulman tribes in that part of the world; and he maintained that, unless the Government took very great care, serious danger would result from the occupation of Massowah by the Italians with 10,000 men. Were they going to assist the Government, or to assert a Sovereignty over the country? He asserted that the Italian Government never went there with 10,000 men unless there was a Treaty, or, if not a Treaty, some arrangement with Her Majesty's Government. There was one remark which the Prime Minister contested to-night, and which was made by his hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin). The Motion of his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition stated that the policy of Her Majesty's Government had involved great sacrifice of valuable lives and heavy expenditure without any beneficial result. Well, on Monday night the Prime Minister turned to the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and said—

> "I deny altogether the assertion of the hon. Gentleman, that the expenditure of blood and treasure has produced no beneficial result. Have we not abolished the *kourbash* and *corvée?* Have we not improved the irrigation of Egypt?"

That was the policy of the Government—spending millions of money, and sacrificing hundreds and thousands of valuable lives, for the purpose of abolishing the kourbash and *corvée*, and improving irrigation. But even that was not true. He (Sir Robert Peel) spoke on the authority of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, who wrote to *The Times*, and said that he had abolished the *corvée;* but, when he left Egypt, it had been re-established. Therefore, the result was that Her Majesty's Government had abolished the kourbash and re-established the *corvée*, and improved the irrigation of the land. Now, in addition to this Italian policy to which he had referred, we had in London at present a special Ambassador from Turkey—Hassan Fehmy Pasha. What had he come here for? He (Sir Robert Peel) had tried to find out what was the object of his mission. In fact, he had asked Fehmy Pasha himself, and he failed to obtain from him the precise object of his mission. But if he had failed to learn from Hassan Fehmy what was the precise object of his mission, at all events he had been able to ascertain what Lord Granville had said to him. Fehmy Pasha asked whether Her Majesty's Government were inclined to evacuate Egypt, and Lord Granville told him they were for political reasons. Fehmy Pasha asked when, and Lord Granville said—

> "The British Government, being a Constitutional one, is dependent upon public opinion, which compelled the Cabinet to send an Expedition to the Soudan, and would not permit the evacuation of Egypt without some return for the sacrifices England has incurred."

MR. GLADSTONE: Who said that?

SIR ROBERT PEEL: That was Lord Granville to Fehmy Pasha. But, on the 19th of February, the first day of the re-assembling of Parliament, the Prime Minister said—and he (Sir Robert Peel) deeply regretted it—

> "I need only remind the House that the policy declared by Her Majesty's Government has always been, with respect to the Soudan,

the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt and its restoration."

Mr. GLADSTONE: To freedom.

Sir ROBERT PEEL: That was not in the first speech.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have referred to the reports, and in consequence of a considerable movement at the time in the House when I used the words "restoration to freedom" the words "to freedom" were not heard by the reporters.

Sir ROBERT PEEL said, it did not appear in the report; but, of course, he accepted the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Caine), speaking at Brixton on the same day—for it was well to compare the different utterances of Ministers—said that the results which had followed in the Soudan were only the consequences of Mr. Gladstone's earnest desire to evacuate the Soudan as quickly as possible. But they had heard the Prime Minister say that the intention of the Government was not the abandonment of the Soudan, but the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt; and the intention of the Government, as shown by the construction of the Berber-Suakin railway, is one of occupation. Immediately on the confirmation of General Gordon's death, this official notice was sent round to all the newspapers in the country—

> "It is now decided, in accordance with the wishes of Lord Wolseley, to open the Berber-Suakin route."

He wanted to know, what every person in the country was anxious to learn, why the Government did not adopt that plan when there was an opportunity of doing so last spring? The Conservative Party and the country were in favour of the establishment of the Berber-Suakin route. Why was not this course adopted, instead of the immense cost which had been entailed in men and money now thrown away on the Nile Expedition? But then the Government had apparently entered upon another plan. Now they had again, apparently, changed their mind. A vast Expedition was leaving for Suakin, evidently for a new purpose, and he had no doubt it would be too late. All these Expeditions had arrived too late. They reminded him of some lines as to the position of this country some years ago—lines which were written by a very celebrated statesman, and were very happy and applicable—

> "In planning expeditions 'gainst the foe,
> Our Ministers are ever sure, but slow;
> Each expedition shares a common fate,
> Slow to depart, and sure to be too late."

It appeared to him that the Government were now adopting a policy of revenge. They were going to avenge Gordon's death. Was that right or wise? Poor Gordon was dead, a scapegoat to the political exigencies of the Government, a victim to their vacillation. But was a war to avenge Gordon a right or judicious thing for this country to undertake? Among others who had said that Gordon was to be avenged was his hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the War Office (Sir Arthur Hayter). That hon. Gentleman had said—

> "Gordon is to be avenged. No Government would be worthy of the name who did not come to that decision. To withdraw would entail a loss of *prestige;* but it was not intended to rescue the garrisons in the South of the Soudan."

A resolution was, of course, at once passed expressing confidence in the Government. The other evening the Prime Minister used an expression which, he hoped, would never again be adopted by a Prime Minister of this country. The right hon. Gentleman, on February 19, asked—"Can we escape by accommodation?" He could not understand how such an expression could be used at a time when the Government had spent millions of money on a reckless war, and sent many brave men to their graves. The House, he hoped, would decline to support the policy of the Government without further pledges and stricter declarations as to the nature of that policy. He was prepared to give his support to this Motion before the House, because he believed every day proved that the policy of the Government was injurious to the public interest, and was working incalculable mischief to the welfare of the Empire.

Sir Charles W. Dilke and Mr. Courtney rose together. Mr. Speaker called upon

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, who said: Sir, I am sorry to stand between my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) and the House; and as I am certain that my hon. Friend will have an opportunity of addressing the House before the close of the debate, I have thought it right that some Member of the Government should rise to reply to the speeches which have been addressed to us by distinguished Members of this House since the speech of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary. As to the fine comedy of the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken—["Oh!"] —I do not use the word in an offensive sense; but I desire to point out that the roars of laughter in which we have all of us been kept for the last hour, by the right hon. Gentleman, are hardly in keeping with, and hardly suited to, the dignity and gravity of the subject before the House. I shall not follow the right hon. Gentleman into the consideration of Lord Wolseley's strategy. I am not a military man, and the right hon. Baronet is not a military man, and is probably no higher an authority on matters of strategy than a layman like myself. Nor shall I follow him in some of the other comments he has made. But I must take exception to the course pursued by the right hon Baronet in giving to the House as quotations from speeches, delivered on various occasions, words which are not quotations at all, but long summaries with his own opinions upon them. One most remarkable example of this practice is to be found in the allusion made by the right hon. Baronet to a recent speech of the Marquess of Ripon. He went very much out of his way to bring the name of the Marquess of Ripon into the matter; and he charged the Marquess of Ripon with having, on a certain occasion, made some undesirable remarks, and with having congratulated the country upon the present unfortunate state of affairs. Now, the passage in the Marquess of Ripon's speech had reference only to the heroism displayed by the British troops. The House will, perhaps, allow me to read what it was that the Marquess of Ripon really did say. What he said was this—

> "There were circumstances connected with the present state of affairs upon which they might undoubtedly and fairly congratulate themselves. What could have been more magnificent than the conduct of the British Army in the Soudan? The lesson that foreign countries would learn was that we were the same people who fought in the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny. Another cause for congratulation was the offer of assistance made to England by her Colonies."

Surely no comment of any kind is necessary in reference to these observations, and it is only necessary to put before the House the actual words of the Marquess of Ripon for hon. Members to see how unfair is the attack which has been made upon my noble Friend. The right hon. Baronet also misquoted, if the House will allow me to use the expression—but I will put it in any other words if the right hon. Baronet objects to that term—the right hon. Gentleman gave his own version of the words of Mr. Clifford Lloyd's letter to *The Times* with regard to the *corvée*, and he entirely misrepresented the words used by the Prime Minister in the course of last week.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: What did Mr. Clifford Lloyd say?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I read the letter in *The Times* very carefully, and, although I do not agree with it, I did not understand Mr. Clifford Lloyd to say that he had abolished the *corvée*, and that it had been re-established.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: Since he left.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I do not pretend to use Mr. Clifford Lloyd's exact words. I am quoting from memory the language of his letter which appeared in *The Times*, not having the passage at hand.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: Perhaps the right hon. Baronet will pardon me if I interrupt him. It is not very fair for the right hon. Baronet, when he is charging me with wilful misrepresentation—for that is his meaning—to speak from memory, without referring to the actual words of Mr. Clifford Lloyd's letter.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I can assure the House that I have no desire to hurt the feelings of the right hon. Baronet; but I read Mr. Clifford Lloyd's letter, and I gathered from it an entirely different impression from that which has been conveyed by the right hon. Baronet. With regard to other points, there can be no doubt that the right hon. Baronet has misrepresented what the Marquess of Ripon said, and that, on three occasions, when he professed to quote the words of the Prime Minister, as a matter of fact he misquoted them.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I really must interrupt the right hon. Baronet, who has now repeated his charge against me. The right hon. Baronet has distinctly charged me with wilful misrepresentation, and I am entitled to defend myself against that charge, and to explain to the House that I used the very words of the Marquess of Ripon. I deny that I, in any way, misquoted him. I quoted his very words. I am in the hands of the House. If I have in any way said anything that was not fair to the Marquess of Ripon, I am perfectly ready to apologize. The words I quoted were to the effect that, in reference to the Soudan, there were circumstances upon which we might undoubtedly and fairly congratulate ourselves.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I am in the recollection of the House. I maintain that the right hon. Baronet made an attack upon the Marquess of Ripon; and I desire to show that, so far from the noble Marquess having made an unpatriotic speech, he did just the reverse.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I never said that the noble Marquess had made an unpatriotic speech.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: That appeared to be the impression which the right hon. Baronet wished to convey to the House. The right hon. Baronet is fond of making rather sweeping and strong statements. The right hon. Baronet said that he knew from the highest possible authority that our relations with France at the present time were more critical than they had ever been since the battle of Waterloo.

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I said that they were more strained than they had ever been since that time.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I was not at all aware that we were on the brink of a war with France, or on anything but the most excellent terms with that country. I do not know how the right hon. Baronet can suppose that our relations with France are more strained than they were at the time of the Pritchard incident in reference to Tahiti, or at the time of the Spanish Marriages, when we undoubtedly were on the brink of war. I do not know whether the right hon. Baronet means by "the highest authority" the French Ambassador, the Prime Minister, or the President of the French Republic. It ought to be one of those three persons to justify the language used by the right hon. Gentleman; but I greatly doubt whether the right hon. Baronet got his information on the subject from either of them. I shall have occasion presently to refer again to the misrepresentations of the right hon. Baronet on other matters; but I will now, in the first place, deal with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross). The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech to-night, took us back a very long way, and he spoke of the danger to the country which had arisen from the seeds sown by the present Government in Egypt during the last four years. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to imagine that the Egyptian Question had been raised entirely by the present Government since they came into Office, and that hon. Members opposite are not in the smallest degree responsible for any part or share in these transactions. The right hon. Gentleman appears to have forgotten all about the meeting at Willis's Rooms, and the action of another Government which had rendered it necessary to send the British Fleet to Alexandria. He is quite ignorant of anything like pressure on the part of the Party opposite, and certain circumstances which preceded the transactions of four years ago. The country, however, will never forget that the present Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and several of their Colleagues were in Office for many years without mixing this country up in the affairs of Egypt, and that it was the late Government who upset the late Khedive and set up the present Khedive.

MR. BOURKE: Not at all. Never.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The despatches are before the House, especially the despatches relating to the bringing of France into the control of the affairs of Egypt, and including Austria against the desire of Austria, and I ask the House if that did not bring this country into the position of direct responsibility which it now occupies in regard to Egypt? I ask the House also to remember that it was the action of the Marquess of Salisbury when he came into Office which changed the Dual Control, which had formerly been merely a financial one, into a political and international one. The right hon. Gentleman taunted us with not having sent out Cavalry to Suakin and

Berber; while the hon. Member for York (Sir Frederick Milner), who spoke shortly after the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire, made a vigorous attack upon us on this ground alone. He also said that the blood of Gordon rested upon us. That is the nature of the accusation of the hon. Baronet, which he endeavoured to substantiate in a speech of great length, because we had not allowed General Gordon to avail himself of the assistance of Zebehr Pasha. The request of General Gordon to have Cavalry sent to him was dependent upon his obtaining the assistance of Zebehr Pasha; and when the Government decided that he should not have that assistance his request for Cavalry fell through. Do hon. Members recollect that speech which the Marquess of Salisbury made with regard to Zebehr Pasha? And, in the face of that speech on the part of their Leader, how could hon. Members opposite now maintain that Zebehr Pasha should have been employed? Do hon. Members opposite mean to endorse the statement that the death of General Gordon and the fall of Khartoum were owing to the not sending out of Zebehr Pasha?

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: What I said was that General Gordon requested us to do certain things—five in all; that we refused every one of them, and substituted nothing in their place.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I was not referring to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman at the moment, but to that of the hon. Baronet the Member for York (Sir Frederick Milner). The right hon. Gentleman carefully guarded himself against giving a distinct support to the request for sending out Zebehr Pasha. We must remember that all of the military authorities in this country were distinctly opposed to the sending of a small force to Berber at that time. We are told that we should probably be doing no good, and that we should be running a risk which no Government were justified in running. That was the opinion of the military authorities. Now comes the question whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire is right in saying that at a later period than that we were too late in the action which we took. The whole stress of the argument against us, with the exception of that of the one hon. Gentleman I have mentioned, who attacked us for not having sent out Zebehr Pasha—the whole stress of the argument against us is that we were too late in the action which we took on the Nile, and that we must have been prepared to be too late—that we acted, in fact, at a later moment than the best moment at which we should have acted; but those who make that accusation against us have not attempted to justify it by any facts or dates at all. They seem to think that we let pass the moment of the highest Nile, and that we let slip the best opportunity for taking action upon the Nile. That is not the case. The first action for advancing up the Nile was taken previous to the highest Nile. The steamers for the transport of an Expedition were passed up the Nile as soon as it was possible to pass them up; and, as a matter of precaution, the orders were given even before the Expedition was decided upon. This was about the middle of July—a considerable time before the actual necessity for an Expedition had been demonstrated. ["Oh!"] I do not know what there is in that statement that can be considered objectionable.

An hon. MEMBER: The words "Before the actual necessity for an Expedition had been demonstrated."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I quite understand the feeling of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and which they expressed in the debate in August, that the necessity was demonstrated before we thought it was. But although that may be the feeling of hon. Gentlemen opposite, we did, in point of fact, act in advance of our own views on the subject, because, as we thought it might become necessary to despatch an Expedition at the earliest date, we passed the steamers up the Nile, and as soon as the river became sufficiently high we took steps which would have to be taken if the Expedition were afterwards decided upon. These orders were given in July, and the steamers passed up the river some time before the Expedition was decided upon in August. Some hon. Gentlemen opposite say that at that date we had no intention of aiding or rescuing General Gordon. Before we decided to send British troops up the Nile, on this very dangerous Expedition, it was our bounden duty to try whether there were other means in existence by which Khartoum could be relieved. These means were tried in July, when active steps were taken to get the Kabbabish Tribes, who were opposed to the Mahdi, to go to Khartoum. Major Kitchener was sent to them, and spent a considerable sum of money in order to negotiate for the relief of Khartoum. This was in July, at the time when the boats were being prepared. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire has quoted to-night a letter from General Gordon, dated 19th of September, in which he complains of receiving no answer to his applications. The right hon. Gentleman has quoted it as if he thought that the receipt of no answer by General Gordon was in some degree our fault. Now, at the moment when that letter was written by General Gordon, Lord Wolseley was actually at Cairo; and every possible step had been taken, two months in advance of that date, to send news to General Gordon at Khartoum. Every conceivable step had been taken, two months before that date, to send news into Khartoum. Messengers had been sent by the Nile, through Suakin and Berber, by Massowah, and even through Tripoli and the Barbary States. Indeed, every possible and conceivable step had been taken for sending an answer to General Gordon; and although, unfortunately, he was without news from us at that date, it cannot be said that it was our fault that General Gordon was so situated. The right hon. Gentleman and other speakers have lately spoken of our being too late, as though we were too late in the ordinary sense of the word, and as though the danger could have been foreseen and prevented with greater speed. Some hon. Members have persuaded themselves that Khartoum actually fell from want of provisions; but, in the opinion of the great majority of this House, that was not the case. There is every possible reason to suppose that Khartoum fell through treachery, and there is absolutely no evidence the other way. There is evidence to show that there was plenty of food to enable the garrison to hold out until Lord Wolseley's Forces reached the city in the ordinary course of events. General Gordon informed us, over and over again, that he had food to last up to December, or, at the least, up to the end of September. On the 18th of September he stated that he had money and food enough in Khartoum for four months, after which time he said he should be embarrassed; but he used no stronger word than "embarrassed." He assumed that no troops had been sent at that time to relieve him; whereas, as a matter of fact, Lord Wolseley had sent troops up the Nile in boats, and a great number were on their way. General Gordon said that if troops were sent, the rebellion would cease as soon as they reached Berber. That fact shows how misinformed even General Gordon was as to the military situation. Now, although General Gordon then expected to have provisions only to the end of the year, as a matter of fact, there can be no doubt that he made sortie after sortie in the late months of the year, in which he captured provisions. The right hon. Gentleman opposite smiles; but there is a great mass of evidence to that effect, and we have the distinct statement of the last messengers who left Khartoum, that General Gordon was in perfect health, that his steamers were going down the river, and that he was constantly capturing grain and taking it up the river. Some hon. Members opposite have blamed the Prime Minister for quoting the anonymous Colonels of General Gordon; but what better evidence can you have than that of General Gordon's two Colonels, and of his Admiral, and of the 250 men who came down from Khartoum? They were Gordon's most trusted men; they acted as his body-guard during the siege; they were constantly going up and down the Nile; and their testimony to Lord Wolseley was that Gordon was not in great straits for want of provisions. Then there was the fact of the four steamers, which were well provisioned, and not by any means steamers that would be sent down by a starving town. It seems, therefore, to be as certain as anything can be that the statements of the messengers are true, and that Gordon was brought to his death by treachery within the town alone. If the danger was treachery, it was one which could not have been avoided by a more speedy military action than Lord Wolseley actually took. Now, I turn to some of the later questions, which are by far the most important raised in this debate, but which it is impossible to consider without previous reference to those military questions which have been made the ground of attack upon the Government. There are some hon. Members on this side of the House who think that after the fall of Khartoum became known we ought immediately to have withdrawn from the Soudan. I think it is unnecessary to discuss that question from the political or general point of view, when you remember how overwhelmingly strong against it are the purely military arguments. We had from Lord Wolseley a statement which, judging from subsequent events, appears to have been too sanguine as to the possibility of either of two courses being taken—either concentration at Korti, or advance. But Lord Wolseley asked for and expected an Expedition from Suakin; and, therefore, farther and considerable military operations were regarded by Lord Wolseley as an essential portion of our plans. The hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) asked a distinct question with regard to military operations. He put one of those questions which it is generally unwise to put and unwise to answer. I am able to say that, because I am not going to make that appeal with regard to this particular question. But speculative questions as to what is to happen in six months' time, at the end of our military operations, are questions which it would be unwise for any Government to pledge themselves to definitely. I cannot think that has been done in any previous military operations in this country, and it would be unwise on our part to do it now. But the hon. Member has put so extreme a case that it is possible to answer it. He asked, if the Mahdi were to retire to the Equatorial sands, whether we should follow him? I answer that no English Minister would be sufficiently mad or foolish to follow the Mahdi in that way. With regard to the future of the Soudan, the hon. Member for York (Sir Frederick Milner) made a somewhat humorous statement to the House, though I think it was somewhat unconscious humour. He expressed a fervent hope that before the close of the debate one of the prominent Members of the Opposition would enlighten him by expressing a firm and enlightened policy. I do not think he is likely to be successful. He seems to have spoken without any regard to the speeches which his Leaders have made up to the present time. He does not seem to have paid any attention to the speeches of his Leaders, either in this House or in the other House, to-night, or to the speeches of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), or of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), or of the Duke of Richmond to-night in "another place." None of those speeches seem to have made any effect upon him, and I think his Leaders will not be much flattered when they read that statement to-morrow; and certainly the anxiety of the hon. Member is likely to be increased by the statements which have since been made in the course of the debate. I sympathize with right hon. Gentlemen opposite when they refuse to give form to declarations of policy. My contention is that no Government and no Opposition ought ever to be asked, six months in advance, to pledge themselves in detail as to the results of military operations. Those results must depend upon circumstances and the nature of the operations themselves. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire made certain general declarations with which I should be prepared myself to agree. He quoted the words of the Resolution, and he said that we ought to do our best to insure a good and stable Government succeeding us. Quite so; and then the right hon. Gentleman said that a good and stable Government in the Soudan meant our staying in Egypt. But this seemed to imply our staying in such portions of the Soudan as were necessary to our security in Egypt; and, no doubt, a large portion of the Party opposite appear to be desirous of pledging us to the policy of staying there. The right hon. Gentleman then read the words of the Resolution, and said the portion of the Soudan in which we must stay must be that portion which was necessary for the security of Egypt. All the highest military authorities of this country have agreed previously in fixing the frontier of Egypt so as to exclude these portions of the Soudan. If you looked merely to military considerations, you would not find it necessary to keep these portions of the Soudan, including Berber and Khartoum. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) told us that there was no ambiguity in the Resolution of the Leader of the Opposition. Those who have followed the explanations of that Resolution would be disposed to think there was an immense amount of ambiguity covered by its terms. For instance, the right hon. Gentleman says we are to stay in Egypt and those portions of the Soudan which are necessary for military security, and that the minimum of the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) was not enough. But he did not say what line he would fix, but put it entirely on the ground of military security. He did not assume any necessity for staying in the Soudan for the purpose of securing good government in the Soudan, or those parts of it which were necessary for the security of Egypt. Some hon. Members have gone so far as to speak of our staying in the Soudan for the sake of trade, and for the benefit of those of the inhabitants of that country to whom we are under obligations. Therefore, I am justified in saying that the speeches on the other side make the Resolution that is moved ambiguous in the highest degree. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) got into a little difficulty, for he said we must establish a safe, and firm, and settled Government in Egypt. That certainly means our staying there ourselves, and yet that we must keep faith with Europe; and I do not know how the two purposes are to be reconciled without breaking faith in some way. The right hon. Gentleman said he would not go into detail, but would only lay down the broad outlines of a scheme; and I am bound to say that his outline is very broad indeed. He refused altogether to commit himself to any frontier line, or to a frontier line within 200 or 300 miles outside Khartoum. He certainly said that Berber was not enough. I will now turn to the questions which have been addressed to Her Majesty's Government with regard to our policy, and the questions put by my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), which have already been dealt with by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary. I also propose to deal, at the same time, with the questions which have been put by the right hon. Baronet who has just spoken. My right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) asked for a great deal of further information; and I was struck by the difference between the speech of my right hon. Friend on this occasion and the speeches which on former occasions he has addressed to this House on foreign subjects. My right hon. Friend was Ambassador to Constantinople while I was Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, and we had much conversation about foreign affairs. I may, therefore, confuse what he said in private with what he has said in public speeches, and if I do I hope he will forgive me. But he has always tried to guard Governments—all Governments—from over-pressure of detail in regard to questions relating to foreign affairs, because of the difficulty and inconvenience of suddenly pressing a Government in this House for details about matters which are the subject of pending negotiations. That is my right hon. Friend's general view; but on this occasion, if he will allow me with all respect to say so, I think my right hon. Friend has violated his own principle in asking questions upon many points of great delicacy, which are the subject of pending negotiations at the present time; and with his knowledge of public, and especially Oriental affairs, I would ask him to pardon me if I answer his questions less completely than I might otherwise do, although I will answer them to the best of my ability consistently with the interests of the public. My right hon. Friend put questions to us in reference to the occupation of the Red Sea ports by Italy; and the right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) made an attack upon us in regard to the occupation of Massowah. I am sorry that the right hon. Baronet is not at this moment in his place, because I was about to refer to his remarks, and in his absence I am unable to speak in so much detail as I would have done if he had been in the House. The right hon. Baronet quoted a great deal of the despatches as to Assouan, and dragged in Massowah, although that place was not in question in the least degree. The right hon. Baronet asked for information in reference to pending matters between this country and Italy, and the negotiations now going on with Hassan Fehmy Pasha in this country; and my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) also asked questions as to Hassan Fehmy's object in being here, the position of Germany and Russia, and the autonomous or international position of Germany in Egypt. With regard to some of these questions, I would the less try to satisfy my right hon. Friend than to argue with him, and try and convince him that on his own principle he ought not to be satisfied. Hassan Fehmy Pasha, who is here at the present moment, is actually carrying on negotiations at this time. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) has pretended to give the House some sort of account of those negotiations, and has said that Hassan Fehmy Pasha himself give him an account of what passed with Earl Granville. Now, Hassan Fehmy Pasha is a man of great ability, uprightness, and integrity, and is in the highest degree a statesman, and one of the two very best men in the service of the Turkish Government at this time. He is an admirable example of a Turkish barrister of great eminence in the law, but he is not highly skilled in the languages of Western Europe; and possibly the right hon. Baronet has failed in understanding from him what it was that Earl Granville said. I will, however, confidently assert that Earl Granville never made the extraordinary statement which, passing through two mouths, has been ascribed to him by the right hon. Baronet. I speak with certainty on the subject, because the conversation has been formally recorded, and Fehmy Pasha has attested the accuracy of the record. I can only say that Earl Granville never said anything of the kind. My right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) has asked me a question in reference to these negotiations. I can only, in the face of the fact that negotiations are now pending, tell him that it will be found from the Blue Books before the House that we have not only recognized the rights of the Porte in the Red Sea, but that, over and over again, we have pressed the Porte to take over those parts of the coast which the Egyptian Government has been unable or too poor to manage. For one reason or another the Turkish Government delayed doing so, and have never acted upon the policy we have pressed upon them. We have no reason to believe that now there is any desire on their part to take a more active part on the shores of the Red Sea than they have taken during the many months we have been pressing them to occupy the places the Egyptian Government has evacuated. Prince Hassan has been sent into the Soudan under circumstances which are absolutely and entirely known to the House. Nothing has passed with regard to his mission which is not contained within the four pages of the Paper in the possession of the House. Therefore, there is no mystery or secrecy in this transaction. Lord Wolseley desires that he should be sent to him, because Lord Wolseley feels keenly his position as a Christian Commander in a Mahommedan country, and wishes to have a Mahommedan with him to increase his influence over local officers. The statement which was made to-night, that we have sent him as the Governor of the Soudan, is not a true statement; because, as will be seen from the last Papers, we prevented any such rank being given to him. Then, as to the position of Germany and Russia in Egypt, we have been asked why those Powers take a more active part in the affairs of that country than they formerly took, and what is behind this activity? The greater activity of Germany and Russia was shown at the time of the Conference by a request then made that there should be German and Russian Representatives on the Caisse. My right hon. Friend must admit that, if the Caisse exists at all, it is desirable that all the Great Powers should be represented upon it. Whenever any changes in the Law of Liquidation are required it is necessary to appeal to the Powers; and it is much more easy to obtain the consent of the Powers to the recommendations of a body on which they are largely represented than to the recommendations of a body on which only a few are represented. Then, again, as to foreign control, there is not the danger of active foreign intervention in the case of a body on which four or five of the Powers are represented upon it. I cannot think that the mere admission of the Representatives of Germany and Russia can be a subject of blame on the part of my right hon. Friend. It has really been done at the desire of all the Powers, who wish to prevent any financial pressure and increase of charges upon Egypt. Then, my right hon.

Friend asks a more important question, and one much less easy to answer. He inquired of us as to the internationality or autonomy of Egypt—whether it is to be international or autonomous? One of the difficulties of using long words is to know always what they mean. "Internationality" is a word which never means the same thing in two cases, and "autonomy" may also be used in different senses. For instance, I find it difficult to know whether Belgium and Switzerland are international or autonomous in the opinion of my right hon. Friend. [Mr. GOSCHEN: Autonomous.] Then, my right hon. Friend wishes to know whether Egypt is to be governed by an International Control, and to cease to have any power of self-government at all. I hope we shall not do anything which is likely to make Egypt international, in the sense of losing the power to govern her own affairs. Her Majesty's Government, in the unfortunate position of things in the Soudan, have not received any considerable amount of local support. I know hon. Members opposite are under the impression that that is in consequence of the declaration that it was our intention to leave the country. But I believe that that absence of local support preceded any declaration of the kind, and any of the consequences to which they allude, and that it is founded upon the fact that we are dealing with a considerable amount of fanaticism. The Mudir of Dongola, who has been specially mentioned in the course of this debate, is a person whom it is undoubtedly impossible for us to abandon to his enemies after the services he has rendered to us. But he is not an inhabitant of the Soudan; he is an Egyptian Turk. He was formerly employed in the Delta, and wishes very much to be employed there again. His chief desire is that when he ceases to be of use in the Soudan he should be employed in the Delta. There can be no doubt that one of the objects we ought to have in view in the course of our operations in the Soudan is the protection of the interests of those who have assisted us. The most difficult, perhaps, of all the questions put by my right hon. Friend, to which it is possible to give an answer at all, is a question he addressed to us with regard to Italy. The question is one on which I think I can throw some little light, although I fear that I shall not be able to satisfy my right hon. Friend. The right hon. Baronet who attacked us just now with reference to the position of Italy in the Red Sea told us that the Prime Minister of Italy made a statement upon this subject which was entirely at variance with the statement of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice). Now, the statement of Signor Mancini is entirely at variance with that of the right hon. Baronet, because he said in the Italian Chamber exactly what was said in the House of Commons by my noble Friend. The right hon. Baronet said that we have changed our policy in regard to Massowah. I have already said that Massowah is not mentioned in these despatches, and that it is not a subject of negotiation in any way. But if we have changed our policy on this point with regard to the occupation of a particular town on the Red Sea in the course of four years, surely the change is not one at which the right hon. Baronet need wonder or be astonished, or accuse us of flagrant inconsistency, because, four years ago, it was thought that a particular town should remain Egyptian, and because Egypt is now too poor to keep it, and, therefore, the care of it ought to be transferred to somebody else. I do not think that the circumstances lay us open to any charge of inconsistency. The late Government stated in this House that they were prepared to hand over Herat, which is called the key of India, to Persia; but I imagine that if we did so now, the Opposition would not think it inconsistent to challenge that policy, and propose a Vote of Censure. Therefore, it is very probable that in the course of a period of four years a change in our policy with regard to the occupation of a not very important seaport may have come over "the spirit of our dream;" and I would remind the right hon. Gentleman of the extreme delicacy of the position of Italy with regard to Turkey, similar as it is to the delicacy of our position towards Turkey in regard to the occupation of Cyprus. Italy is in possession of certain territory which she admits to be under the Sovereignty of Turkey, as we admit Cyprus to be. I should like to know, if anybody in the Italian Chamber was to go into the question of our occupation of Cyprus, where the position is somewhat similar, what would have been thought by us? My right hon. Friend, who was Ambassador at Constantinople, will appreciate the value of the remark. There is, at this moment, not only friendship and amity between this country and Italy, but there is the closest possible friendship and amity in the relations between the two countries. We disclaim all responsibility for the proceedings of the Italian Government in their operations at Massowah. We are not responsible for them in any way; we did not suggest them originally, although we acquiesced in them; and we do not consider, under the circumstances of the case, that we are called upon to express any opinion with regard to that Expedition. But, in general terms, we cannot refrain from expressing our earnest desire that the extremely amicable relations now existing between the two countries should not only continue, but even be strengthened. It should be remembered that Italy has a large number of its people in Egypt; the language of Italy is greatly used there in commercial transactions; that it has a considerable trade passing through the Suez Canal; and that the most valuable results are anticipated from the friendly relations between Egypt and Italy. It is a country, too, whose remarkable revival in recent years has excited the sympathy of all Englishmen. We had, before there was any question of an Italian Expedition to Massowah, or to any of the ports on this coast, pointed out to the Sultan that Egypt was not able to maintain them, and that it had better take steps with regard to them. But time passed; no steps were taken; and I think that, under these circumstances, we should not be the first persons to protest against the action of Italy. My right hon. Friend pressed us very much upon the subject of the Suakin and Berber railway—a subject much more difficult to answer. Surely my right hon. Friend must admit that it is impossible to give an absolutely binding pledge upon the subject at present. Suppose he were in power and were asked to give a pledge as to his own policy, that he would in all circumstances keep Berber, maintain the trade route, put down the Slave Trade, and open up the country to civilization. Would he give that pledge? Suppose that the Mahdi was at Khartoum with unbroken power, with an immense force of religious fanaticism behind him, would my right hon. Friend give the same answer as to the immunity of the railway and the trade route, and the opening up of the country to civilization, as he would if the Mahdi were dead, without any fanatical successor? You must remember that in an Oriental country it is quite within the bounds of possibility that this whole movement may suddenly break down; that the country may be restored to its former position; and that the people may return to their old allegiance. Take the possibility of the death of the Mahdi. These prophets, as a general rule, do not leave successors behind them. The inutility of a railway line under certain circumstances in such a country could be easily shown. A comparatively small force of the enemy could prevent its working. Although military reasons have made us make the line, I hope that it may remain, I hope that the Soudan may return to such a state of tranquillity and peace that the railway line, after a few years, will be regarded as a commercial undertaking, and may be utilized for purposes of trade. I would never be a party to the protection of the line by an enormous military force, or at an enormous expenditure of money. But it would be the height of folly to give an absolute pledge. That seems to me to transcend the ordinary conditions under which pledges may be asked for and given. There can be no doubt that the railway, if it were maintained, would be a blessing to Africa; but, on the other hand, no one in this country would consent to keep for years a large British garrison in Berber at an immense expense for the purpose of protecting a railway which, if it had to be protected, would be absolutely useless for purposes of commerce and civilization. Therefore, I think my right hon. Friend will admit that it is impossible for any Government whatever to give an absolute and binding pledge in reference to the Suakin and Berber railway. The utility of a railway, if our Forces are to be kept in the Soudan for 12 months, must be evident. The House will remember the difficulty that was experienced in moving troops out of Alexandria four years ago. Then, in general terms, my right hon. Friend asks the Government for pledges with regard to the future government of the Soudan. It is not, in my opinion, possible, to give more explicit pledges than those already given. My own impression is that no pledge as to the ultimate future of the Soudan, or of Khartoum, is possible under present circumstances. It is undesirable to give pledges which in the nature of things cannot be carried out. There is no general agreement in this House or in the country as to what that future should be; but if there were such an agreement, it would be foolish to attempt to put it in the form of a pledge. Our intention is to use all reasonable care to leave behind us in the Soudan a lasting state of tranquillity. We will not and cannot go beyond the statement that we will use all reasonable efforts. We decline to convert that statement into a binding pledge. We should be merely deluding the House if we were to say more than that. My right hon. Friend seems to contemplate the possibility of our keeping a grip on the Nile at Berber. I would ask him whether in the course of the debate he has heard from the Party opposite anything in the nature of a binding pledge that would dispose him to entertain the idea that they would accede to his wishes in this respect? I do not complain of the vagueness of the statements of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite; but I contend that it would be hostile to the interests of the country if binding pledges on such a subject were made at the present time. Hon. Members opposite have spoken to-night of a policy of "bloodshed and bolt;" but it is difficult not to cast our eyes back a few years and to remember what was the policy of the late Government in Afghanistan. If ever there was a policy of "bloodshed and bolt," it was in Afghanistan. ["Oh!"] I mean in the abandonment of Cabul, the capital of Afghanistan, without leaving behind any settled Government. [*Cheers, and ironical cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Hon. Members cheer ironically; but the expression "bloodshed and bolt" does not apply to the policy of the present Government in Candahar, which was contemplated by themselves, and has been approved by Sir Donald Stewart himself. I would ask hon. Members who cheer ironically to read that statement. When we left Candahar we left behind us a settled Government, and such a condition of things as resulted in the formation of an independent and united Afghanistan, which was what we demanded. If that should be possible, of course we should like to pursue in Africa a policy such as that which we followed with so much success in Afghanistan. We have not forgotten the success of that policy; and although some hon. Members seem to think that we shrink from giving a pledge that we will carry out in the Soudan the policy we have so successfully pursued in Afghanistan, I am quite sure that I have now shown that the conditions of the present situation are such that it would be merely imposing upon the good sense of the House and the country if we were to attempt to carry our pledges further than we have carried them already.

Mr. MARRIOTT said, that with regard to the rebuke with which the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down thought fit to commence his speech in reference to the right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel), and the laughter and spirit of levity he had provoked being out of place, he (Mr. Marriott) thought the House would agree with him that such a rebuke came with a very bad grace from a Member of Her Majesty's Government. He did not want to go into details, which were now well known all over the country, as to how some of the Ministers acted on the receipt of the intelligence of the fall of Khartoum; but, considering how they acted, he thought the rebuke which the right hon. Baronet had administered to the Opposition was singularly ill-timed. He could not help admiring the audacity of the right hon. Baronet. He only wished the Government had displayed the same audacity in their policy as the right hon. Gentleman had in his arguments. When he told them of "bloodshed and bolt" in Afghanistan, he (Mr. Marriott) should like to ask who bolted there? Why, the present Government, who left Candahar and bolted, after the successful march of Sir Frederick Roberts. Who bolted from the Transvaal? Why, the whole policy of the Government had been to make a successful war, and then bolt; and what he wanted to know was, whether we were going to have another bloody war, and then another bolt, without any tangible good resulting to civilization? The right hon. Baronet tried to make out that the Government were not responsible for the death of General Gordon, because General Gordon was betrayed by treachery. That was not the first time this excuse had been made. It had been made by the Prime Minister in one of those airy phrases he was fond of using, such as that of "a people struggling to be free." He would ask the right hon. Gentleman for one moment to consider the dates, and then say what foundation there was for the assertion that Gordon was sacrificed by treachery, and not by the neglect of the Government. General Gordon's last letter was dated December 14, and in that letter he said he expected the catastrophe in 10 days. He himself well knew that the catastrophe was going to happen; but if relief had come in December, that which did not happen till January 26 would not have happened at all. He wondered whether the right hon. Member for Ripon was satisfied with the answer he had received to his question? He wondered if he was satisfied that the Government was pursuing the right course? The Ministry, the right hon. Baronet stated, had all along said that their intention was to leave in Egypt a stable and lasting Government; but the fault which hon. Members found with them, and which the country found with them, was that they had never realized what a stable and lasting Government meant, or the process or period of time that it would take to establish it. Having destroyed the Army and upset the existing Government of Egypt, they considered that they would be able to set up another Government in the course of two or three years. The House and the country ought to bear in mind this fact—that, considering they had overthrown in Egypt the very foundations of authority, and that there was no Egyptian Army, the establishment of a stable Government in that country could not be accomplished in less than a generation; and, therefore, if that was the intention, they must remain there for 25 or 30 years. Before a stable Government could be established, Her Majesty's Government would have much to do; they would have to restore order—no easy matter; they would then have to produce an equilibrium of the finances, and that also was no easy matter, as Her Majesty's Government had already found out; and then they would have to give the Egyptians equality of laws and equality of taxation, which things, as he had already said, would take a generation for their accomplishment. The country asked why, if Her Majesty's Government intended to do all this, and to remain in Egypt until it was done, they had not said so plainly at the outset, instead of beating about the bush, at one time speaking of six months, at another of a year, as the duration of their stay there, and now giving no definite reply on the subject at all? The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, in replying to the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition, put forward this defence. He said that the matter was *res judicata;* that all these matters had been brought up before; that they had been made the subject of Votes of Censure; that the country was satisfied; and that, therefore, the House ought not to go over the ground again. But the right hon. Gentleman forgot that, although the Votes of Censure were not carried, the conduct of Her Majesty's Government was only condoned. [*Ministerial dissent.*] He was using the language of the Home Secretary. He and hon. Members on those Benches said, not that the Government had committed three, four, or five errors of judgment, but that they had committed a series of errors of judgment, and that at different periods those errors had been condoned. But were they, having committed another error of judgment, again to be condoned? Why, the Prime Minister had never yet realized the initial mistake made in bombarding the forts of Alexandria without having troops ready to land there. The historian of our times would have to record that the English Fleet entered the harbour of Alexandria in the month of May, 1882; that upon the 30th of that month the English Consul sent home a telegram, not only in his own name, but in the name of the European inhabitants of Alexandria, which stated that, so long as the Fleet remained, their lives and their property were in danger unless troops were in readiness to land; that, on the 11th of June a riot took place, during which several lives were sacrificed, and the English Consul (Mr. Cookson) insulted and wounded; and that when, notwithstanding these warnings, the Fleet bombarded the forts, the lives and property of the Europeans in the city were left at the mercy of the rabble. He said that, were the Government a Corporation or a Railway Company, and were they brought before a Judge and jury in this country, not only would they be held liable for the amount of the damage resulting from the bombardment at Alexandria, which his hon. Friend the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) stated at £4,000,000 sterling, but a verdict of manslaughter would be returned against them for the lives that were lost. But Her Majesty's Government had never realized that fact. Why had this been condoned? Because the telegram of Mr. Cookson was not published until after the war had begun, when everything else was forgotten, and the victory of Tel-el-Kebir put out of sight the fault of the Government in not providing for the protection of life and property at Alexandria. On the 5th of October, 1882, Earl Granville addressed a despatch to the Earl of Dufferin, in which the Earl of Dufferin was asked, in the most polite manner, to show to the Porte that England wished for her co-operation, while all the time England had imposed impossible conditions on her Army and impossible conditions on her Fleet. The House knew that the Porte was deceived, and that there existed a great soreness in consequence. But in that despatch there was one line which might have given hope as to the future. Earl Granville said that, while the sacrifices they had made had given England power, that power had thrown upon her great responsibilities. He would ask hon. Members to take their minds from the 5th of October, 1882, the date of the despatch, to the 8th of August, 1883. At that time Colonel Stewart had been sent to Khartoum, and it would be found that 30 or 40 despatches suggesting reforms were sent by him to Sir Edward Malet and passed on to Cherif Pasha. Then General Hicks sent despatches, all of which were received. But about the 8th of August Earl Granville began to be alarmed, and for the first time showed the white feather, for he wrote out to Sir Edward Malet, reminding him that Her Majesty's Government assumed no responsibility whatever in regard to the condition of affairs in the Soudan. Now, at that time, let it be borne in mind, the Soudan was as much a part of Egypt as Jersey was of England; and yet Sir Edward Malet was instructed to point out that he was debarred from giving advice with reference to affairs in the Soudan. Then followed the sacrifice of General Hicks and his Army, and the defeat of Baker Pasha, after which, in the month of February last year, a Vote of Censure was moved in that House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), both of whom he regretted not to see in their places, took part in the debate on the Motion. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford rejoiced that Her Majesty's Government had at last discovered and acknowledged their duties, and added that, bearing in mind the difficulties of their task, he should vote with them. He wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman rejoiced now, whether he felt sorry that he rejoiced then, and whether he thought it would have been better had he voted against the Government? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon also said that the policy of the Government must be different from their past policy; and he added that he believed the Government would stand by their pledges, and he would stand by them. What did the right hon. Gentleman think of the Government pledges now? They had given pledges which might be as easily broken as those of last year. Hon. Members knew what had taken place between February and May last; they knew the Government policy was never to act themselves, but only when public opinion guided them. It was not until that article appeared in *The Pall Mall Gazette* that they sent out General Gordon; they sent him out first on account of public opinion, and, secondly, because it was a cheap thing to do. After that El Teb and a series of battles took place; General Gordon was believed to be in danger, and accordingly hon. Members on that side of the House did the duty of an Opposition by again proposing a Vote of Censure. Upon that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford was silent; but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon delivered a speech, in which he said that Her Majesty's Government had not recognized the danger of the situation, and impressed on the House that not only the Government, but every individual Member, incurred great responsibility by the vote he was about to give. He (Mr. Marriott) agreed with that; but what vote was given by the right hon. Gentleman? Why, none at all. Having told the House of their responsibility he went away, as did also the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, without voting. Hon. Members knew that on that occasion the conduct of the Government was condoned; that they pledged themselves to be responsible for the safety of General Gordon; and they knew that on the 8th of August the Government had not made up their minds. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down said they were preparing to act months before; but if that were so, why did they not take the House into their confidence? The Government came down to the House in August and asked for £300,000 on account of the Expedition which it was known in November would cost £7,000,000, and when they must have known that the Expedition was undertaken too late. On the 13th of September they had not expressed their intention of giving field allowance to the officers of the Staff; and he said, without fear of contradiction, that on the 13th of September it was the opinion of military men in Cairo, the opinion of their own Staff officers, and the opinion of Mr. Cookson, that they were six weeks or two months too late; and if there were a Royal Commission to inquire into the circumstances, he was confident that Lord Wolseley, were his opinion asked, would say—"I knew at the time—nay, I expressed the opinion in Cairo—that we were six weeks too late." Well, then, who was to blame? Was it not the unanimous opinion of hon. Gentlemen on those Benches, and of many hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the Government ought to have begun to act sooner? They said—"We do not want the Government to send soldiers into the climate of the Soudan in June and July, but we want them to begin their preparations for doing so; to get their boats ready, if boats are to be used, so that the Expedition may start at the earliest fitting moment." And had it started in September, instead of in November, there could be no doubt that Khartoum would not have fallen, that General Gordon would have been saved, and that the English Flag would have now been floating over the city. Who, then, was to blame for what had happened but the Government? He observed on the Benches below the Gangway the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), who sacrificed himself when he left the Government, and who in an interesting speech, which he (Mr. Marriott) had read, took his constituents into his confidence, and told them that, like him, the Prime Minister disapproved of the Egyptian War and the Expedition to Khartoum. But if that were so, how came it that the war and the Expedition were carried out under the auspices of the Prime Minister? [Mr. COURTNEY dissented.] The hon. Member shook his head, but he said in his speech that it was a policy of which the Prime Minister disapproved. He was so reported in the newspaper in which he had read the hon. Member's speech. The hon. Member was deserving of respect for having sacrificed his place in the Government to his opinions as to proportional representation; but although he left the Government on that question, he (Mr. Marriott) thought that the question of the Egyptian War was of more importance still, and he would remind the hon. Gentleman of the saying, "Straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel." Again, the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) had applied to the Government language which hon. Members on those Benches would be called to Order for using; he said they were "cowardly, and not honest." If that were the opinion of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite, he would ask if they were going to vote for a Government whom they declared to be dishonest and cowardly? If so, he hoped their constituents would know it, because he was convinced that the great body of the working classes would then support the policy of the Opposition. He knew that many were taken with the phrases that had been used in reference to this question—such, for instance, as that of "scuttling out of Egypt; but the establishment of a civilized and stable Government would not only be a great blessing to Egypt and the Soudan, but it would also be the means of opening up an enormous trade with Liverpool, Manchester, and the manufacturing districts; if a railway were made between Berber and Suakin, there could be no possible doubt that those in the North would gain enormously. But for that one thing was necessary—there must be a civilized and stable Government. Now, a civilized and stable Government was impossible at the present moment without the help of England, and that was impossible so long as Her Majesty's Ministers remained in Office. He quite admitted that some of Her Majesty's present Ministers might carry out a proper policy for Egypt and the Soudan; but the problem would never be solved until this country had a good understanding with Germany, Austria, and Turkey. He quite reciprocated what had been said about Italy. They all wished to be on the best terms with that rising nation, which had their good wishes; but an alliance with Italy alone was a danger both to her and to ourselves. The only alliance should be with Germany, Austria, and Turkey, which would be the best alliance possible; but how could such an alliance be brought about whilst they had such a Prime Minister as Mr. Gladstone, and such a Foreign Secretary as Earl Granville? The Turks had not forgotten the despatch of Earl Granville of the 5th of October, 1882. It was easy to deceive a person once, but it was very hard to do it twice; and it was not astonishing if the person deceived felt a little sore, as they knew the Turk did in regard to the treatment he received from Earl Granville. The Turk had not forgotten those splendid harangues in Mid Lothian, and those splendid pamphlets written by the Prime Minister about a "bag-and-baggage" policy. If Gentlemen opposite were so opposed to the shedding of blood—and nobody was more opposed to it than Gordon had been—the only way to prevent the shedding of blood was to go to the Soudan on a good understanding with the Turk. The Sultan of Turkey had, they knew, immense authority over all Mahommedans. He was their head—their Pope. The Mahdi was a false Pope and a false Prophet. A good understanding with the Turk was almost the first requisite to acting peacefully in the Soudan, because in the Soudan they were fighting people who did not wish to fight with us, and whom we did not wish to fight with. All this had been brought about by the almost unheard-of bungling of Her Majesty's Government. The Soudanese were a peaceful people who loved work, who made the most beautiful articles in silver and gold, and sold them to Egyptian and Arab tyrants and slave dealers. These were the people they were now fighting, and who were led away by a few whom the Prime Minister had described as "struggling rightly to be free." The Soudanese themselves, the original inhabitants of the Soudan, were an industrious people, who wished to be at peace with this country; yet what could they think when they saw our soldiers at their doors? Why, that we were invading their country as their enemies. He believed that if we went to them in an amicable spirit, and offered them money and goods in a peaceable way, we might be friends with them, though, of course, we must have force to appeal to as a last resort. But with the present Prime Minister and Earl Granville in Office, he maintained that it was almost impossible for any real solution to be found for the Egyptian Question. Even the present debate was not the most serious one that would have to be taken, because, after all, they had to find the financial solution of the question; and he never could conceive the people of this country agreeing to a Multiple Control. That Control would be condemned not only by that House, but by the country at large. The country would never stand the spending of £20,000,000 or £30,000,000, and then the putting of the Control under a variety of nations, each acting against the other, and each having different interests to serve. He knew the moderate Members on the other side of the House were waiting for the declaration of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington). That was rather a happy trait of the Prime Minister. He got up and made a rabid speech, which pleased the extreme Party, the Radicals calling "Excellent!" but the moderate men, disliking it, declared that they would not vote in support of the Government; and then the Whips went whispering about, and got the Secretary of State for War to finish the debate; and he would give some kind of soothing syrup which would satisfy the moderate Party. The result was that the Prime Minister satisfied one Party and the noble Marquess satisfied the other, while no promise was kept and no pledge redeemed. He (Mr. Marriott) did not make the charges against the Government which had been made by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). He did not repeat the charge made by the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), that they made promises they did not keep; but he did say that their want of action and the disproportion between their promises and their fulfilment of promises had been such as to earn for them a character for hypocrisy all over Europe. Promises were made and carried out in a half-hearted manner, and pledges were put forward with which the country did not agree. Was that to continue? The decision rested with the Moderate Liberals, who in heart and feeling were much more with the Opposition in this matter than with the Prime Minister. They agreed almost entirely with the policy the Conservatives were advocating, and yet they—or some of them, at any rate—would vote against the Motion censuring the Government. There was only a narrow passage—the Gangway — dividing the Moderate Liberals from the Radicals, whilst from the Conservatives the former were divided by the wide floor of the House; and yet, in feeling, in regard to the Egyptian policy of the Government, the Liberal Members were much nearer to the Conservatives than to the Radicals. But, however near the Opposition they might be, for Party purposes they would not vote against the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had told them that that would be a very serious occasion in the House; but, in his (Mr. Marriott's) opinion, there never was a more serious time for the country, and he did not believe that the feeling in the House was half as serious, nor the indignation against the Government half as bitter and pronounced, as it was throughout the country. That House did not represent the real feeling of the country; but to-morrow and on Saturday, when they read the papers, they would find that the speeches which had been made, and the vote which had been taken in "another place," were a much truer representation of the opinions of the country than the speeches made or vote taken in this effete and moribund, so-called "popular" House. The House of Commons did not represent the feeling of the people of the country; and he would only refer on this point to one remark made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). On a recent occasion the right hon. Gentleman told them that he would not vote for a Motion of Censure, because he did not wish to give a blank cheque to the Marquess of Salisbury. The right hon. Gentleman had never had great confidence in the people of this country. He had always been opposed to household suffrage and its extension to the counties; but could the right hon. Gentleman have used any phrase more clearly showing his distrust of the people than that now quoted? What did it mean? Why, "You may pass a Vote of Censure; but if you do we shall have to go to the people, and they will return the Marquess of Salisbury, and I am not prepared to trust the Marquess of Salisbury." But the Marquess of Salisbury had never asked for a blank cheque. The Conservatives were of opinion that, of late years, far too many blank cheques had been given to Ministers sitting on the Treasury Bench. What were wanted were Ministers with a firm and decided policy, and power was wanted in the House to check the Government if necessary. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) had acknowledged the evils of the present Administration; and he (Mr. Marriott) asked the House whether, in the face of the evil courses which this Government had pursued throughout the whole of these Egyptian affairs, they were going to give them another Vote of Credit? The words of the Resolution might be considered by some open to criticism; but its plain meaning was that the past deeds of the Government did not entitle them to confidence—that Her Majesty's Ministers were no longer fitted to be entrusted with the management of the affairs of the country, and that others could be found who could be depended upon to carry out a policy in accordance with national sentiment; therefore he hoped that many, even on the Ministerial side of the House, would be found to support it.

MR. BRYCE said, that at that late hour of the evening—12.50 P.M.—he would confine himself to a very few observations, and would not follow the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down into his attack upon the Mid Lothian speeches, nor into his references to the probability of Party voting on the Ministerial side of the House, to which the hon. Member had, perhaps, felt himself at liberty to allude through being himself so exceptionally free from the possibility of being charged with giving a Party vote. One part of the hon. and learned Member's indictment consisted of the bombardment of the forts of Alexandria, which event took place whilst the hon. and learned Member sat on the Liberal side of the House, and to which event the hon. and learned Gentleman, at the time, took no objection. What was the critical point to the Members sitting below the Gangway in the triangular duel which the House was witnessing?—and he called it such because it seemed to him that those of them on the Liberal Benches who were not altogether satisfied with the declarations of the Government conceived that the Government and the Opposition were mutually answering one another, but had failed to answer the objections which were made to any further aggressive operations in the Soudan. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt), in one of the most powerful speeches which even he ever delivered in the House, had answered with singular effect the arguments of the Opposition, who pleaded in favour of establishing a stable Government in the Soudan. He had shown the difficulties which would have to be encountered in an undertaking of that kind—how little there was to gain by it, and how much to lose. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who followed the Home Secretary, on the other hand, had shown how inadequate would be the destruction of the power of the Mahdi unless it were accompanied with something more. He (Mr. Bryce) did not think the answer given by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) completely removed the objection which many of them felt to the policy announced by the Government. For himself, he wished to draw a marked distinction between the political and military features of the situation. He admitted the plea put forward by the President of the Local Government Board, and previously by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan). He agreed that the movements of Her Majesty's troops would have to be guided very materially by the exigencies of the case, and did not think the House was the proper place in which to express opinions as to the military features of the case. The Government must have given to them a large discretion in the matter. But he did believe that the House and the country were entitled to a clearer statement as to the political objects at which the Government were aiming. In spite of all they had heard from four Cabinet Ministers, they were still in the dark as to those objects. The Prime Minister had said that Egypt was to evacuate the Soudan, but carefully abstained from giving his pledge that England should do so. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had dwelt on the importance of breaking the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum; but he had omitted to say why it was so necessary to break his power at Khartoum, and what was to be done in case he withdrew South or West of Khartoum and established himself at Kordofan. An hon. Member had asked what course would be followed if the Mahdi retired in the direction of the Equator; and the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board had rather evaded the question by saying that no one would think of following the Mahdi to the Equator. But suppose he withdrew to where he was before he attacked General Gordon, to those very regions in which his power had grown to its present formidable dimensions, what security was there that the Government, in their operations against him, would not consider it necessary to remain for a long period at Khartoum, to pursue him and engage in campaign after campaign beyond Khartoum? They could not find much comfort in the hopes expressed by the President of the Local Government Board, that the power of the Mahdi would expire of itself, and would not survive a single defeat. It was true that these outbreaks of fanaticism sometimes died away as rapidly as they had arisen; but there were cases in Mahommedan history in which the originator of some religious movement had found a successor, under whom it had continued and grown more potent. The present movement had risen so fast, and had consolidated itself so much, that they must not base their policy upon any hope that the Mahdi's power would disappear of itself. It seemed to him (Mr. Bryce) that the Government ought now to be prepared with a distinct declaration as to what they would do in case they found the campaign lengthening itself out. The House ought not to pass any Amendment which would forbid a forward movement if the military exigencies of the case required it; but ought to require an assurance that a movement of that kind would not turn into a long campaign, and, above all, that no step should be taken which should bind them to permanent occupation. Therefore it was that he looked with great apprehension to the making of the Suakin-Berber railway. It was impossible to suppose that when a railway of that kind was once made, public opinion in England would consent to abandon it. If any proposal for such abandonment was made, they knew how many arguments would be raised against it. They knew how strongly the absurdity of abandoning a trade opening such as that to the tribes of the Desert, after having spent large sums of money on it, would be urged. The question was, therefore, could they give a simple Vote of Confidence in the Government, or were they bound in some other way to express their sense that a more specific statement of policy was wanted? It would seem as though an opportunity were afforded them for expressing that opinion in the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley); but that Amendment was defective in two important respects. It protested too much, and prescribed too little. It indicated no policy for the Government to follow—it forbade an act of military exigency, and not of administrative policy — an act which, indeed, he personally believed not to be necessary, and in support of which, he submitted, no sufficient evidence had been tendered by Her Majesty's Government. Not even the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in the speeches they had made on the military question, had given any sufficient grounds for believing that it was necessary to go forward against Khartoum; and he wished to call the attention of the House to the ignominious position in which they might be found if intentions of the kind announced by the Government, under the sudden impulse of the feeling caused by the news of General Gordon's death, should be apparently maintained between now and December next, and then, when December came, abandoned. It would be far better, now that alarm had subsided, to look calmly at the situation, and make up their minds that such a forward movement was not necessary, than to hold themselves out as intending to undertake it, and then to sneak away in December next, because public opinion would not support them. He ventured to say that public opinion was already opposed to the plan which the Government had announced. The people of this country were opposed to the making of a railway from Suakin to Berber, because they believed that it would ultimately involve a permanent occupation. He would like to ask the Government whether they thought it wise to endeavour to commit the country to a forward policy of this kind at a moment when they were so uncertain as to the views of the great mass of the new electors put on the electoral roll by the Franchise Bill? An hon. Friend of his (Mr. Picton) had denied, the other night, that the Democracy were eager for war. His own opinion was that the new electors, and the whole body of the working classes of the country, were somewhat too indifferent to our Imperial interests. He wished they were more interested in these matters, and more alive to the sacrifices they might be called upon to make in regard to them. It was because he was afraid that the Government, who were on the point of embarking in a forward policy, which would lead to the retention of British troops in Equatorial Africa for a long time to come, would find, before many months, that they were not supported by the public opinion of the country, and would therefore have to pull up half way, that he begged them to pause before they committed themselves. They saw their Possessions in India threatened —they were threatened on the East in Burmah, and on the West in Afghanistan; and was that a time to engage in new liabilities? Was it not rather a time when they ought to reserve all their strength for the calls that might soon be made upon it? The Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) he could not support, as it did not suggest any aims or principles of general policy, but merely sought to condemn one particular military operation; and he had therefore placed on the Paper an Amendment of his own, which he should move if an opportunity arose for him to do so. It expressed a definite line of policy; and he could not help thinking that if the Government were more free than they were to express their real opinion, they would say that his Amendment did not fall very far short of their views. There was another Amendment given Notice of by the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). He (Mr. Bryce), while naturally preferring his own, was willing to vote for that Amendment, should there be a disposition to think it more seasonable. He would only say, in conclusion, that hon. Gentlemen opposite must not complain of them because, while thinking that the Government should be more explicit in their declarations, they, at the same time, were not prepared to support the policy of the Opposition, which they deemed far worse than that of the Government. The Government, it was true, were not sufficiently anxious to withdraw from these complications, but the Opposition wished to increase them; the Government kept them in a mist, but the Opposition would plunge them into a night whose darkness might at last be relieved by a flash of lightning, which would only serve to show them that they were on the brink of a precipice.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned," —(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION BILL.

(*Mr. Craig-Sellar, Mr. Davey, Mr. Raikes, Sir Lyon Playfair, Sir Henry Holland.*)

[BILL 25.] SECOND READING.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment on Second Reading [25th February],

And which Amendment was,

To add to the word "That," in the Original Question, the words "whilst this House is prepared to take such steps as may be needful to strengthen its own Committees sitting on Private Bills, or by arrangement with the other House of Parliament, to refer opposed Private Bills to Committees consisting of Members of both Houses of Parliament, and thus obviate the present cost to promoters and opponents of having to appear before Committees of both Houses of Parliament, it is unwilling to delegate its legislative functions to paid Judges or tribunals."—(*Sir Joseph Pease.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir JOSEPH PEASE appealed to the House to allow the debate to be resumed. It was stopped yesterday by the hour arriving beyond which opposed Business could not be taken.

Mr. HEALY: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to second that.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Healy.*)

Sir JOSEPH PEASE: I may point out that a large majority of the House yesterday were in favour of this Resolution, and that many hon. Members have asked me to move this Amendment. It is not a matter of such great importance as to induce me to press it upon the House; but in good faith towards those who supported me I feel bound to do so.

Mr. SEXTON: When the Irish Members desire to proceed with Business at an early hour, they do not find English Members so anxious to assist them.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I understand there was an agreement with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, if this Motion were pressed, words should be inserted in the Amendment. The Amendment reads—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'whilst this House is prepared to take such steps as may be needful to strengthen its own

Committees sitting on Private Bills, or by arrangement with the other House of Parliament, to refer opposed Private Bills to Committees consisting of Members of both Houses of Parliament, and thus obviate the present cost to promoters and opponents of having to appear before Committees of both Houses of Parliament, it is unwilling to delegate its legislative functions to paid Judges or tribunals.' "

It was understood by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that if the Motion were pressed after the word "unwilling," the words "without inquiry and consideration" should be inserted. If these words are inserted, it really leaves the Resolution of no considerable importance—in no way pledging the House. Under the circumstances, therefore, I think the consideration of the Amendment might very well be deferred.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

——o——

POST OFFICE SITES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bill to enable Her Majesty's Postmaster General to acquire lands in London, Birmingham, Bristol, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne for the public service, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE and Mr. HIBBERT.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 72.]

HYDE PARK CORNER (NEW STREETS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, Bill to provide for the maintenance of the New Streets at Hyde Park Corner, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE and Mr. HIBBERT.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 73.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir JOSEPH PEASE, Bill for closing Public Houses on Sunday, making exception for the sale of beer during certain hours, and for the Metropolitan District, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir JOSEPH PEASE, Earl PERCY, Mr. TREMAYNE, and Mr. CHARLES PALMER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 74.]

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 27th February, 1885.

TURKEY—FEHMY PASHA.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, it is a wholesome practice not to answer here matters which are stated in debate in the other House of Parliament. But there are some exceptions, and there arise sometimes questions of a personal character. Your Lordships all know that some time ago there arrived in this country a Special Envoy from the Porte —Fehmy Pasha. At the time of his arrival I made some inquiries, and from both Englishmen and foreigners I received, without exception, a high and flattering character of that gentleman. If I may say so with respect, the communications I have had with him have entirely confirmed the opinions previously given to me. But an old friend of mine, Sir Robert Peel—one of the most brilliant and lively speakers I know —appears to have made a rather more than usually amusing speech last night, and he gave the House of Commons an account of a conversation which took place between Fehmy Pasha and myself. I was a little puzzled at first, because I had not the slightest recollection of having said what I was stated to have said; and, in the second place, because I did not see how Sir Robert Peel could have known it if I had. That, however, was explained by Sir Robert Peel himself, who subsequently said that he was informed of it by Fehmy Pasha. I have taken the opportunity of communicating with Fehmy Pasha, who is quite in accordance with me in the opinion that Sir Robert Peel was under a misunderstanding in what he said. It is not an important matter, but I thought your Lordships would excuse me for mentioning it.

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.—RESOLUTION.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order of the Day read for resuming the debate on the Lord Wentworth's amendment to the Marquess of Salisbury's motion to resolve—

"That this House, having taken into consideration the statements that have been made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, is of opinion that—

(1.) The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided councils of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations;

(2.) That the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations will be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

Which Amendment was,

To leave out from "That" to the end of the motion, and insert "an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should not employ British forces to occupy the Soudan or to prevent the exercise by the Egyptian people of their right to select their own government."—(*The Lord Wentworth.*)

Debate resumed accordingly.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that it was not his intention to take up their Lordships' time by a long discussion of the first part of the Resolution of the noble Marquess. Whatever might be their opinion with regard to the responsibility of the Government for the fall of Khartoum and the sad fate of the lamented General Gordon, and for the other grave losses which had happened, it was, at all events, too true that nothing that they could say or do now could bring back to us our great countryman who had gone. They could not undo what had happened; but they could look ahead at what was to come. He did not wish in any way to attenuate the gravity of recent events; but it seemed to him that the events to come were of more importance from a national point of view, because there was, at all events, time to exercise, or to attempt to exercise, some influence over them. In his judgment, the interests of the country demanded that they should ask and that the Government should give to them some frank and full statement of their policy with regard to Egypt and the Soudan in the immediate future. They knew that the Government had issued instructions to Lord Wolseley that he was to follow the Mahdi to Khartoum and break his power. In that policy he believed the Government would be supported in that House and by the general feeling of the country. In itself, perhaps, it was not a policy altogether desirable, because, to a certain extent, it was impossible not to feel admiration for the gallantry of the Arab Tribes, who had originally been under intolerable oppression. He had no desire whatever to see English power and English authority extended by means of the sword; but when they looked at a subject of this kind they must look at it as a whole, and on all the circumstances and the men with whom they had to deal. It must be remembered that they were an Oriental and fanatical people, who were perfectly incapable of understanding a policy of conciliation and concession, and who, if we had attempted to treat with them upon the fall of Khartoum, would only have accepted our action as a confession of weakness. The policy announced was, therefore, necessary under the circumstances. But he thought that they might ask the Government to tell them a little more of their plans. That the Mahdi's power would be overthrown might almost be regarded as a certainty, and he could not suppose that the Government had not contemplated such a result. He thought they might ask the Government to tell them plainly a little more of their plans. After the Mahdi had been overthrown, what did the Government intend to do next? Did they intend to remain until some settled form of Government was set up; and to give some assurance that England would stand by those friendly tribes who had stood by us? They might be told that they should wait till the event happened. He knew well that it was very difficult for the Government to speak out; but, unfortunately, they had not observed a policy of consistent silence. The Prime Minister had announced on more than one occasion that their policy was one of retreat from the Soudan, and it had been reasonably supposed that retirement from the Soudan was the leading point in the policy of the Government. It was true that the Prime Minister had limited his statement, and said that he had only made it with reference to Egypt, and not with reference to England. He would now only ask the noble Earl the Leader of that House to go a very little further. He did not want to ask what the Government did not mean; but he asked them to tell what they did mean. They wanted some plain and distinct words that they could all understand. He wished to raise a humble but firm protest against this system of long speeches and long sentences, which meant anything, or everything, or nothing, and which, in his judgment, had been prejudicial to the interests of this country on more than one occasion with respect to foreign affairs, and which, looking at the matter only from a Party point of view, had been injurious to the Liberal Party. He did not raise any complaint against the noble Earl who led them; when the noble Earl spoke they could all understand him; his only fear was lest the noble Earl should consider it his duty to be silent. He wished to appeal to him, and to ask him whether this was a time for reticence? He would ask him whether he could not say something to them that night which would encourage their friends and discourage their enemies instead of the reverse? Some announcement from him of an intention on the part of England to remain in the Soudan until something like a settled form of Government was established, and that the interests of the friendly tribes would be adequately protected, would double the strength of our Army and of the tribes who had assisted our troops, and take away half the strength of the Mahdi and Osman Digna. He would remind their Lordships of the lines—

> "Fama, malum quo non aliud velocius ullum,
> Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo."

These Arab tribes were greatly influenced by rumours and reports, and, respecting as they did our bayonets and our squares, they would be strongly influenced by the report that we were going to remain till a settled Government was established. It was more than probable that half the troubles of the Government would be dispersed entirely by such an announcement. They were told that they ought to have confidence in the Government. They had confided in the Government—when it was proposed to censure the Government for the fall of Sinkat and Tokar they had supported the Government. Did anyone suppose that they on that side of the House did not feel bitterly with regard to the falling of those gallant garrisons? But they then had confidence in the Government, and the result now was that they had seen General Gordon sent to Khartoum without any support for a long time, and without any apparent intention of supporting him. They had now heard of the fall of Khartoum and of the death of its heroic defender, and they now said it was the turn of the Government to have a little confidence in their supporters. If Her Majesty's Government would announce to them, in plain and distinct words, that they would remain only for a short time in the Soudan he was prepared to vote in their favour, even with the death of General Gordon present to his mind. But if Her Majesty's Government could not announce some clear and distinct policy he had no alternative left to him but to vote for the Resolution, as this was the only means open to him of expressing his deep regret that the Government was unable, from whatever cause, to announce a firm and decided line of policy at a moment which they all knew to be a critical one to the interests of the Empire.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, it is very much to be wished, both for the sake of their own supporters and for the general advantage of the House, that the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary should lend an attentive ear to the appeal that has just been made to him from the Bench behind him. Whether or not the noble Earl will condescend to satisfy the doubts, and the not unreasonable doubts, that there are as to the policy of Her Majesty's Government I do not know; but my duty rather is to suggest to your Lordships some of the reasons, at all events, which may induce your Lordships to vote for the Resolution of my noble Friend behind me. It is so large, so vast a question, that I could spread my recommendations over a far longer period than your Lordships' patience would give to me. I could recommend this Resolution to you on the ground that there has been, from first to last, a consistent failure of every single attempt, of every single object, Her Majesty's Government have set before themselves. I could recommend it to you again on another ground, the absolutely useless expenditure of blood and money lavished upon the sands of the Soudan. I could again urge it on a ground, by no means the least, that Her Majesty's Forces are even now placed, I will not say in a dangerous, at all events in a most anxious, position, in consequence of their policy; and, lastly, I might again urge it on the ground that has been indicated by the noble Earl on the back Bench opposite, that we have had no policy declared to us—no certain indications given to us of the course Her Majesty's Government propose to pursue, and in which they propose to lead this country. But, my Lords, I shall not take any one of those grounds. I shall myself vote for the Resolution upon a narrower and much simpler issue, but one which, I believe, recommends itself to your Lordships and to the whole country—that narrow issue being the abandonment of General Gordon. Why, my Lords, do I say this? For two reasons. In the first place, I hold that the conduct of Her Majesty's Government with respect to General Gordon goes to the root of the whole policy which a Government ought to pursue towards its Agents abroad. If you mean to be well served abroad you must support your Agents so long as they serve faithfully and loyally, and discharge their duty to the Government, the Crown, and the country. There are some who sit on that Bench who have sat in the Cabinet of Lord Palmerston. What was the doctrine he always maintained? It was that which I have endeavoured humbly to express, and it was that which gave him his great strength over and over again in foreign policy. Secondly, I dwell on this point, because among all the melancholy records of the last few years I know of none so melancholy as the abandonment of General Gordon. My Lords, I do not like to express all that I feel on this subject. We know that Her Majesty's Government and those Members of it that I see opposite are kindly and courteous Gentlemen in private life. It is almost impossible to believe that in their public capacity they can so far depart from all the principles which I would safely trust them to apply in private life. Having said that, and having said it with pain, I repeat that I know of no record more shameful than the conduct that has been pursued towards General Gordon—no record more shameful, and none more dishonouring to the Crown and to the country. Let me for a moment recall the character of General Gordon. It is not my place to pass a fulsome eulogy upon the dead. I do not desire to say of him, now that he is dead, what I would not have said while he was living; but I do say that he represents one of the highest types of the old English character. I am afraid I must say old, for the type is dying out. Fearless almost to a fault—if such a thing be possible—full of resource, courage, and ingenuity, he had, over and above that, a strong sense of duty and fear of God. As to his mission, who does not remember that, when the Government were in great perplexity, they appealed to him at an hour's notice to undertake that mission? Casting aside the objects to which he had devoted his time and almost his life, he consented to undertake the mission, and on the very day he was requested to go he went. My Lords, I believe that at the last moment of starting some of those paltry and contemptible technicalities which are sometimes raised by the Treasury in respect of money were raised in his case, and General Gordon left this country obliged to borrow the money with which he travelled.

Earl GRANVILLE: He came to this country from Belgium. General Gordon, as is well known, was a man who utterly despised money. In order to accomplish his journey, having none with him, the King of the Belgians lent him £25 to come here.

The Earl of CARNARVON: It is not a very creditable or worthy story.

Earl GRANVILLE: Not creditable!

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I rise to Order. Whatever observations the noble Earl has to make he will have an opportunity of making presently.

The Earl of CARNARVON: I say it is not creditable that a man of General Gordon's position and character should have been obliged to leave the country with borrowed money.

Earl GRANVILLE: That is altogether an inaccurate description of the facts.

The Earl of CARNARVON: The noble Earl can state his case afterwards; and it is the usual courtesy of Parliament to allow a noble Lord to proceed uninterruptedly with his speech.

Earl GRANVILLE: I beg pardon. The noble Earl speaks of the courtesies of Parliament. It is not in accordance with the courtesies of Parliament, when an explanation has been made, for a noble Earl not to accept that explanation. I stated the circumstances to which he alluded when he said that General Gordon was in want of money; and I referred to his journey from Belgium to this country, when the King of the Belgians lent him £25. Then the noble Earl goes on to say that it was not creditable that General Gordon should have left this country without any money but that which he had borrowed. That is a perfectly different thing.

The Earl of CARNARVON: I will, at all events, so far conform myself to the usages of Parliament as to accept that explanation for the purpose of carrying on this debate. But I come back to a more important point in connection with this matter. General Gordon was sent to Khartoum. On that solitary figure posting across the Desert the eyes not only of this country, but of all Europe, were fixed; and when he reached Khartoum it is no exaggeration to say that there was a long-drawn sigh of relief throughout the Kingdom. We hoped and trusted that the worst was passed; but then there followed a long year of weariness, of watching, and of fighting—a year in which he and two Englishmen, who were his companions, bore the brunt of that terrible ordeal. It was not the first time that Englishmen had been placed in such circumstances. The House may remember how, at the outbreak of the Crimean War, three gallant Englishmen encouraged the garrison of Silistria and withstood the whole of the Russian Forces. You will remember, also, how my gallant friend, Sir Fenwick Williams, of Kars, animated the garrison of Kars, and inspired the most desperate resistance with which that fortress was maintained. And so it was, again, in General Gordon's day; so he maintained, so he endured, so he showed the most wonderful valour and resource; and, in the midst of all, let it never be forgotten that by that indomitable courage he succeeded in saving the lives of some 3,000 people in Khartoum. From time to time short letters and telegrams came out to us as to what was going on in Khartoum—letters and telegrams disconnected and fragmentary, but one and all indicating the invincible spirit of the writer; and with them came also requests to Her Majesty's Government. How were those requests answered? I will not go into details on this subject. My noble Friend last night dealt with them pretty fully; but how were those requests answered? At first, when General Gordon went out, there was an acclamation as it were of support to him on the part of Her Majesty's Government. Mr. Gladstone said—

> "As to General Gordon, we have no more to do than to say that we make ourselves responsible for all the measures he adopts."

Sir Charles Dilke was not less emphatic. He said—

> "General Gordon is better able to form a judgment than anybody else: we have implicitly followed the advice that we have received from General Gordon."

What said the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary, who, after all, was the person to whom General Gordon would look as his official superior in these matters? He said there never was a mark of greater confidence shown by a Government to any man than by the mission given to General Gordon. The noble Earl went on to speak in that strain for a considerable time; and he gave us an anecdote about Henri Quatre, and made an allusion to Confucius, which I have no doubt, in the noble Earl's mind, had some reference to the matter in hand. I doubt, however, whether the French Monarch was altogether the man who would have withdrawn his confidence, or have allowed his Agents abroad to suffer, as has happened in the case of General Gordon. And as to Confucius, the reference to him may illustrate how the professions of philosophers often point one way, while their practice is in quite the opposite direction. For, in the very briefest space of time afterwards, the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary refused the request urged over and over again by General Gordon in the most emphatic language for the sending of Zebehr Pasha. I doubt whether Confucius would have recognized the noble Earl as his disciple. My Lords, the baneful and petty influences of Party came in; and General Gordon's requests, one and all without exception, were, upon some ground or another, refused by Her Majesty's Government. Out of the five or six requests enumerated by my noble Friend last night, there is not one that was complied with. They all fell dead on the ears of Her Majesty's Government. The Prime Minister was busy, as he has said in "another place," on a comparison of the relative merits of the different routes by which succour could be sent. General Gordon was praised; he was refused; and he was told at last that he was exceeding his instructions. When one reads and knows how large and full his powers were, it is difficult to understand what could have been in the mind of any man who could speak of General Gordon as exceeding his instructions. At last he was told to come away and to save himself. There is a letter which, I think, has no parallel in any Blue Book of our day that I have ever read. It was quoted, I believe, last night; and, at the risk of wearying your Lordships, I must quote it again. It was a telegram from the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary, and it was dated, singularly enough, on the 23rd of April, St. George's Day, the patron saint of England; that saint from whom you would expect the qualities of courage, of chivalry, and all that is best in the English character in its best days. And what was this telegram? It was addressed to Sir Evelyn Baring, and it directed him to communicate at once with General Gordon, telling him—

> "We do not propose to supply him with Turkish or any other force for the purpose of undertaking military operations, such being beyond the scope of the commission which he holds and the plans of our permanent policy in the Soudan; and if with this knowledge he continues in Khartoum, he should state to us the cause and the intention with which he does so."

I cannot, my Lords, remember any message so hard and so cruel ever being despatched by an English Government to an English Agent who was enduring such hardships, and was bearing the whole weight of such a burden in the face of the enemy. We know how General Gordon accepted this invitation or instruction to come away. The tacit promise that he made to the Khedive, and the one condition which he imposed, was that the safety of the civilians among the Natives should be cared for. That promise he strove to keep; and he said—

> "I have no option as to staying at Khartoum; it has passed out of my hands."

And he wound up the whole of that most tragic correspondence by words which have been rarely addressed to the Foreign Minister of this country—

> "I leave to you the indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Sennaar, Kassala, Berber, and Khartoum."

I believe there is no parallel to the telegram that I am quoting. At length multiplied warnings came pouring upon the Government in such force and such numbers that they could not resist them; and an Expedition was organized; and it was launched. And if courage and skill on the part of officers and men could have in any degree countervailed the official delays, General Gordon might have been saved. But he fell at his post, and he died quite as much as any other knight of old died, giving up his soul to God and his life to the State. It is to be remarked that everything, or almost everything, that General Gordon has said has come true. It is said that the spirit of prophecy sometimes comes strongly upon men who are about to die; and so it would appear to have been in this case, for there was nothing that General Gordon noticed and recorded but has practically been fulfilled. He has warned you that if you refused to send a few troops now you would soon have to send many; that if you refused to spend a few pounds now you would soon have to spend vast sums of money; that if you allowed Berber to be taken you would have to go to Khartoum; and he warned you that if you allowed Khartoum to be taken you would have to struggle with the whole Mahommedan population. I now turn for a moment to something different. I think the case such as I have described it would justify me, and would justify any of your Lordships, in recording a vote on that single ground which I have just mentioned. But we are bound to ask whether the Government have any other arguments than those which they have brought forward, and how does the case stand? My Lords, the debate in this place last night and the debate in the other House, as seen by the ordinary channels of information to which we all have access, seem to have brought us somewhat nearer the point than formerly. The Government are now willing to confess, as I understand, their error with regard to Hicks Pasha; they are willing to confess the error they made as regards the Mahdi, and their want of appreciation of the formidable nature of his rising and of his power. They confess also, to a certain extent, to the delays that have taken place, and they meet this with the argument that "We have done the best we could in the circumstances." My Lords, we have heard it said that the virtue of penitence consists of two parts. It consists of sorrow for the act done, but also of an intention to adopt a better course in the future. Now I am afraid Her Majesty's Government are hopelessly impenitent, because I cannot detect in anything they said here, or in anything that I have read of "elsewhere," any indication or promise of amendment in the future. If we could find or ascertain any reasonable ground of hope in this respect, even at the eleventh hour, they might ask us to condone the errors of the past; but is there any hope? I frankly own that I see nothing but irresolution, obstinacy, and casuistry. The entreaties of their followers have not received much satisfaction. They have been urged over and over again to declare, not the whole of their policy, but enough of it to justify a vote. The oracle is dumb; the smallest answer has not been received. Meanwhile Moloch demands the sacrifices of fresh life and more blood. The only policy—if policy you can call it—which has been vouchsafed to us is that which is termed, in not very elegant English, "the policy of smashing the Mahdi and then retiring." It reminds me very much of the old lines—

"A noble King of France,
He had ten thousand men;
He marched them up a hill,
He marched them down again."

If this is to be the end and the object of the policy enunciated it is, to say the least of it, a very unsatisfactory one. But your Lordships must observe that in this policy there are two parts. Torrents of blood have been shed; hideous scenes have been enacted at Tokar and at the other towns which have fallen. I can remember the scathing terms in which the Prime Minister spoke of those scenes of horror which occurred only a few years ago in Eastern Europe; and yet where is the difference between them and those which have taken place in the Soudan? You allowed those things to take place and secured nothing in return; and after the sacrifices which had already been made and the blood which had been shed I cannot conceive a Christian Government adopting such a monstrous view or a Christian nation sanctioning it. Assuming that you had taken Khartoum and had smashed the Mahdi, would your retirement then have been possible? I think it would have been perfectly impossible. I ground this belief, first of all, upon General Gordon's own statements. If one thing comes out clearer than another from these Papers it is this—that General Gordon held it to be absolutely impracticable, and that you could not retire from the Soudan—at least, from all parts of the Soudan—in the manner now proposed. You have to remember what my noble Friend said just now as to the relations with and the conduct of the Northern Tribes. What is to be your conduct in relation to those tribes on whom we have to depend? You have to remember that you draw the greater portion of your supplies for the Army from those tribes; and the moment you announce the abandonment of the country they will at once withhold their supplies. For that reason, if for no other reason, it is impossible to carry out this extraordinary policy. I said just now that the military position was one which, though it need not create fear, at the same time is one which it is impossible to consider without anxiety. It needs no military genius to point to the serious nature of the case; there are, unquestionably, risks of health; they may be more, or they may be less, but they are very great. There are, again, equally unquestionable risks of the failure of supplies. You are in a country from which you must draw your supplies; and yet, by your perverse announcement of the intention to abandon that country, you are doing everything in your power to stop those supplies and to turn those tribes against us. More men are needed. It is admitted on all hands; and yet every man you send there, to a certain extent, increases the difficulty which I have just now referred to. Lastly, do not forget—do not let the country forget—that the 10,000 or 12,000 men who are now in the Soudan and in Egypt, the flower of the English Army, are locked up there for months and months to come; and I ask your Lordships to consider, in the anxious and critical position of European politics, how far such a result as this is wise, how far it is creditable to the sagacity of Her Majesty's Government? Is there any other argument which would induce us to say "No!" to the Resolution of my noble Friend? I can conceive of but one—that it is desirable that a Liberal Government should stay in, and that the Conservative Opposition should stay out. The meaning of this is that Party feeling must override every other consideration. Now, my Lords, Party government has existed in this country for about a century and a half. It has had brilliant periods; it has also produced great evils; and I think those of the present generation will be of opinion that during the last five or six years Party government has shown itself in no favourable light. Party government has, at least, had this one consolation—that when matters became bad, and when the Government has blundered in a course of consistent and hopeless failure, the common sense of the country, the moderate men on all sides, had drawn together, and an utterly incompetent Ministry has been displaced in order to make room for those who, at all events, are to be tried. That has been the case. It was the case in the last century, when the Government of Lord North was turned out. It was the case in our time, when the Coalition Government of the time of the Crimean War was reconstructed to such an extent that it practically became a new Government; it was the case again in 1874 when Lord Beaconsfield came into Office. The same thing has held good on the other side of the Atlantic. I cannot conceive that there is any man of sense on this side of the House who could desire to accept the Offices which noble Lords opposite hold. I can conceive no greater heritage of woe and anxiety than such Offices as they hold; but, at the same time, it has been the consistent maxim of the Conservative Party to do their duty and to carry on the Queen's Government, and I cannot doubt now, as on former occasions, such would be their conduct. As regards the question of policy, the answer of the noble Lord last night seems to me to be perfectly delusive. It is, of course, very difficult to define beforehand what should be the exact details of a policy. No one desires to retain the Soudan for itself; but it is necessary to see that the legitimate influence of England in Egypt is maintained, and it is clear that there may be points outside Egypt, which are necessary to the safety of Egypt, and which it is the duty of the Government for the time being there to hold. We have spent blood and money in the Soudan, and it is right that we should obtain some return for it. We have destroyed the Government of Egypt; we have destroyed her institutions; and we are bound to place something on their ruins. Anyhow, our Government is bound, at least, to do this—to accept the responsibility of their acts; to put an end to their melancholy irresolution; to know their own mind, and to speak it plainly. They ought to have a policy, and, having announced it, to adhere to it.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I will not follow the noble Earl into his disquisition on the merits or demerits of Party government. I apprehend that his very unfavourable view of Party government during the last four or five years may possibly be somewhat influenced by the fact that during that period he has sat on the Opposition side of the House. For myself, I must say that I shall not despair of Party government, even though the Votes of Censure should to-night be carried in both Houses of Parliament. But, to turn to the important subject of the Motion now before the House, the noble Earl opposite says that he rests his speech principally upon an examination of the manner in which we have treated General Gordon. I cannot help thinking—and I hope he will forgive me for saying so—that while he, no doubt in common with all others, greatly admires General Gordon, that which was uppermost in his mind was the manner in which General Gordon could be best used to attack the Government. I am placed naturally in a position of difficulty with regard to a discussion of this point. After all that has been said in General Gordon's praise, it would be impertinent in me to detain the House with a eulogy of him. But General Gordon was not infallible. If I were to discuss in detail all the advice and suggestions which he gave the Government, I am conscious that, after his heroic death, it would have a grating effect on the House. Therefore, I hope I may have some excuse for not going into all the details that I otherwise would have ventured upon. On the other hand, I may be pardoned if I mention two or three points. Now, the essential part of the whole case is that a clear view should be taken of the original mission of General Gordon, and the grounds upon which it was approved by the Government. General Gordon's mission was in its initiative and conception, both on the part of the Government and on the part of General Gordon himself, essentially a pacific mission. General Gordon was of opinion that his influence in the Soudan was such that he might be able to accomplish the pacification of that country by his name and by his influence with the tribes. That in the case of any other man would have appeared a Quixotic idea; but in the case of a man who had displayed extraordinary powers over tribes of men, half-civilized, in all parts of the world, and not least in the Soudan, it did not appear an altogether impossible task; and, under the circumstances in which Her Majesty's Government were placed, they considered it wise, in the interests of Egypt and in the interests of this country, that they should accept General Gordon's offer to proceed to the Soudan. General Gordon, it is impossible not to say, was mistaken in his calculations; and it turned out unfortunately that the course he had hoped to pursue was one of which, after no long time, he came to doubt the success. He then completely changed his policy. Having gone out to the Soudan distinctly saying that he did not wish for nor expect the assistance of British troops, he then took another view, and came to the conclusion that nothing would be satisfactory unless a great Expedition of English troops was sent to the Soudan. He came slowly to that opinion, but he did arrive at it. Before he came to that conclusion he made a number of suggestions; but it did not imply any want of confidence in him that the Government could not accept them. Last year attacks were made on the other side of the House on General Gordon for having taken the singular step of issuing a Proclamation, in which he declared that he would not interfere with the Slave Trade. Undoubtedly it was a great mark of the confidence of Her Majesty's Government in General Gordon that they deferred to General Gordon's opinions on this subject, and I do not think that in the case of any other man they would have done so. Take the suggestion, for instance, in regard to the appointment of Zebehr. General Gordon at Khartoum could not, and did not, know all the facts with regard to Zebehr which were in the knowledge of the Government; and if the Government had assented to his proposal General Gordon could subsequently have turned round and reproached them for having appointed Zebehr, with the information they had that Zebehr was not to be trusted. I never was more clear in my life upon any subject than that it was the absolute duty of Her Majesty's Government to refuse to send Zebehr. Then there was a suggestion made by General Gordon that Turkish troops should be sent to the Soudan. But that involved a number of considerations with which General Gordon was not acquainted, and the Government could not accede to it. The noble Earl has stated that our abandonment of General Gordon was shameful; but we deny that we abandoned General Gordon. The whole question was one of time and means. In a matter of this kind, those who do not succeed are always in an unfavourable position; but when great military operations are undertaken one has to consider whether there is a reasonable prospect of success. The result shows that we had a reasonable prospect of success. Supposing that Khartoum could not have been reached by General Wolseley, then the Expedition would have been a case of miscalculation; but, in point of fact, Lord Wolseley nearly succeeded in reaching Khartoum in time, and but for treachery he would have been in time. Therefore, the military operations were certainly not miscalculated. I wish, my Lords, to refer to another point upon which the noble Marquess who moved this Motion laid very great stress indeed. He said that our declaration that the Soudan would be evacuated by the Egyptian Government was a stupendous blunder. Such words as those, no doubt, sound very sonorous and exceedingly well in a speech; but in human affairs I venture to think that nobody would apply them to anything except what they very much disliked; and you often meet with such high flights of expression in rhetorical speeches and sensational newspaper articles. But if you look at the matter more closely, I rather think you will find that the mistake, if one has been made, was upon the other side. Just consider what the alternatives would have been. In the first place, General Gordon, when he was sent out, was distinctly of opinion that the Egyptian rule in the Soudan should cease.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The declaration was made before General Gordon was sent out.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: That does not affect the statement that General Gordon was of opinion that the Soudan ought to be evacuated by Egypt. The noble Marquess will see what the argument is which I was going to adduce. Her Majesty's Government were decidedly of opinion that the Soudan should be evacuated; and the point is whether we were right in announcing that policy? Now, supposing that holding that opinion, and having sent General Gordon, who also held that opinion, we had determined not to announce it, what would have been the effect of that? Either we must have left the people of the Soudan under the impression that we were going to restore the Egyptian Government in that country, or we must have declared to them that we intended to send an Expedition for the purpose of restoring the Egyptian Government there—one or the other. Of course, if we were going to substitute another Government, that would be another question; but I maintain that nothing more suicidal could have been done than to have left the people of the Soudan in a state of ignorance upon the point. They would then have regarded General Gordon, to begin with, as a man sent out to place upon their necks the yoke they had determined to shake off. I will just ask whether this declaration has been in the slightest degree dangerous to this country? On the contrary, what would have been the effect if we, when sending an Expedition to the Soudan, had announced that we, a Christian Government, and, therefore, looked upon with suspicion by the Mussulman population, had come there, not to free them, but for the purpose of riveting upon their neck a yoke which they detested? My Lords, I do not think such terms as "stupendous blunders" are wisely made use of in connection with these matters. The noble Marquess says that that declaration was one of the causes of all our misfortunes in Egypt. Another of the causes which he mentioned was that we had not sent English troops at once after General Gordon to support him. Well, I say again, my answer to that is simply this—that we sent Gordon on a pacific mission. The noble Earl behind me (the Earl of Camperdown) and the noble Earl on the other side of the House (the Earl of Carnarvon) both adverted to the question of the policy of the future, and said that, although with reference to the intentions of the Government it may be of importance to define what we have done in the past as regards this country, it is far more important to know what is to be done in the future. What we are continually told is that we have no decided policy. Now, a decided policy, although we do not hear it so plainly stated in this House, has, in fact, meant this—as regards Egypt, it has meant that we should pledge ourselves to hold it permanently. That is a decisive policy, which, out-of-doors, at all events, is entertained; and, as regards the Soudan, that we should pledge ourselves to remain there for some indefinite period. But, in point of fact, that would not be a decisive policy. A decisive policy means something more than that. There must be a definite period; and it is just that which, in the circumstances of the case, renders it impossible for any Government to have a decisive policy. Upon the subject of the evacuation of Egypt, I have always been, and still am, of opinion that Her Majesty's Government has been right, and that you should leave as soon as you have formed a Government that can stand there. It would be inconsistent with our pledges, and contrary to our interests, to remain in Egypt; or, even were it in accordance with our interests, looked at selfishly, it would be impossible to remain when we considered the interests of the European Powers. Therefore, the policy of remaining permanently in Egypt must be dismissed, as one which, I will undertake to say, could not be adopted by any Government in this country. We have always said that, having gone to Egypt, we could not leave unless we succeeded in settling the Government there, and in bringing about a state of things which might give some hope that a settled Government in the Soudan might be maintained; and it has always been our intention and policy to secure our own interests in Egypt. The policy of Her Majesty's Government in the Soudan is this—being, as we are, in Egypt, we are bound to provide for the security of Egypt. We found in the Soudan a growing danger —I say a growing danger, because, apparently, it has become much greater from the presence of this False Prophet, the Mahdi, who exercises such an extraordinary influence over these tribes—and we are agreed that it is absolutely necessary that this power should be checked. Suppose we succeed in giving a severe check to this power, it is obvious it would be to our interests to substitute a state of things that will keep this power in check; but no man can say at present in what manner that can be done. But, in point of fact, something else is asked of us. Some want us to declare that we are going to keep the Eastern Soudan; but I maintain that such a policy as that is utterly irreconcilable to the interests of this country. To say that, with all the engagements we have in other parts of the world, we are to take possession of the whole of the Eastern Soudan, on whatever pretext, is, to my mind, the most disastrous policy this country could possibly follow, and it could not be an object of any Government in this country. It is a country full of fanatical and hostile tribes, and must be held, if held permanently, with a large Army, placed in such a climate and at such a distance from us as to render such a policy most dangerous. That cannot be, to my mind, the permanent object of any Government. My Lords, we cannot give any further pledges than those we have given —namely, that our object is to check the Mahdi, and, having checked his power, to substitute, if possible, such a state of things as may reasonably be expected to prolong that security. The remark of my noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) seemed to me to justify entirely this policy, because he said—"You have locked up 7,000 of your best troops in the Soudan, and have thus weakened this country." I entirely agree with the noble Lord that, in the face of European complications and the present state of affairs, it is a misfortune to this country that 7,000 of the best troops should be locked up in the Soudan; and I say it would permanently weaken this country, and weaken it to a very serious extent, if you were permanently to lock up a large body of your troops in the Soudan. Those who are responsible for the affairs of the country know only too well the entangled questions involved in the Soudan; and yet we are reproached because we say consistently, and again and again, that our policy, and the whole object of our policy, is to disentangle this country from the embarrassments in which it is involved in Egypt and the Soudan, and not to continue permanently in that position in which we find ourselves, and if it be possible to extricate ourselves from that position, and to return to a position in which our strength and our influence will be greater all over the world, and in which we shall be able to secure objects of other kinds which are, if possible, even more closely connected with, and of more importance to, the interests of this country. My Lords, the Motion made by the noble Marquess is one which I doubt not will be carried in this House. It strongly condemns Her Majesty's Government; but it does not, I think, really pledge noble Lords opposite to any precise and definite policy. It says, in effect, that the abandonment of the whole of the Soudan would not be conducive to our interests in those regions. My Lords, "abandonment of the Soudan" is an ambiguous expression. It may mean a great deal, or, as was said by my noble Friend (the Earl of Northbrook) last night, it may not mean very much. The abandonment of the Soudan—that is, to march in and then to march out again—is one thing. To retire from the Soudan after you have established some satisfactory state of things there is another thing. The permanent occupation of the Soudan is a third; and I do not by any means see, from the Motion or the speech of the noble Marquess, nor do I think that the noble Marquess and his Friends intend us to discover what course would be pursued if they came into power. My impression is that, practically, their policy would be found very much the same as that which Her Majesty's Government have pursued. I do not believe that any Government would be rash enough permanently to occupy the Soudan; but I do believe that any Government in power in this country would endeavour to bring about such a state of things as would secure our interests in Egypt, and as early a retreat from it as may be possible in the circumstances.

LORD HARRIS said, he had listened with the greatest attention to the speeches that had fallen from the Front Bench on the Ministerial side; and, while he viewed with respect the chivalrous manner in which the noble Lords had thrown themselves into the breach, the impression left on his mind was this—that if it were to be accompanied by so little skill in fence, so little vigour in the counter-attack, and supported by such lack of enthusiasm from the Benches behind them, their case must, indeed, be a weak one. While their Lordships would appreciate the readiness, twice repeated, of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) to retire from the cares of Office, they would not be so ready to admit the plaintive excuse he put forward in defence of Her Majesty's Ministers—that unprecedented circumstances had hampered the Government—as a valid one. He had no doubt that the speech of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies would be appreciated at its proper value; but he did not think the noble Earl was justified in congratulating himself on the policy that had been pursued, because the converse or any other policy might have resulted in a European war, when they knew that at this moment the eyes of Europe were watching with anxiety the ring of clouds on the horizon, which might at any moment give out the flash of guns and the thunder of artillery. He congratulated the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) upon the Resolution he had brought forward. It was drawn in no doubtful terms; but he might say that his mind was not of such a character as to enable him to draw a distinction between that Resolution and the Resolution which had been brought before the other House. To his mind they were similar—if not in words, certainly in import—and amounted to a distinct impeachment not only of the Egyptian policy of Her Majesty's Government, but a distinct impeachment of the whole of their foreign policy. Their conduct of foreign affairs was remarkable only for its lack of foresight, and lamentable for its indecision until the moment for decision had passed. He contended that ever since the time that the Government were committed to action in Egypt their policy had been an inconsistent and an undetermined one. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for India contended that it was not inconsistent, for to be consistent it would be necessary to state a fixed time for the withdrawal of troops from the Soudan. But they had already fixed a date for the withdrawal of troops from Egypt, and had not adhered to it; and, therefore, he was justified in saying it was inconsistent. To his mind, a fair description of that policy would be, if it had not been so unfortunate and so unlucky, a happy-go-lucky policy, having in it a distinct element of *kismet*, of leaving things to chance, that they had no right to expect from a Cabinet of English gentlemen, and which would have been entirely inexcusable in a Cabinet in that country, whose assistance, he confessed, would have been of the greatest value to us now—he meant our old Ally, Turkey. The case of the Opposition was that the affairs of Egypt were in the hands of Her Majesty's Government, and that Her Majesty's Government had failed; and he challenged them to prove that they had adopted a particular line of policy; that they had now arrived at an expected point on that line, and that they would follow that line up to a definite issue. It was for them to show the people of this country that the charges made against them were groundless. If the vacillation or indecision which reigned in their Councils had affected their action, had it not also had an effect upon the Mahdi, and that in an entirely different direction? The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies said that they believed the Mahdi would be satisfied if his own Provinces were free. That was most characteristic of the policy of the Government. They could not conceive that anyone would advance; they could only conceive that everyone would retire. What was the result of that policy of vacillation? What was the result of the announcement of their intended retirement from the Soudan, which the noble Earl, who had just sat down, insisted was not a mistake? He found it in inclosure 108 in the Blue Book—

> "At the beginning of February, the Mahdi heard through one of Zebehr's messengers and Osman Digna that the British troops had been defeated, and that the Khedive and the English

Government had determined to give up the Soudan, and make Assouan the frontier town. The Mahdi and his troops were much pleased when they heard this. . . . The Mahdi said he would now go to Khartoum, take Gordon prisoner, and exchange him for Arabi Pasha."—[Egypt. No. 1 (1885), p. 109.]

That was the result of their policy of vacillation. Some of their Lordships had to mourn friends and relatives who had fallen in the war; all England through there was mourning for those who had fought and died as soldiers should, and now lay buried beneath the sands of Africa; but these losses sank into insignificance in the face of the loss which the country had sustained by the death of General Gordon; and he thought he might say that the country laid his death at the door of Her Majesty's Ministers, for whom it was to answer the question why they did not keep up communications with him. The Government had sent General Gordon on a most perilous mission, and it was their duty to give him every support and all the information that was necessary. They had shown themselves ignorant of the first principles of modern military recognizance—having sent forward their advance guard, they had omitted to follow it up with a support, or to keep up connection between it and the reserve. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies said that Sir Evelyn Baring lost no opportunity of communicating with General Gordon; but Sir Evelyn appeared to be singularly unfortunate in getting his messages through, and was certainly not so successful in that respect as was General Gordon himself. Nothing was more plaintive than his message, saying that "this would never have happened if they had kept him better informed." He could not conceive what excuse the Government could put forward for not getting messages through. Gordon reported in one of his despatches that all the north side was free of Arabs; and this fact was clear from other reports. If General Gordon could get messages through, how was it the Government failed? They had also failed to support Gordon with military force. But Khartoum had now fallen, Gordon was dead, and it was for Ministers to answer the question why they failed to keep open their communications, or to pay the penalty. If they contemplated sending troops to Khartoum, they certainly made a most extraordinary mistake for Ministers of a country which had more dealings with Eastern nations than any other nation, in failing to strike quickly. With regard to the future, he warned Her Majesty's Government to be careful that British interests did not fall into the gulf of Mahommedan fanaticism. If we were to retire, who was to take our place? Where was the Egyptian Army which might have taken their place? Destroyed. But as to those Egyptian troops, the First Lord of the Admiralty said they were very good if they would only stand, and they would make an efficient force with which to support—what did their Lordships think?—the police. It was evident that the protection of the Soudan could not be entrusted to Egyptian troops; and if we retired, where should we retire to? We might draw a line on the map; but would the Mahdi respect it? He had set the ball of fanaticism rolling, and the only way possible was to meet it. He considered that the bounden duty of England, for her own honour, and for the safety of Egypt, was to render secure that boundary which her most dangerous enemy threatened; but what assurance had the country that the Government would adopt such a course? The promises of the Government, such as they were, were utterly unreliable and deceptive. They were as delusive as the mirage of the Desert itself. In the vote he should give, he believed he was merely echoing the opinion of the people of England—that in the hands of Her Majesty's Government the foreign affairs of this country were no longer safe.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, he thanked the noble Lord who had just sat down (Lord Harris) for the admirable speech he had delivered; and he would also thank the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) for the lucid way in which he had put forward his case. If the Government intended to exculpate themselves from blame, and to excuse their conduct, it was interesting to show to what extremities weakness might come; but what was more interesting and important was to make out what the policy of the Government in future was to be. Those who agreed with Her Majesty's Government were never tired of assuming that those who differed from them desired the occupation of

Egypt and the permanent occupation of the Soudan. The noble Earl had said the same thing that night. It was for exactly the opposite reason that he (the Earl of Dunraven) objected to the policy, or want of policy, of the Government. Their policy was inevitably leading towards the annexation of Egypt, and towards the permanent or indefinite occupation of the Soudan. The Government, by their action, or default of action, were going, step by step, to plunge this country into greater difficulties, and to make it more difficult for this or any other Ministry to withdraw from Egypt or the Soudan. The House had heard nothing from the Government as to what form of Government was to be left at Khartoum. The noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty said they would be very glad to see some form of Government; but what the House wanted to know was, whether Her Majesty's Government attached such importance to that as to take measures to insure that it was established? It was not sufficient to be told merely that the Government would be very glad to see it. No doubt they would, if it were without any trouble on their part. Then the noble Earl said the one thing that was perfectly clear was, that Egypt, at any rate, was to have nothing more to do with the Soudan. It might be right or wrong; it might be wise or foolish. But if Egypt was not to be allowed to have anything to do, not only with the whole of the Soudan, but with Khartoum and the Eastern Soudan, at least the Government might have given them some indication as to what authority they intended to put there in the place of Egypt. He should also like to know what was the meaning and object of Prince Hassan's appointment, because it was rather peculiar that the brother of the Khedive should be appointed to an important post with the English Army, when, at the same time, the Government were reiterating their assurances that Egypt was to have nothing whatever more to do with the Soudan. The noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty went on to lay great stress upon the importance of the railway from Suakin to Berber. He (the Earl of Dunraven) entirely agreed with the noble Earl in that matter. A railway had, no doubt, a most civilizing influence, and would work a very great change in the country. But it was rather strange that the civilizing influence of a railway should have only just dawned upon the minds of Her Majesty's Government. He quite agreed that the railway would do much good. It was astonishing what an effect the rapid carrying of goods from one part to another had upon the minds of men. Those who acquired goods in that way wished to get more of them, and to get more of them they had to occupy themselves in the pursuits of peace. We made them a present of that railway; but, for the railway to be of the smallest benefit to the country, we should maintain our hold of the country until that railway had had time to effect its benevolent objects. To do otherwise was merely to waste the money the British people would have to pay for the construction of the line. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for India (the Earl of Kimberley) spoke about destroying the power of the Mahdi; and the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) spoke on the same subject. The object of the Expedition was the destroying of the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. But what was the use of doing that if we were immediately to go away? Had Her Majesty's Government forgotten the lesson of last year, when they sent an Expedition to Suakin, and killed 5,000 or 6,000 Arabs; and he ventured to say, if those men were killed without definite aim or object, that was not an act of warfare, but was an act of murder. He was told it was a necessary thing, and would break the power of Osman Digna. We knew that Osman Digna was just now as powerful as before, and had, in fact, a larger force than last year. It might be necessary to destroy the power of the Mahdi in order to occupy Khartoum; but were we to do so, and then to retire, it would be an absolute waste of money and waste of human life, because such a course could not, by any possibility, have the smallest practical or permanent good effect. Her Majesty's Government were not justified in spending the money of this country, and lavishing the lives of Englishmen, without definite aim and object. A large portion of the country was most fertile; and if we determined to remain there until a settled Government was set up, then Her Majesty's Government would be justified in shedding blood, if necessary, and spending money; but, if not, were they justified in causing the life of a single Englishman to be lost, or spending a single shilling of our money? He should like to know for what the Expedition was forming, because the original purpose, he was told, was the rescue of General Gordon? He was beyond the power of rescue now. He had saved Her Majesty's Government trouble in the way in which it was generally saved, their attempts to save having, unfortunately, been settled by slaughter before they could reach the objects. That part of the Expedition was gone. He did not know what their object was. When they got to Khartoum, were they going to use every effort for the relief of other garrisons still holding out in the Soudan? That was a question, and, surely, an important one, which no Member of Her Majesty's Government had touched upon in that debate. He wanted to know what was to become of these garrisons? He wanted to know whether Her Majesty's Government considered themselves in any way responsible for them? Last night the noble Earl (the Earl of Derby) said the Government were not responsible for the position of these garrisons; but it seemed to him (the Earl of Dunraven) that we were as responsible as if there were English soldiers placed there under the direction of Her Majesty's Government, because Her Majesty's Government compelled the Egyptians to announce their intention of retiring from the Soudan, and thus, practically, to leave the garrisons to their fate. Therefore, Her Majesty's Government, he maintained, were as much responsible for the lives of these men as if they had been sent there by Her Majesty's Government. He did not know how far it was feasible to rescue some of these garrisons; but he wanted to know whether the Government felt this responsibility, and would take all the measures they could to carry it out? Last year, it was said, Lord Wolseley was to take measures to relieve the garrison of Sennaar, and was receiving his instructions. He would like to know if that noble and gallant General would be exceeding his instructions now if he took any measures for the relief of Sennaar? He would like to know if anything was to be done to relieve the gallant garrison at Kassala? Were they to be left to the same fate as the garrisons at Sinkat and other places? He understood, some time ago, that some Treaty arrangement had been made with Abyssinia. For this country to employ Native Abyssinians to operate in a religious war against fanatical Musulmen was, on the face of it, an injudicious act, and it was only excusable if some great object was to be gained by it. Then we knew that Italy was established in Massowah. The Government, he thought, might give the House some information on that point. The information required was, whether that had anything to do with either Suakin or the policy in the Soudan? As to the Mahdi, we knew, on very good authority, that not very long ago the Mahdi might have been disposed of very summarily with a force of, say, 500. That fact was used by a Member opposite as a proof of the insignificance of the movement. Now, it heavily taxed the British Army to put a force in the field against him, to say nothing of the enormous expense. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies seemed to have made an extraordinary and novel discovery, which he imparted to the House the previous night. He said he had discovered that the Mahdi was not a petty Chief, struggling to be free, but was at the head of a religious movement, and it was a movement that might have grave consequences. Her Majesty's Government might have had information from various sources which they could recognize as authentic by men well knowing the country. The ex-Khedive had given a strong opinion long ago as to the religious movement of the Mahdi; and similar opinions had been given by Mr. Broadley, who had defended Arabi, by Arabi himself, by Dr. Schweinfurth, by Sir Samuel Baker, by General Gordon himself, by Mr. Blunt, and by Mr. Villiers-Stuart. All these had borne testimony to the importance of this movement, and had all explained that it was a religious and political movement which, if not checked, would endanger Egypt. In spite of this they were told that Her Majesty's Government had not reason to suppose that the Mahdi was anything more than a petty Chief struggling to be free. That was a fair example of the ignorance which characterized Her Majesty's Government on matters of this importance; and he did not think that the feebleness of their policy could be better exemplified than by the speech of the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty last night. He explained that, although evil consequences had happened, Her Majesty's Government were hoping that something would occur. Her Majesty's Government were constantly hoping that something would occur, and consequently took no measures to prevent the disasters which followed. The announcement that they would be glad to see a certain policy at Khartoum showed the greatest amount of ignorance concerning affairs going on in that part of the world—an amount of ignorance absolutely inconceivable. They had naturally heard a great deal about General Gordon, who had occupied the attention of everybody for a long time; and now Her Majesty's Government seemed anxious to show that he exceeded his instructions, and that he did not fulfil his mission in the way in which he undertook to do it. They also said that it was impossible for them to anticipate the danger he was in; and the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies went so far as to say that in one respect only had Gordon's wishes not been carried out, and that was on the Zebehr policy. As he (the Earl of Dunraven) understood, the first and greatest considerations were for General Gordon to go out and ascertain the best means of evacuating the Soudan, supplemented by a distinct mission to evacuate the Soudan given him by the Khedive and accepted by Her Majesty's Government. Gordon went out, and let them see what he did on this matter. After General Gordon arrived at Khartoum, he sent some valuable and important Reports bearing upon the difficulties and dangers of his position. In a telegram in January, 1884, to Sir Evelyn Baring from Khartoum are these words—

> "I implore you, in view of the impossibility of relieving the garrison, to give orders to retreat, as one-third of the troops are disaffected, and cannot be depended upon for maintaining order in the town."

General Gordon telegraphed from Berber on his way out, just at the time the Egyptian Forces were at Suakin. He said—

> "I would not, were I supreme, try again any Egyptian Forces at Suakin, but would engage 3,000 Turkish troops in British pay. That would settle the affair."—[Egypt. No. 12 (1884), p. 56.]

Then Gordon arrived at Khartoum on

the 18th, and on the very same day telegraphed home to say that he would not be able to place a successor in his seat, because that would be a signal for general anarchy throughout the country. Yet the Prime Minister said the other day that General Gordon could have withdrawn at any time he liked. At a later date he asked for 200 Indian troops to be sent to Wady Halfa. He (the Earl of Dunraven) did not think it necessary to repeat many of these telegrams, because it was distinctly stated last night that there was no reason to suppose that Gordon was in any danger and could not have returned himself at any time. In March he telegraphed—

> "I have no option about staying at Khartoum. It has passed out of my hands."—[Egypt. No. 12 (1884), p. 135.]

Before that he said—

> "Should you wish to intervene, send 200 British troops to Wady Halfa . . . . and then open up Suakin - Berber road by Indian troops."—[*Ibid.* 151.]

On March 1, after his request was refused, he said—

> "I will do my best to carry out your instructions; but I feel conviction I shall be caught in Khartoum."—[*Ibid.* 152.]

In face of this telegram, Her Majesty's Government came down there and affected to tell their Lordships that they were ignorant that General Gordon was in danger, and that they acceded to all his wishes. Then, as to his mission, that was said to be a mission of peace, and so it was a mission of peace; and General Gordon endeavoured to carry it out in a peaceful way. First of all he had wished to have a personal interview with the Mahdi. That had been absolutely forbidden by Her Majesty's Government. His next request had been that Zebehr should be sent to him as his successor, and that request was also vetoed by Her Majesty's Government. They had been told that General Gordon could not have been in a position to judge, and that Her Majesty's Government at home knew better. But the Government seemed to have forgotten that Stewart had also said that Zebehr should be sent, as well as Nubar Pasha and Sir Evelyn Baring. Sir Evelyn Baring had said that he believed the best course would be to permit Zebehr to succeed General Gordon. He said—

"I believe that Zebehr is the only possible man you can suggest to go there, and Nubar Pasha is strongly in his favour."

Yet, whether they were right or not, the Government did put a distinct veto on the two means by which Gordon hoped to carry out his mission. First, by an interview with the Mahdi, and, secondly, by sending Zebehr Pasha. He asked for force, but force was invariably refused him. He asked for a British Force and he asked for a Turkish Force. All these requests were absolutely not only not complied with, but were refused in the strongest terms by Her Majesty's Government; and yet they came and said now that they did everything that Gordon asked them to do. The only thing that General Gordon did that Her Majesty's Government acceded to was his proclamation that the Slave Trade should not be interfered with. That was the one solitary instance in which Her Majesty's Government did not interfere with General Gordon. In every other respect, in attempts to carry out his mission, they refused him what he asked, and gave him absolutely nothing at all. Then they come and say General Gordon might have retired if he would. They entirely miscalculated their man if they thought it might be possible for him to leave behind him those who had trusted to him. He said he would not go, for the sufficient reason that the Arabs would not let him. "Evil communications," it was said, "corrupt good manners;" but the communications from Her Majesty's Government to General Gordon had not been sufficient to make him throw aside his responsibility, or to prevent him carrying out the mission he was sent there to fulfil. He would say nothing more on the subject of General Gordon. The noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty took exception to the points raised by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) in his most able speech. It was necessary to draw the line somewhere. To go back to the Dual Control was absolutely absurd. The result of the statement that we would interfere by force in Egypt, if necessary, was that we were obliged to send our ships to Alexandria. That step was protested against in the most vigorous way by the Sultan. He would not say whether Her Majesty's Government had become responsible for all that ensued. As a matter of fact, the forts were bombarded, the town was burnt, and a great massacre occurred, because Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to send troops. Her Majesty's Government said they could not find troops because of the political condition of the country. It was a strange thing, if they were able to bombard the town, that they were not able to find troops and prevent massacre, and prevent Alexandria from being burnt. England was alone in the matter; we had the entire responsibility on our shoulders. He would like to know whether Her Majesty's Government accepted it—whether they intended to remain there until they had put the Government of the country on a secure basis, and had reconstructed society? They did nothing of the kind. They made an attempt to withdraw their troops with the loss of General Hicks and 10,000 men. The natural consequence was that the Mahdi and his movement came to a head, and gathered great force. Another point was that we were obliged to undertake the Expedition to Suakin. Could any reasonable man doubt that if that Expedition had been planned in time, and sent out in time, it could have proceeded from Suakin to Berber, and the whole thing would have been ended there and then. There was a second point at which the Government could have averted all the consequences that followed from that date. If they had sent across from Suakin to Berber, there would have been an end of the Mahdi, and we should have been spared all the trouble that had occurred since. But Her Majesty's Government did nothing of the kind. Her Majesty's Government sent out General Gordon; and since they sent out General Gordon they might have interfered. Not only did they not interfere themselves, but they would not allow anyone else to interfere; and the whole responsibility rested with Her Majesty's Government. He maintained that there were three distinct occasions when a determined policy might have been adopted—first, before the bombardment; second, after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir; and, thirdly, after the destruction of Osman Digna's Force at Suakin, when an Expedition might have been sent to Berber. Even after General Gordon went to Khartoum, Her Majesty's Government might have averted all the disasters that had befallen us in Egypt. We were told the other night that we were not entitled to exile Arabi. He did not know in what light we looked upon Arabi; but some time ago Her Majesty's Government spoke of him as aiding a people who were struggling to be free. Who were the people who were struggling to be free? Were they the Egyptian traders, or the Arabs, or the Fellaheen Native population? Who were the people struggling for freedom in the Soudan? Were they the Arab slave hunters, the Arab conquerors of the country, or the Native negro tribes of the Soudan? Whenever Her Majesty's Government were seized with a violent desire to fight, and were anxious to kill somebody, then they said—"This man is a rebel, and he must be smashed;" but when they changed their mood, and did not wish to do anything, they turned round and said that the same people were "a gallant race struggling to be free," and that it was contrary to all their principles to interfere with them in any way. He remembered certain words that were used by Mr. Gladstone just before he came into Office. They were noble and excellent words; but unfortunately they were not carried out. The right hon. Gentleman said that we were both rich and strong, but that no people were rich and strong enough to disregard the priceless value of human sympathies; that at the close of the year, should an account be taken, he trusted that they might not find that they commanded a less meagre store of those human sympathies than they had at its beginning. Now, for himself, he (the Earl of Dunraven) might ask whether, since they took Office, the present Government had much increased the stock of those sympathies? When they succeeded to power the country enjoyed the friendship and respect of all foreign nations. That could hardly be said to be the case still. Their policy had caused the deaths of 500 Englishmen and fully 50,000 Egyptians and Arabs; and that was not likely to increase the stock of human sympathies extended to them in North-East Africa. Before very long the Government would have to render an account not only to Parliament, but to the country. The people would audit that account, and he doubted very much whether they would consider the record a satisfactory one which was so disfigured by such frightful extravagance both of money and of human life.

Lord ABERDARE said, that in a crisis like the present, if it could be shown that with safety and advantage to the country the Government could be replaced on the Treasury Benches by noble Lords opposite and their Friends, he should willingly vote for the Resolution that night. But he thought it seemed to him that the double indictment preferred against Her Majesty's Government by the noble Marquess in his Resolution had signally failed, and that, so far from the present dangerous condition of the country being improved, it would be greatly aggravated by the assumption of Office on the part of noble Lords opposite. The Government were made responsible for the failure to rescue General Gordon; but if there had not been one traitor in Khartoum and Sir Charles Wilson's Force had been able to relieve the place, he believed that Her Majesty's Government, instead of being vehemently attacked, would have been held up to the country as a model of wisdom and vigour. All this came about because of an act of treachery 48 hours before the arrival of troops at Khartoum. It was known that Gordon's troops were not trustworthy, that they gave many excuses for desertion and abandonment, and yet up to this unhappy day his troops had proved themselves faithful enough to warrant him believing that he might depend upon them. The question, therefore, of the condemnation of the Government rested not upon their own actions, but upon the fact that a traitor took measures to betray his Leader 48 hours before the arrival of succour. It had been said that the Government had received telegrams from General Gordon announcing his danger, and pointing out the manner in which that danger might be overcome; but he asked if there was any person who would accept the recommendations with our knowledge of what had taken place in the country? One of General Gordon's propositions was that 200 troops should be sent to Wady Halfa; but was it to be supposed that this small force would really have been of any use? Another proposition was the sending of 500 Cavalry from Suakin after the victories of General Graham; but if these men had started on their journey it was improbable that any of them would have been alive. It was also said that General Graham's Force should have advanced after his victories in the Eastern Soudan; but no man who had the slightest knowledge of the means necessary for such a movement in such a country would advocate it. The wells on the route between Suakin and Berber were few; the population was hostile; and there were many other considerations against the adoption of military movements which contained a considerable element of rashness. If the noble Marquess was to succeed in putting out the Government and taking their place all his eloquence would not give him a majority in the other House unless he could obtain the support of the Irish Members. Within the last few days some steps had been taken by Her Majesty's Opposition in the House of Commons to secure that support. He had seen with the deepest regret the authority of the Speaker set at defiance, and that course had been supported by a considerable number of the Members of the Opposition. He saw in that an incident not unconnected with the proceedings of their Lordships' House that evening. It was of ill-omen, and if by such means the Government were displaced he was afraid great injury would be inflicted on the best interests of the country.

EARL BEAUCHAMP repudiated the insinuation of the noble Lord who had just spoken, and said that on the occasion referred to the power which the Speaker proposed to exercise was one which was to be employed for the first time in circumstances of great perplexity, and after the discussion it was proposed to close had not lasted more than two hours; and, under such circumstances, it was surely open to independent Members of the House of Commons to vote as they thought fit. If the only defence of the Government was that they had nearly succeeded in saving General Gordon, that defence was a very poor one. The noble Lord had endeavoured to show that the Government were not to blame on account of the recent Expedition being too late, because Sir Charles Wilson had reached Khartoum two or three days after it had fallen owing to treachery. But were the Government justified in running the time to so fine a point that it was necessary to make that most dangerous and unprecedented march across the Desert from Korti to the Nile, which had been so heroically performed, but at so great a loss of life? After all, that march had ended in failure. He considered that the conduct of the Government towards General Gordon had been characterized neither by generosity nor magnanimity. The noble Lord suggested that no reasonable man could have accepted General Gordon's suggestions such as those to send a few troops to Wady Halfa and two squadrons of Cavalry to Berber. But General Gordon did not base these suggestions on the material value of a small body of troops, but on the effect which they would have as an indication that the power of England was behind them and would be exerted if necessary. This suggestion of General Gordon's appeared perfectly reasonable. And the moral effect of such a demonstration might have been to prevent the disasters which subsequently occurred. As was well known, our advance upon the Nile had secured the Mudir of Dongola as an ally; and it was perfectly natural to believe, as General Gordon did, that the appearance of British troops at Wady Halfa would have secured great advantages to the garrison at Berber. Berber did not fall until June, and there had been ample time for a small detachment of British troops to march from Suakin to Berber to relieve the garrison there. On March 24 Sir Evelyn Baring recommended that this should be done, and quoted the opinions of Generals Stephenson and Wood to show that it was perfectly practicable. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in a speech on the 19th of February, took great credit to the Government for having taken upon themselves the responsibility for everything Gordon did. But how were those brave words borne out? General Gordon invited the co-operation of Zebehr Pasha, and suggested that he should be appointed to succeed him as Governor General; but the noble Earl refused his permission. On the 6th of March the noble Earl made another speech about General Gordon; and he (Earl Beauchamp) thought he could detect a shadow of want of confidence. The noble Earl then said—

> "With regard to ourselves we have had confidence in General Gordon, and we hope and believe it was justified."

Those were hardly such cordial terms

as those used by the noble Earl on February 19. Again, on the 6th of March, Mr. Gladstone said that the Government made themselves responsible for the measures adopted by General Gordon; but how did the noble Earl carry out that promise of Mr. Gladstone? On the 21st of May the noble Earl in a despatch said—

> "Her Majesty's Government have been at all times ready to assist the Government of the Khedive with their advice as to the best means of withdrawing from the Soudan the Egyptian garrisons . . . and for that purpose they consented to the mission of General Gordon; but . . . the presence of Egyptian garrisons in the Soudan . . . is in no way due to any act of Her Majesty's Government, and that they cannot hold themselves responsible for the measures which those on the spot may think fit to take with a view to facilitate their withdrawal."—[Egypt. No. 25 (1884), p. 50.]

Who was meant by "those on the spot," but General Gordon? The despatch of the noble Earl of the 11th of March recognized the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government for that which, in this despatch of the 21st of May, he afterwards repudiated. It was true that a large part of the Soudan consisted of barren desert; but a great part also was a region of unbounded fertility. Both Lord Dufferin and Sir Samuel Baker recommended the retention of a part of the Soudan. Sennaar, Berber, Dongola, and Khartoum were all Provinces of great fertility, which, when General Gordon was in his former position of Governor General of the Soudan, were a source of great wealth and commerce; and even in the last few years of Egyptian finance—before 1882—were also a source of revenue. He wanted to know, therefore, what reason there was for abandoning those four fertile Provinces? When they spoke in Government despatches of "restoring to the inhabitants their former position of independence," he wanted to know whom they meant by the inhabitants, and what by independence? Did they mean the independence of the slave, or the independence of the slave-hunter? Were they going to abandon the people of the Soudan to the anarchy from which they were rescued by General Gordon 10 years ago? Was that their idea of a mission of mercy; or were they going to restore to them a peaceful and orderly Government in which life and property could be secure? If they really did mean to restore those Provinces to their former independence, they would make their last state far worse than the first. He characterized as a stupendous blunder the announcement of the abandonment of the Soudan at the time it was done. When there were garrisons and persons engaged in commerce in the country, it was the height of folly to announce that they would evacuate the Soudan before they had placed those persons in a position of safety. Anybody could see that such an action was not only insane in its idea, but likely to be disastrous in its consequences. The noble Earl had referred to the growing power of the Mahdi; but why had Her Majesty's Government allowed it to grow? The Government had received many warnings; but they had deliberately disregarded them, and now the plea was raised that the circumstances had changed. But the charge against Her Majesty's Government was that the circumstances had changed, and that they knew that they would change. What was to become of the railway from Suakin to Berber? They had had some experience of difficulties in regard to another highway—the Suez Canal; and he thought the House and the country ought to know what was to become of the railway after it was laid down. Who was to be responsible for its administration if it did not remain in the hands of England or Egypt? He did not think they were unduly trespassing upon the reticence of Her Majesty's Government in asking to be taken into their confidence, and to be informed with what objects and purposes this railway was to be constructed? In conclusion, the noble Earl spoke of General Gordon's death, and said that on the shoulders of the Government must rest the responsibility for the agonies with which his heart must have been filled.

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, he would not trespass on the time of the House by any lengthened speech. The debate had already lasted nearly two days, and a remarkable feature of it had been the extraordinary vitality of certain of the arguments used, which were refuted over and over only to come to life again. The remark did not apply to the speech of the noble Earl who had just down, and who, in closing, had paid a tribute to the late General Gordon—a tribute which everyone would agree with. General Gordon had only filled that place in their Lordships' mind which he was sure he now filled in the minds of all Englishmen, and which he would fill in the minds of Englishmen for many years to come. The noble Earl opposite, who had framed a careful indictment of the Government, had inquired as to the railway which was to be laid down. As to that, he could only reiterate what had already been stated, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, that it was to be undertaken simply and solely for military purposes. The only object for it being laid down was in order that they might safely withdraw Lord Wolseley from Khartoum. Lord Wolseley had himself specially asked for it, and it was purely in deference to his request that it would be proceeded with. The noble Earl also asked why the Government did not long ago undertake to smash the Mahdi, because he would then have been easily smashed. The answer was simply this—that it never had been originally an object of the Government to smash the Mahdi; and it was only now, when his advance was likely to embarrass the policy of Her Majesty's Government, that they thought it necessary to adopt the policy of dealing with the Mahdi in that summary manner. Then, as to the issue of the Proclamation of the abandonment of the Soudan, on account of which some condemnation had been passed on Her Majesty's Government, that step had General Gordon's hearty sanction and approval. To have sent a White man and a Christian into that part of the world at a time of great confusion without some definite object of which the population were likely to approve would have been to commit him to a far greater danger than that upon which he voluntarily embarked. The one thing on which the entire population of that part of the world was agreed was the desire to be rid of all European control. Hatred of all Christians was a feeling common to all the Arab tribes in that neighbourhood. The noble Earl who spoke a short time ago (the Earl of Dunraven) stated that all the disasters that had fallen upon the Soudan were the result, not of the Dual Control, but of the Joint Note for the maintenance of the Khedive and the government of Egypt. Of course, it was quite true that the issue of the Note had affected all the subsequent events; but why was that Note issued? Simply and solely for the reason that this country was led by the action of the noble Marquess opposite into a joint partnership with France, which obliged us to consult, and in a great measure to follow, the wishes of that country. Practically, we had undertaken the government of Egypt in conjunction with France; and it was owing to the extreme urgency of keeping on friendly terms with France, and in order that this partnership might not be wrecked, that the Joint Note was issued. M. Gambetta, who was then at the head of the French Government, was a man of a strong will and of an enterprizing character; and he it was who urged the issuing of this particular Note. In fact, it rather appeared from the Blue Books that the Foreign Secretary himself objected to it, and that it was only when it appeared that our relations with France would be in danger that he yielded. Had Gambetta remained in power, it is not improbable that the understanding with France might have been successfully maintained; and if it had been, then Arabi would in all probability never have ventured to raise his standard of rebellion. Therefore, the Government were justified at the time in concurring in the presentation of the Joint Note. Then, as to the future, the Government had been asked to pledge themselves to a particular definite line of policy on the conclusion of the military operations in the Soudan. He did not see how they could have sufficient groundwork for arriving at any decision until the military operations were concluded. Nothing could be more rash than to announce a precise and definite plan of that kind. The Government had, however, intimated their desire to form something like an orderly Government at Khartoum before leaving it. The Government had gone as far as they could in intimating to the House and the country that they did not intend simply to smash the Mahdi and then leave the country. Of one thing he was confident, and that was that Her Majesty's Government fully intended to establish an orderly Government at Khartoum before troops were withdrawn from that capital, the ultimate object being to leave both Egypt and the Soudan entirely. The object of the Motion was to turn out the present Government and replace them by the opposite Party; but it seemed to him that, seeing that our present difficulties had arisen not merely, as the noble Earl had suggested, from the Joint Note, but from the partnership with France in the government of Egypt which had made that Note a necessity, that would be an extremely illogical step to take merely because Her Majesty's Government had not yet been entirely successful in their attempt to undo the mischiefs which their Predecessors had created.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE took credit for having initiated the interesting debate upon the sending out of General Gordon which took place in April last year. The fears then expressed had, unfortunately, been realized. He did not wish to underrate the difficulties the Government had had to contend with during the time that they had been in Office; but he, nevertheless, thought they had brought upon themselves the indictment now urged against them by their determined obstinacy in rejecting advice, and indecision in adopting any course. He hoped that in the course of that debate they would have some explanation from Her Majesty's Government which would lighten the minds of many people as to the reason why General Gordon was ever sent to Khartoum at all, and why, when he was sent, the Government did not take the responsibility of his mission, and treat him as an Ambassador to any Foreign State. From first to last, the evil of the Government in Egyptian affairs had been vacillation in policy and indecision in action. The taunt of the Government had been that the present Opposition was responsible for the Dual Control. He admitted it; but, had they been in power, none of the difficulties which had arisen would have occurred. He believed that if the late M. Gambetta had been alive and in power in France at the time the Egyptian Question arose, a much more vigorous and satisfactory policy would have been pursued. After the death of M. Gambetta, France had become one of the greatest difficulties in our negotiations. The Government had, unfortunately, given way to M. Freycinet. The policy of an English Government with regard to Egypt ought to have been linked with that of the Suzerain; but ever since the Russo-Turkish War the policy of this country had been changed towards Turkey, and now this country was beginning to feel some of the very serious difficulties which arose from attempting to conduct the affairs of a Mahommedan country without the assistance of the Caliph. If they had not made this change of policy, he believed that they would not have had to send an Army to defeat Arabi, or to send General Gordon to the Soudan. But whenever Turkey had proposed to do anything she had been thwarted by England and France. When an Envoy was sent to Turkey, they sent their ships to Alexandria, and after the Envoy had returned their ships remained. What had taken place? The revolt at Alexandria was in May, 1882, and lasted a month; a British squadron was there, but did nothing to quell the insurrection. In June the Government had instructed Sir Beauchamp Seymour to bombard Alexandria. In his opinion, that was one of the most atrocious acts ever committed by a British Government. There were no troops landed to save Alexandria from bloodshed; but they waited till the end of August to put down Arabi Pasha. The whole of their Egyptian policy from that time had become an imbroglio and an incubus upon the English nation. The next step had been to send General Gordon to rescue the garrisons in the Soudan. The Government then sent an efficient Army to Suakin; but after having defeated Osman Digna, instead of making up their minds to open up the route to Berber, they had refused to do so, against every advice, and against the imploring demands of General Gordon himself; against the advice even of their own Minister at Cairo. It was perfectly possible to open up the Suakin-Berber route; and, at all events, it should have been attempted. But no arguments, no entreaties, no imploring demands in either House of Parliament or in the country at large, had had the slightest effect on Her Majesty's Government. They had been wrapped up in a policy of direct obstinacy. The blame entirely rested with Her Majesty's Government. They had from first to last warnings from persons whose opinions were worth having, that General Gordon was in the most imminent danger, and yet they disregarded them. He hoped that the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Napier of Magdala) would state to their Lordships what he thought of the march up the Nile. Whether that House and the other House of Parliament would that night pronounce a verdict that would force the Prime Minister to place his resignation in the hands of the Queen remained to be seen. He did not, however, believe that if the Government had a majority in either House of Parliament it would in the least remove the imputation and slur which rested on them. The time would come when the country would be able to give their verdict. They would join hands round the grave of General Gordon; and they would then say, feeling the sorrow which overwhelmed them all, that the policy of vacillation and inaction was the murderer of General Gordon.

LORD NAPIER OF MAGDALA: My Lords, reference has been made to my former observations in this House, and I find it incumbent on me to revert to them. On the 4th of April, 1884, the question of the safety of General Gordon appeared to me very serious, and I had failed to learn that Her Majesty's Government were making any preparation for his relief. Knowing from experience how much preparation is required for even a small Expedition of a difficult nature, I gave Notice of a Question to ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs whether any Expedition would be sent for General Gordon's relief; and whether the Scientific Departments had been requested to consider how such could be effected either from Suakin or Cairo? The Prime Minister having the previous day declared that he was not prepared to send an Expedition for the relief of General Gordon—which I only became aware of on entering the House—I confined my Question to asking whether the Government would be prepared with a plan in case it should be necessary. I beg permission of the House to read an extract from my remarks. I said—

"The Government had declared that at present in their belief such an Expedition was not necessary; but the time might come when the opinion of the Government might change, and when General Gordon's position might not be so secure as it appeared to be at present; and, therefore, it would be a dreadful thing if General Gordon should escape—if it were possible to imagine that such a noble nature would attempt to escape—and leave behind him those who might suffer all the evils of an unfortunate war. It was possible the time would come when the Government might consider it necessary to relieve Khartoum; and if such relief was to be carried out, it would certainly be carried out from either Cairo or Suakin, and it would be done with more effect if every step had been previously prepared by the Scientific Departments under the Government, whose resources were inexhaustible. Khartoum was about 445 miles from Suakin, and about 1,200 miles from Cairo. Of the distance between Khartoum and Suakin there were 200 miles of route by the Nile, and of the remaining 245 miles, 100 miles consisted of Desert, which might be divided into, and traversed in, two stages of 50 miles each. Then there came 145 miles of level country, between the Desert and the Red Sea. There would be no difficulty at any season of the year in making a practicable route across those 145 miles; and then there would be those 100 miles of Desert to be crossed. Along the 145 miles, at every stage there was some water to be got, good or indifferent; and no doubt it would be in the power of the force occupying those halting places to get more water, and to sink more wells in the neighbourhood of the springs. No doubt the climate of Suakin was very severe indeed; but it was not unhealthy, and he believed that the country could be crossed by British troops, properly equipped, at any time of the year."—(3 *Hansard*, [286] 1612.)

At that time the Mahdi's followers were not in possession of Berber, and therefore nothing would have been easier than for a force to have crossed over from Suakin, and given a hand to General Gordon. General Graham then had destroyed the power of Osman Digna; and although he was not at that moment in a position to advance because he had not transport camels they might have been got at many of the ports of the Red Sea. I concluded that if Her Majesty's Government decided on the Nile route of 1,200 miles they would at once begin vigorously to lay down rails to pass the difficult Cataracts to be connected by intermediate railways hereafter. I did not object to the Nile route under such circumstances, as there was convenience in having Cairo as a base, and any permanent opening of the way was removing a great evil, and the want of communication from Cairo to the extremities of the Empire. But such steps were indispensable, and also the provision of steamers and river transport for the navigation of the intermediate reaches of the river between the Cataracts. That appeared necessary then, and it appears to be necessary now. I did not enter into these details. General Wolseley requires support and better communication with Cairo. As long as he can rely on Dongola no doubt he has a great resource. No one had any right to criticize the action of Lord Wolseley in ordering the advance of General Sir Herbert Stewart. That was a most gallant and brilliant advance, with the view of extending a hand to General Gordon; but it was a great military risk. Lord Wolseley trusted, and justly so, to the valour of his troops; and if the movement had succeeded it would have been a brilliant achievement, which could not have been surpassed. There seems to be some anxiety as to the position of Lord Wolseley's Force; but I have no doubt whatever that it is perfectly safe under his command. Had Lord Wolseley's plan to advance on Berber and Khartoum been carried out, it would have been necessary to advance from Suakin to Berber, in order to meet him and effect the withdrawal of his troops from Suakin. That advance has, unfortunately, been suspended. I think that great misapprehension has prevailed with regard to the climate of the Soudan. I know by experience that troops have marched and fought in India in heat quite as great as that of the Soudan. The temperature recorded in the higher lands in the Soudan is from 110 degrees to 112 degrees in the shade. I have records in my possession from officers in camp at Mooltan, in India, showing a temperature of 120 degrees in the shade. The heat of the Soudan is not so trying as the heat of India, although it is very great; and although no one would wish to send troops to the Soudan in the hot weather, if it could be avoided, yet I believe it would be quite possible to conduct operations, if necessary, even in the hot season, provided they are supplied with Indian tents and proper means of assistance. Uneasiness has prevailed, because so large a body of troops has been blocked up in Africa; but if more troops are required, we have only to raise them. I am told that Lord Wolseley had already informed the Government that he required 10,000 more soldiers to carry out the short service system. Some apprehensions have been entertained regarding the Russian approaches to the Afghan Frontier. All the Russian officers whom I have met are extremely pleasant people, and I should be extremely sorry if we should ever be at war with Russia; but I do not believe that Russia would make war on England for a few miles of ethnographical frontier. I trust that the officers in command of the troops in the Soudan, if they find that they are able to advance, to carry out the objects of the Government, will be permitted to do so in any season of the year.

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK said, that at that stage of the debate he would certainly not go into a retrospect of the events which had led up to the present condition of affairs. There had not been a debate in their Lordships' House in which argument was less needed. During the whole period of this terrible tragedy the Members of the Opposition had plied the Government with arguments of every kind; but, as they all knew, the Government had turned a deaf ear to their warnings, and treated their arguments with scorn. Now, however, the justice of all they had said was abundantly proved, not merely by speeches on the Opposition or Ministerial side, but by the fact that the Government were now hurrying to do too late that which they had all along been urged to do while there was yet time. He knew they were told the circumstances were changed, and that those efforts which it was not right to call upon them to undertake in the way of risking troops and expending treasure for the life of one man and a handful of followers was justly called for by the grave circumstances of the present condition of affairs in the Soudan. But he thought that only proved again more fully still what the Opposition had always said and urged—namely, that Government must do in the end what they were now doing, and that they ought to have done it while General Gordon was alive, and not wait until he was dead. They must always remember that General Gordon was sent out in no ordinary way. They knew that the Ministers of the Crown never failed in pressing upon the House the fact that General Gordon was the central point of the whole policy of the Government, and the representative of all that England held most dear. If they did send out General Gordon in that way then it was their bounden duty to take every precaution to assure themselves that they would be able to bring him back again. The point which they had now to consider was what course they had to take. The Government had been taught a bitter lesson; but had they shown any sign whatever that they had learnt it? Had they had no lesson before? Could one have believed a short time ago that any Government could have received the news of the tragedy of Sinkat, and not, at all events, have provided that the safety of Gordon must be jealously guarded? Even now they heard that the interests of England were still jeopardized, and that the blood already spilt had been spilt in vain. They had gone to Egypt, and they should be determined not to leave it until they had bound her to them by such bonds of friendship that no unfriendly hand could loosen them. There were many reasons to justify the votes which they were about to give; and although the Secretary of State for the Colonies warned their Lordships that that House might do just as it pleased, because it was not on their votes the existence of the Government depended, but on those in "another place," he asked their Lordships whether during the last five years their action had been such as to warrant confidence being reposed in them? He had no doubt that the historian of the future would record a verdict against this Administration, that its career had been one of degradation and shame. He trusted that that might not be so; but he appealed to their Lordships to do their part, so that in that shame this House might have no part. They had often in that House to take a decision which exposed them to much censure and criticism out-of-doors. In proceeding to a division that night they had no such censure or criticism to face; for he believed that by carrying the Motion of the noble Marquess they would be recording on the pages of their country's history the verdict for which their country was indignantly calling.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH took a retrospect of the last five years, and of the different position which England occupied in 1879, when its destinies were intrusted to a Minister who recognized that in nations, as in individuals, *noblesse oblige.* She, by a display of determination, backed by her Fleet alone, saved Constantinople from the grasp of conquering Russia; and this assertion of her power at once placed her in her old position as one of the foremost European Powers. The present Government, on coming into power in 1880, proceeded, out of sheer perversity, to reverse all that their Predecessors had done; the consequence of which was humiliation and disgrace, so that we were now the scorn and laughing-stock of the world. Formerly, our alliance was courted; now, we were made of small account. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies explained last night what the Government policy in the present state of affairs was to be; but his explanation was characteristic of the noble Earl, whose policy always appeared to be to get as much as possible out of harm's way, to open his mouth and shut his eyes and see what Providence would send. It behoved us now to see that all the blood and treasure poured out in the Soudan should not be fruitless, but that at least some blessing should be left behind us, when we gave it up, in the establishment of some settled form of government, by which the blessings, of justice and civilization might be insured to the inhabitants.

EARL CADOGAN: Whatever may be the opinion of your Lordships upon the question submitted to you in the course of this debate, one thing I think will be admitted by everyone—that this discussion has taken place under most unusual and exceptional circumstances. I have not been for many years a Member of your Lordships' House; but I do not believe that the oldest Member of this House can recall an instance in which a Vote of Censure such as the one now under discussion, involving charges of the gravest character and possibly the very existence of a Government, has been discussed almost entirely from one side of the House. Peer after Peer has risen on the Opposition Benches, and has arrayed the facts to be found in the Papers presented to the House, and scarcely any Peers but those who are Members of the Government have attempted to make a reply. If silence were to be taken as giving consent, I do not believe that at any time has a Vote of Censure been carried with so much unanimity, for that which we are now discussing might be taken as carried without any division at all. Under such circumstances, it will not be necessary that I should intervène for long between your Lordships and the statement of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville). The affairs of the Soudan have been laid before the House so completely that I am not disposed to go into them any further. I prefer to remind your Lordships that there is some fear that in the discussion of the special Expedition to which the Resolution of my noble Friend refers, the larger interests and principles of policy may be left out of sight altogether. My Lords, we must not forget that this Soudan Expedition is not merely one of those small wars or military operations, usually attended with defeat and disgrace, to which Her Majesty's Government have accustomed us in past years. It is the outcome of the general policy of Her Majesty's Government in their conduct of the affairs of Egypt; it is only an episode in one phase of that great Eastern Question which so vitally affects the interests of this Empire and the whole of the civilized world. The country laments, and your Lordships lament—and your grief has found eloquent expression during this debate—the sad scenes enacted at Khartoum, and the terrible fate that has befallen that hero of heroes, General Gordon. But these disasters mean more than humiliation, to which, unfortunately, we are becoming more and more accustomed. They mean a failure on the part of this country at a time of great difficulty and great crisis in Continental affairs; they mean the loss of the influence and *prestige* of this country; they mean the weakening of our power before the world, and therefore they demand serious attention, and should be viewed, in my opinion, as a whole. My Lords, if you examine the Egyptian Question as a whole, and will look at the history of these affairs from beginning to end, you will find that Her Majesty's Government never had a policy at all. Their line of action has been invariably guided by the political exigencies of the moment. They appear always to be hindered by a dread of their responsibility, which to them appears a perpetual bugbear; and they are fettered, above all things, by the necessity of keeping together and consolidating that heterogeneous conglomeration of atoms which goes by the name of the Liberal Party. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) did well, last night, to remind your Lordships that the same vacillation and feebleness of purpose have marked the whole history of the conduct of Egyptian affairs by Her Majesty's Government. It was their undecided counsels which prevented their dealing firmly and with adequate strength with the rebellion of Arabi, that *fons et origo mali* of all their disasters. It was their undecided counsels which led to the massacre of the garrisons, to the despatch of General Gordon, and to the Expedition which was sent—too late, as usual—to effect his relief. Now, my Lords, the Prime Minister has told us that all these *laches*—all these iniquities, as I should prefer to call them—of the Government were condoned in the month of May last, when he obtained a mechanical majority of 28 in the other House of Parliament to approve the course his Government adopted; but at that time we had not the information to guide us to a decision on the merits of the policy of Her Majesty's Government which we now have fully at our disposal. The Government then told us that, although they had met with defeat and disaster, and although they had failed in rescuing the garrisons, they still had one trump card to play—they had sent General Gordon by himself to effect what they had been unable to attain by their armies and by their diplomacy and by their policy. If, under these circumstances, Parliament acquitted Her Majesty's Government last May, I do not see why they should be acquitted this year, after the result of Gordon's mission, now that that disastrous result is known. There is one point I should like to advert to which has not been touched upon in this debate, and that is, that the responsibilities we have now incurred in Egypt have been largely increased by the policy of Her Majesty's Government of incessantly and continually weakening the Egyptian Government. It is true they have, with a certain amount of loyalty, supported Tewfik; but they have never ceased to interfere in all the internal affairs of Egypt. They have dismissed some Ministers and appointed others, and have never lost an opportunity of humiliating the Governor of Egypt in the eyes of his subjects. Now, my Lords, the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, last night, told us that they could not wish to treat Egypt as an English Province. But if it be possible to treat Egypt as a British Province, Her Majesty's Government have done it. What is the meaning of these perpetual sham appointments which are supposed to be made by the Khedive of Egypt, and which are decided upon by Her Majesty's Government? We have had an instance of it within the last few days. Sir Evelyn Baring writes that Lord Wolseley wished that Prince Hassan should be appointed on his Staff as Governor of the Soudan. After some correspondence Her Majesty's Government assented to the appointment; and although their policy at this moment is that Egypt shall quit the Soudan and have nothing whatever to do with it, the brother of the Khedive has just been appointed Governor of the Soudan. But there is another instance, and a more remarkable one, of this extraordinary conflict of authority in Egypt. When General Gordon was sent to the Soudan there was some difficulty felt in Parliament to understand the conditions under which he was sent; and from a conversation which took place in "another place" at that time it appears that it could not be ascertained whether he was appointed by Her Majesty's Government or the Khedive. Under these circumstances, my Lords, no one need be astonished that Her Majesty was advised to insert in her gracious Speech that memorable sentence, that "information from Egypt included painful uncertainties." But the noble Marquess yesterday said that the counsels of Her Majesty's Government were not only undecided, but also divided. The First Lord of the Admiralty took umbrage at that statement. It is difficult for us to prove that the Government are not a happy and united family. Our belief, however, is that the discussions in the Cabinet resemble more than anything that game which is indulged in at athletic sports called "a tug of war," than the friendly discussions which are usual in such a body. The scene which took place last night in the course of the debate also throws some light on the matter. My noble Friend the late Under Secretary of State for War (Viscount Bury), in the course of his able speech, was endeavouring to recapitulate some statements made by the First Lord of the Admiralty. The noble Earl was not then in his place; but immediately three Cabinet Ministers sprang to their feet in their anxious and earnest desire to correct the statements my noble Friend had just made, and to give the exact meaning which they thought attached to the words of the First Lord; but I was particularly interested to notice that the Members of the Government were each and all at total variance with one another. Then the noble and learned Earl sprang from the Woolsack and gave my noble Friend the "lie direct."

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, is it Parliamentary, is it in accordance with the usages of this House, to apply such language to anything that was said? I said that I understood the First Lord of the Admiralty to say the reverse of that which the noble Viscount had attributed to him.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, if I have been guilty of saying anything which either offends the feelings of the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack, or which is in any sense un-Parliamentary, I beg, without hesitation, to retract it. Perhaps my language was rather more strongly descriptive of the statement of the noble and learned Earl than what I was entitled to employ; but I am in the recollection of the House, and I do not think that the words just quoted by the noble and learned Earl were exactly those which he used. I have, however, to apologize if I have, in any way, misrepresented him to the House. But with regard to this question of divided counsels, I do not quite understand why the noble and learned Earl should be so anxious to disclaim the accusation. It appears to me that the fact of their being divided is the only possible defence that can be offered for many transactions which we have so much deplored in the course of the last few years. I confess I should have thought it would have been impossibe for 14 men to sit round a Council Table and with complete unanimity to decide on the courses that Her Majesty's Government have adopted. One word as to the delay. The culpable delay, to which my noble Friend alludes, I suppose may be considered to have occurred from the moment when danger was seen actually to exist. Now, the moment, in my opinion, when the Government should have considered that General Gordon was in danger began from the moment when, to use the words in his despatch, he was "hemmed in;" and if they were cut off from communication with him they should have considered his danger and made preparations to meet the danger. The Prime Minister never would see the danger that existed.

At the end of the month of April he solemnly told the House of Commons that no danger existed to the garrison of Berber; and before five weeks were over the whole garrison of Berber, consisting of 5,000 people, with the Governor of that fortress, had ceased to live. But, my Lords, the Prime Minister has now given a very different excuse for the delay which arose. He says he spent three months in discussing with his Cabinet as to the choice they should make of one of the two routes that are now both adopted. Now, it is my belief that if Mr. Gladstone had consulted the Intelligence Department at the War Office—a Department which, perhaps, does not exist within the Cabinet—he would within a much shorter space of time have been enabled to make up his mind as to which route to adopt. I believe the right hon. Gentleman ultimately chose the wrong one; but that must remain an open question. But both the choice of routes and all other preparations should have been in time to meet the possible case of failure; and it seems to me that the chief weight of the charge that we have to make against the Government lies in this fact—that they never seem to have provided against possible failure and possible disaster. Apparently these chances never entered into their heads. And now they shelter themselves under the plea of treachery. Well, now, treachery is an Oriental weapon. It is probably the best, the sharpest, and the surest in Oriental hands, and it has various characteristics which might have prepared the Government for its use at the siege of Khartoum. In the first place, traitors almost always lean to the strong side. They are quick to detect signs of weakness on the part of anyone; and, I ask, is it possible to imagine any circumstance more likely to lead to such traitorous action as that which we are now deploring than the course adopted by the Government in their whole dealings in this matter? If they foresaw that the very fact of the appearance of an Expedition in the neighbourhood of Khartoum would lead to the tragedy, why did they ever send an Expedition at all? If, on the other hand, they did not foresee the probability of treachery, they are not entitled to allege this probability as a reason why they should have delayed their preparations. The fact is, there is abundant evidence in the Papers to show that the sending out of Gordon to the relief of Khartoum was a temporary expedient required by the political necessities in which Her Majesty's Government found themselves; and that the Expedition was also a temporary expedient, undertaken in the hurry of the moment, in one of those rushes which the noble Marquess so eloquently described. And now I come to the second part of the Resolution of my noble Friend. I agree that the difference between it and that presented in the other House of Parliament is a difference in form, but in meaning and scope there is very little difference, indeed, between them; and I believe if the Resolution in the other House is carried, it will be entirely and utterly impossible for the Government to retain the Office which they now hold. There is further a reason why these two Resolutions should have been different both in form and substance in the fact that the Resolution before the other House was laid on the Table before the framer of it had had the opportunity of seeing the Papers which were presented a day or two afterwards, and of hearing the explanations afforded in both Houses of Parliament. Is it to be wondered at, that, after we had had the advantage of seeing those Papers and of hearing the statements of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Resolution of my noble Friend was couched in stronger terms? Now, Mr. Gladstone says that he will not abandon the Soudan; but he has not told us how long he means to stay there. We know from the definition of policy sent by General Gordon on the 5th of February, and never contradicted by the noble Earl, that it is the intention of the Government to establish "a firm Conservative Government in the Soudan." But what we wish to know is, when you have created that Government, how you mean to make it a stable one, and to insure that it will remain stable after you leave? Before we make further sacrifices, and before we enter upon the expenditure of further blood and treasure, I think we have a right to demand that the objects for which we are going once more there are such as are likely to be permanent, and likely to benefit the country and fulfil our obligations to it. The statements of the Government are not sufficient. It is not enough to know that they will not abandon the Soudan. We want to know what they will do while they stay there. We want to know what they intend to do with the railway. It is, I consider, our solemn duty to challenge the Government and its policy. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies has told us that their policy has been the same—that there is to be no change, and that he is prepared to go on with the tactics which he has adopted ever since he has been at the Colonial Office. But there must be, in spite of the noble Earl, some change in the policy of the Government. There must be some change, not only in respect to the Soudan, but in the whole spirit which animates their policy in relation to home and foreign affairs. It has been said that we have been half-hearted in the action which we are now taking, and that, although prepared to censure, we are not ready to take responsibility. There is no doubt that the heritage which the Government leave to their Successors will be one of unmitigated woe, embarrassed finance, diminished *prestige* and authority, and an increased responsibility which would require some courage and some determination to face. There could be no personal ambition in the matter; but there are higher interests and duties than those of personal and Party feeling; and in no respect is the difference between the Opposition and the Government more clearly marked than when the Opposition show their willingness to subordinate their private feelings to the welfare of the country. I cannot believe that my noble Friend and those to whom we look for light and guidance in this matter will shrink from their obvious duty if this Motion is carried. It is absolutely necessary that a firm, simple, and honest policy should be announced, or that the present Government should cease to exist. I do not believe I am using language too strong for the occasion when I say that the continued existence of the Government has become a great danger and scandal to this country. The late Earl of Beaconsfield once likened a Liberal Cabinet to a row of extinct volcanoes. But the difficulty now is that the volcanoes are not extinct. Their dangerous and spasmodic characteristics remain; and, unless they can be controlled, may involve the country in still further degradation and ruin. There may be some who think that Party feelings and the existence of the Liberal Party are of more importance than this danger to the State, and they will probably obey the crack of the whip, and condone the various offences of the Government. We, at all events, will not share in that responsibility. We have appealed to Parliament to solemnly condemn the Government for its policy in Egypt and the Soudan; we believe that we have the opinion of the majority of the country at our back; and we trust to the verdict of the country.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, your Lordships were good enough to allow me last week to make a statement with regard to the subject of our discussion to-night; and, although this does not dispense with the duty of taking some part in the debate, I feel that it is a justification if I do not trespass now at too great length on your attention. I have listened to this debate, nearly the whole of it, with the interest which it deserves. One thing has struck me in connection with the brilliant and condensed speech of the noble Marquess who made the Motion (the Marquess of Salisbury). It was that he was much more sparing of strong epithets than he generally is on occasions of this sort. On the other hand, in the very able speech of the noble Earl who has just sat down (Earl Cadogan), he has rather departed from that persuasive moderation which generally characterizes his speeches, and he evidently thought he would try his hand at a little strong language. But I must do the noble Earl the justice to say that he most gracefully and courteously withdrew a word which appeared to your Lordships a little too strong. I have not, however, generally observed the same weakness in his illustrious Chief. My noble Friend (Earl Cadogan) has complained of the monopoly which his side of the House has had in the debate. I must admit that there has been speech after speech which appeared to me to repeat, not only what has been said by Peers in this House, but very much repeating language we have read and heard for some time past; and it is quite clear that in all this technical, detailed criticism of the Government, it is very difficult for other than official Members, who have followed the thing, to give answers when these particular criticisms are made. I entirely agree with what fell from my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) when he said that, though the Government differed from the Resolution, he had not one word to complain of the noble Marquess for bringing it forward. During the last two years we have had difficulties of a most complicated character; episode after episode has arisen, and whatever alternative was presented and adopted, offered occasion for criticisms, not only plausible, but which might very reasonably be made. Whether by the advantage which the Opposition have taken during those two years of constantly questioning, constantly criticizing, and of constant attacks, a great national question of this sort has been advanced or not, I must leave entirely to others to decide. But when they come forward with the avowed intention of dismissing the Government from Office as being incapable of holding it, and of replacing it with one of their own, I can only say that I think that that course is perfectly right and Constitutional. The noble Earl has been good enough to give your Lordships a description of what passed in the Cabinet. I am very sorry I have not seen the noble Earl in our Cabinet, for I should rather like to see him there. But when he complains of supposed dissensions in the Cabinet, I cannot help asking, are we the only Party who have dissensions? My noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) the other night spoke about the great difference between the two Motions in this House and the other, and he happened to allude to a report in the newspapers describing what had occurred at a political meeting at the house of the noble Marquess.

A noble Lord: At the Carlton Club.

Earl GRANVILLE: Well, I do not know that there is much difference. The minute he said this, the noble Marquess sprang to his feet. I thought he was going to smash my noble Friend by indignantly denying the truth of the statement; but not a bit of it, he merely rose to explain that when the Members of the House of Commons of his Party came to the meeting to complain of the Leader of the Opposition in the other House and of the Motion he had framed, it happened on a Tuesday, and not on a Monday. The noble Marquess, in his opening speech, went back somewhat. He went back to the time of the rebellion of Arabi. He was perfectly justified in doing so. When taking the responsibility of a Vote of Censure on the Government in a great national crisis, I think he was bound to explain the grounds of his Motion as far as he could do. The noble Duke who spoke soon after him (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) extended the charge very much. I may say, of all the speeches, the one which gave me the greatest pleasure was that of the noble Duke. His speeches are generally characterized by judicial, practical, good sense, and he confines himself closely to the points in hand. On this occasion, however, he claimed for General Stephenson a monopoly of the idea of the route from Suakin to Berber, and then the noble Duke went off at a tangent and surveyed mankind from China to Peru. He dropped in in India, he came down to the South of Africa, he went to Ireland, he followed Mr. Chamberlain to Birmingham and Ipswich, and he most ingeniously got back to Egypt by way of Berlin. But in that brief time, the noble Duke compared Her Majesty's Government with the Government to which he, the noble Duke, himself belonged; and he boasted of the immense success of their having maintained peace in all the world. If the noble Duke had a right to go back to 1874, I have a right to go back to 1874 too. Mr. Gladstone left Office with perfect peace everywhere, and the first official announcement of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Conservative Government was, that he found our relations quite excellent with all foreign countries, and that there never had been a time when this country was held in higher respect by foreign countries. The noble Duke praised the admirable means which the late Government took in defending India. So far as I know, the means they took to strengthen our defences in India amount to this—that they utterly destroyed the stable and firm Government then existing in Afghanistan; and the end of all things, after bloody battles and the murder of Cavagnari, was that the late Government had to retreat as fast as possible from Cabul, without making any effort to establish a firm Conservative Government in its place. When the noble Duke reproaches us with South Africa, does he pretend that the seed sown by the late Government was not the source of those difficulties? Does he imagine that the present difficulties have nothing to do with the measures of the late Government? With regard to Ireland, the noble Duke quoted Mr. Gladstone as to the state of that country, and said that he made an incorrect statement. But when Mr. Gladstone made that statement, it was at a time when he had no official information, which, however, the noble Duke went on to admit was not the case, as he, indeed, was bound to do, after the alarming letter which Lord Beaconsfield wrote to the Duke of Marlborough at the time. The only use of quoting this was to show how perfectly quiet Ireland was at the time. The noble Duke then went to Berlin, and quoted the remarks of Prince Bismarck, which were of an unfavourable character with regard to the Egyptian policy of the present Government. Now, Prince Bismarck is one of the most remarkable men of the time; he is a man of great ability, great will, and great intellect. Prince Bismarck is a man whose friendship is to be desired, and whose enmity is to be deprecated. He has rendered enormous service to that great country, Germany; he has united it; and the gratitude to him for that work is such that he has absolute power with regard to foreign affairs, and exercises great influence on the rest of the Continent. But, although that be the case, does the noble Duke pretend that we should abdicate all liberty of action with regard to the policy we pursue, either in Colonial or foreign matters? I must say that I have not the slightest right to complain of Prince Bismarck—of his expressing an unfavourable view of our Egyptian policy—for the simple reason that the policy of the Government has never yet been in accord with the advice with regard to Egypt which he gave to the late Government and to ourselves—namely, to take it. It was friendly advice; but when the noble Duke reproaches us for not having followed that advice, I have to ask him in return why it was not followed by Lord Beaconsfield, who, when the same advice was given to him, answered that he would not take Egypt at a gift?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Is that observation of Lord Beaconsfield to be found in any public document? I never heard of it before.

EARL GRANVILLE: Do you dispute it? I heard it on the highest possible authority. It was mentioned at the time, and I believe it to be perfectly true. Unless the noble Marquess can say that the words were not used by Lord Beaconsfield, the objection he makes is of no use at all. Now, I come next to General Gordon; and no one can feel more regret that he was sent to Egypt than I do. But I do not know whether it is blindness on my part, I do not feel self-reproach for being one of those who were responsible for his having gone there. The noble Marquess yesterday said that General Gordon had gone out as a forlorn hope. That is not the case. If it had been the case, I am not quite sure that it would strengthen the argument. I can understand that in warfare, when a number of men volunteer for a forlorn hope and go, perhaps, to attack a fort, with a hundred chances to one that they will lose their lives, or be taken prisoners, there is no obligation in honour on the Commander of the Army to risk any more lives in saving that forlorn hope. ["Oh, oh!"] I believe I am quite right, speaking as I do in the presence of such great authorities. But General Gordon did not go out as a forlorn hope; he did not consider it so; he was confident of success. When we saw General Gordon, we asked his advice, and it was to send him out, and he thought he could be successful in his mission. When we did send him out, what were the criticisms made upon us? The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Waterford) said he did not approve it; but if he did not, he kept his reasons to himself, because the applause was almost universal in its favour. Indeed, only one criticism was made, and it was this—one in the phrase that has been so constantly applied, rightly or wrongly, to everything that we have done—"It is too late; he ought to have been sent two months before." That criticism, however, was made in ignorance of the fact that the Government had been considering the subject, though they believed that General Gordon had determined never to serve in Egypt again. Whenever we inquired of the Authorities in Egypt whether he could be utilized the answer was in the negative. Therefore, the only criticism made upon us with regard to the despatch of General Gordon was perfectly unfounded. What would have been our responsibility, if a man showing everywhere such extraordinary power over Orientals, and who had had such conspicuous success in the Soudan, and told us he was able to assist in the work we had at heart, had been refused to be sent out? What would have been the language of the noble Marquess? A noble Lord said that we ought not to have sent him out alone, but should have given him a considerable Force. That, in my view, is a perfectly different question. That would have been a perfectly different course; and with the information then in our possession, I venture to say that if that had been the view of General Gordon we should not have sent him out at that particular moment to go to fight in the Soudan. Then, again, it has been said that we did not give an ample and sufficient discretion to General Gordon. I must say, in passing, that we entirely repudiate, with some indignation, the assertion that we sent out General Gordon merely to suit our convenience, and not for any public object we had in view. I declare that to be absolutely without foundation. When we sent him out, we were desirous of giving him our fullest support, and the most ample discretion as to the course, in the circumstances, which he should pursue. We sent him out with one set of instructions, which were cordially agreed to by him. When he got to Egypt those instructions were changed at his suggestion, and with the sanction of the Egyptian Authority, and we immediately approved the change. We asked him if troops sent to Suakin would be of any use, and he replied—"I do not want troops there." We were most unworthily attacked in consequence of the Proclamation he issued. Whether we entirely approved of the details or not, we supported and justified General Gordon; and we were quite prepared to take the consequence of his acts, and to approve of the details of any policy he might carry out within the scope of those instructions. Then the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) contrasted our policy with that of Lord Palmerston, who, he said, set a brilliant example of supporting a subordinate. Nobody knows that better than I do. If a man employed by Lord Palmerston did a foolish or a wrong thing, the private castigation he got was something fearful; but the fact once accomplished, Lord Palmerston took the responsibility on himself and defended the subordinate to the best of his ability. But does the noble Earl think that if Lord Palmerston had received a proposal from his subordinate, however distinguished, to entirely change the policy which he had been instructed to carry out, Lord Palmerston would have taken it as a mark of confidence in his own policy, and would immediately have changed his policy and followed that course? I do not complain in the slightest degree of any change which General Gordon made. He found circumstances on arriving at Khartoum different from what he expected; and, with the view of solving local problems, made certain suggestions, and instead of his pacific mission, he proposed, in a now familiar phrase, to "smash the Mahdi." But I beg to observe that that bears much upon the question of his application for any military force. It was not with the least notion of his own personal danger that he wanted it; but in order to carry out a policy, whether good or bad, which was not the policy with which he started, and not the policy of Her Majesty's Government. I do not understand, after what has been said by the Opposition as to the notion of sending Zebehr, how it can be possibly imputed to us as a fault that we did not send out Zebehr at his request. I believe that with the knowledge we had, apart from the political disadvantages we saw in it, the sending out of a first-rate General whom we did not trust, who was a great supporter of slavery—I believe it would have been a positive act of treachery to General Gordon, and that we should have been accomplices in the murder of General Gordon, which result would have amounted almost to a certainty. There are certain other things, such as the mission of only 400 men to go to Berber. Is it now thought that that would have been a safe, efficient, or wise measure to take? Still less would it have been so to send 200 men to Wady Halfa. That proposal was a perfectly new policy, and it was impossible to carry it out. Another question is with regard to the Turks. I believe that General Gordon was merely feeling that he would like some Turkish soldiers in his camp. The whole thing was impossible. The Turks would have been a long time in making up their mind. We know that the Turks do not move very rapidly. They are quite ready to have an Army in Egypt Proper, and then detach from that Army detachments to the Soudan and elsewhere, who will not interfere with local questions. A great many military questions have been argued here to-night, and I listened with great interest to what was stated by the noble and gallant Lord the Field Marshal (Lord Napier of Magdala). Of course, I do not refer to him further than to say that, while he counsels us in one direction, some of our advisers counselled us in another. I have listened with some astonishment to the courage with which some noble Lords laid down the law as to what is the right military view to take, and what it is right not to do. My noble Friend who generally speaks on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Dunraven) was once, I believe, a brilliant war correspondent, and, of course, we all know that newspaper correspondents know all about military matters; but the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Carnarvon) has laid down the law on military matters as if he were himself a Field Marshal, and he, I have no doubt, would act as such. But I do not wish to go over what has been so fairly stated by my noble Friend by my side. I want to say something as to the future. I do not know that I have much to add to what I said the other night. It appears to me, from all that has fallen from noble Lords in this debate, there are certain things upon which there is more agreement than is generally supposed. It appears to me, with the exception of the noble Lord (Lord Wentworth), who, for reasons which I entirely appreciate, moved an Amendment, and possibly some other noble Lords who share his view, that the great majority of this House on both sides are of opinion that the safety of our Forces is a paramount consideration, and that that safety is best secured by active and vigorous action, however much we may deplore it at the present moment. That action is directed towards destroying the power of the Mahdi; and when we have destroyed the power of the Mahdi and are masters of the situation, as I hope and believe we shall be, I think on most questions there can be very little difference of opinion. I imagine that when we are masters of the situation we shall desire, all of us equally, to form the best Government that can be formed on the spot. I imagine that we shall be anxious to deal with the Slave Trade in a most effectual way. I may mention one thing on which we are all perfectly united—that the honour of this country is concerned in the defence of Egypt Proper. The noble Earl says that he must have a definite pledge as to what we are going to do with the railway to Berber. Its primary object is that we believe it to be the most efficient—and not only the most efficient, but also the most economical—way of conveying troops, with their provisions and stores, to the places where they are to be employed, and which we wish to occupy. If we find the circumstances favourable, would it not be perfectly obvious to any Government who was at that time in power, to make the best use and utilization of that railway which can possibly be to the best advantage of that country in whosoever hands it was? But if we are asked, though ignorant of the military and the political circumstances in which possibly for some months we may be placed, to define where we will apply the English Military Force for the purpose of defending the railway across the desert, that is a responsibility which I decline on the part of the Government. My noble Friend behind me (the Earl of Camperdown) made a very touching appeal to me. He said—"Why cannot you, at all events, confide in your personal followers?" I have the greatest confidence in the noble Earl; and if he will call upon me to-morrow, I will engage to tell him everything I know in connection with the subject. But I must decline to give to the whole world an answer to a question which, I believe, has never been put to any Government in any country before a war. I cannot conceive of anything more unstatesmanlike, or anything that would more betray the duty of an existing Government to the country, itself than to enter into those definite and clear pledges respecting circumstances of which we have not cognizance. There is the first great difference between the two sides of the House. The noble Marquess, in his great fertility of imagination, described our plan as an intention to lay an ostrich's egg in the sand, and then run away. If we are victorious, as we hope and believe we shall be, and are masters of the situation in Egypt, it is impossible not to believe that one of the first objects of the Government would be to do all that is possible for the safety of those Native tribes who have loyally and faithfully supported us during these disturbances. My own impression is this—when we do succeed in destroying the forces of the Mahdi, the particular request of the Natives will be that we ourselves should retire as soon as possible from their country, and let them govern themselves and it. The noble Marquess described the hatching of the ostrich egg, and the various stages of its infancy before it arrived at maturity. During all that time he said that this interesting fledgeling would have to be rocked and nursed by the British Army in that land so truly described by General Gordon and Colonel Stewart as "a land of fearful monotony and fatal climate." That is to be the position during this long education of the future Soudanese Government which the noble Marquess has deliberately laid before your Lordships. The noble Marquess wants us to occupy these districts of the Soudan, when, only yesterday, he stated, to my great surprise, that we have no interests in the Mediterranean, and that it is a matter of indifference to us what becomes of Tripoli and Morocco. My Lords, I can only say that this appears to me a most superfluous and unnecessary declaration to lay before your Lordships on the part of a man who wants to turn us out; and, while the one may not show much slumber on his part, the other shows a remarkable amount of dash. I can only say this with regard to this policy in the Soudan—this long or permanent retention of the Soudan by our troops. I know what the result of the Motion will be in this House to-night; but I do not know what the result will be in "another place;" but of this I am perfectly certain, that if that Motion is successfully carried in that place, and the noble Marquess succeeds to the responsibility of Office, he will look at it a little more carefully than he does when he makes those dashing Opposition speeches. I exceedingly doubt whether he will propose such a policy as that which he sketched out last night; and I am perfectly certain that if he does, he will be forced by the people of this country to wriggle out of it at the earliest possible moment.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the House is ready for the division, and I will not venture to interpose between it and that division for more than a very few minutes. I have not much to answer on the other side of the House. The remarkable point, as has been said, of this debate has been the smallness of the advocacy which the Government have received from their own side, or to put it epigrammatically, as I heard it mentioned in private by a distinguished supporter of the Government, my Motion is one that it is much easier to vote against than to argue against. I was rather interested to watch what the proved skill and tact of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) would do with the case that he had to deal with; and it was curious to notice that, although he was pleased to stand up at that Table, and gave us three-quarters of an hour of very pleasant, agreeable, and amusing speaking, he imitated his followers in this—that he carefully avoided arguing against my Motion. He said nothing to repel the charge of the desertion of General Gordon; he said nothing to explain the culpable delay which this Motion is intended to censure. The noble Earl did not take that course for any lack of time, for he had time to play pleasantly about a number of somewhat irrelevant subjects; and he told us some curious things in the course of that dissertation. He told us, for instance, that Mr. Gladstone did not know the state of Ireland, because he had not access to official documents, and so he entirely disposed of any comparison between the state of Ireland now and as it was then. My Lords, it is not necessary to have access to official documents to know that the state of Ireland is now unsatisfactory. Then the noble Lord's imagination took him to Berlin, and he told us a very pleasant story of Prince Bismarck, which he said he heard on the highest authority. I would advise him to put a mark against that authority, and not to believe its stories in future. I can only say that I never heard of Prince Bismarck having offered Egypt to Lord Beaconsfield, and it is needless to say that that which was not offered could not have been refused. The noble Earl points over his shoulder to a source of information as to what passed in the late Cabinet, which, of course, he exclusively possesses. What Prince Bismarck may have offered to that statesman who was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Lord Beaconsfield's Cabinet, and who is now Secretary of State for the Colonies under Mr. Gladstone, I cannot say.

EARL GRANVILLE: The words I used were that Prince Bismarck advised the late Government to take Egypt.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I never heard that story before. There is only one other remark of the noble Earl to which I wish to refer. He spoke of his never having disregarded General Gordon's wishes; but he qualified that by saying that in asking for troops and contemplating military operations, General Gordon was entirely passing by the original object of his mission, and that, in that respect, the Government were in no way bound to regard his desire. I will not quote documents at this late hour; but it must be in the remembrance of all your Lordships that in the Report which General Gordon wrote on his way from Brindisi to Alexandria, and which he sent home the moment he landed in Egypt, he distinctly stated that, however defensive and pacific his action might be, military operations might become necessary, and that if he was attacked, he would not undertake not to defend himself, or not to press home any advantage which, in defending himself, he might obtain in military operations; and the Government were perfectly warned that such military operations might become necessary, and that such operations must demand the use of British soldiers. He did ask for British troops in small quantity; he did ask for Turkish troops, and for Indian troops. All these requests were denied him, and the Government knew, by the testimony of his brother Englishmen who were there in the month of April, that, unless British troops were sent, the situation of General Gordon was desperate. It seems to me to be impossible, in the face of those facts, to contend that the Government did not abandon General Gordon. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby), last night, defended the Government in his own peculiar manner. He said that General Gordon had received enormous praise for the danger of the mission on which he went; but the noble Earl went on to say that, if there had been no danger, of course there would have been no praise. He seemed to look upon it entirely as a commercial operation. The English people paid General Gordon a certain amount of praise, and General Gordon, like an honest man, in fulfilment of his contract, ran a certain amount of danger. The noble Earl would be an admirable political mathematician, if he did not strike out all questions of human sympathy from his calculations. There is no doubt that, whatever may have been the praise that was lavished upon General Gordon when he started, praise was not the motive that dictated the bold, the almost reckless, task which he undertook. He went forward in full confidence that he was serving his Queen; that he was fighting for the cause of humanity; that he was doing his duty to his country and his God; and he never asked whether men praised or blamed him for what he did. Nothing is more conspicuous, in all the utterances of his that we have, than his entire indifference to any opinion that might be passed upon that which, in his conscience, he thought it his duty to do. And it was precisely that sublime, heroic disinterestedness which attracted to him the affection and the sympathy of the English people in a measure that has scarcely ever been given to any of their servants. No public man, and no Military Commander in our history, has gone out on his mission bearing with him in such abundance the good wishes, the hearty prayers, and the deep sympathy of the whole people. In their minds there was no question of any commercial bargain. They did not ask whether the risk that he ran was commensurate with the praise which he received. They followed him, they loved him, they prayed for him, they hung upon his destiny, because they admired the splendid qualities which he displayed, and they appreciated the disinterestedness with which his sublime sacrifice was made. My Lords, the only noble Lord on the Treasury Bench who really undertook the task of repelling the censure conveyed in this Motion was the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook). He undertook, with great straightforwardness, to meet the charge of indecision, and he met it in this way. He said, there is nothing more untrue than that we showed indecision; from April to June we resolved upon the Suakin route; from June to August we changed our minds, and we resolved upon the Nile route; and then we did not act immediately, because we were possessed with a "profound reluctance" which induced us to wait and see whether something favourable in the circumstances might not turn up, and that reluctance it was which caused delay. But he seemed to think that nothing was more unreasonable than to apply to such conduct as that the reproach of indecision. These things are questions of definition. What do you mean by indecision? I take the most familiar example of indecision — an old woman crossing a street. She sees a hansom cab in front, nearly upon her; she goes back from it, and comes upon an omnibus coming from behind, and she goes forward; she has a "profound reluctance" to pass either of them; and she waits to see whether something will not turn up to help her, with the inevitable result that the old woman is run over, and an unsympathizing world says that her fate is due to her indecision. If this is the most decided, the most persistent, and resolute conduct, I only hope the Government will not give us such specimens of resolution for the future. I have only now to correct one or two misapprehensions which have been made with respect to what I ventured to say. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies appeared to me to entirely misunderstand what I said, or meant to say, when I characterized, as a stupendous blunder, the announcement of the intention to retire from the Soudan. The policy of retiring from the Soudan I think erroneous; but that is another question. That was not what I meant; but the blunder was, that while your garrisons were there, in the power of the enemy—garrisons for which, as the event proved, you were in honour bound to fight, garrisons placed in the utmost difficulty to rescue —while they were in that position, that you should announce a policy which made all the tribes surrounding them into their desperate enemies, was as fatuous a policy as it was possible to conceive. As soon as you made up your minds that the Soudan was to be evacuated, your first course should have been to retire the garrisons as rapidly as you could; and, when that was done, then you might announce your policy as loudly as you pleased. But it was an unfortunate announcement when the men were in deadly danger—a policy of crass folly which almost amounts to a crime. A noble Lord imputes to me a wish to occupy the Soudan permanently, and to lock up a British Force there for an indefinite time. With respect to British troops, I said nothing. The noble and gallant Lord the Field Marshal (Lord Napier of Magdala) spoke this evening, and justly said that if 7,000 British troops were locked up in Egypt, and if it was for the public service, your best course was to raise 7,000 more. Without falling back upon that alternative, there is another course that might be pursued. I am ready to admit that the climate is unfavourable; but I also contend that there are other troops under British power within reach who could probably be made more effective for the purpose; but that is a military question on which I decline to dogmatize. I only wish it not to be understood that I lay it down, as a *sine qua non*, that it must be British troops who are to do all the work in the Soudan. As to the assertion that I said it is to be a permanent occupation, I do not know how long will be necessary to give to the Government which you leave in the Soudan the elements of security. This, however, I am certain of—that if you do not retain the Soudan in your power for a sufficiently long time to give security to the Government, so that it shall have a chance of existing and of acting, all the blood and the treasure you have expended will have been poured out in vain, and Egypt will be exposed, in all their acuteness, to all the dangers which you confess it is your duty to guard her against. I know not whether the task is heavy or light; but I know that if there had been a bold hand and a resolute will a little time ago, the task would have been much lighter than it is now. If the task is heavy or light, the only chance which the Government have of setting up a dyke, which shall keep from Egypt a flood of barbarian fanaticism, will be that you shall give the initial steps of that Government your powerful support, so that it may be able to stand upright by its own strength and to fulfil the functions which you propose to assign to it. That, my Lords, is the policy which I venture to lay before the House. That is the point upon which the statements of the Government have been haunted by a persistent weakness and vagueness, which I can only account for by the belief that what they are afraid of is not so much the Mahdi of the Desert as the Mahdi below the Gangway. It is that they may not lose the chance of Radical votes in the great inquest of to-night that a veil has been carefully thrown over that part of the policy as to what shall be done whenever the Mahdi has been smashed. They prefer to leave it in darkness. We know that a noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown) has been invited to call at the Foreign Office, and the plan, duly drawn out, will be produced and presented to him. It is for Parliament to say whether the past conduct of the Government is such as to induce them to trust it with this unlimited power for an unknown plan; or whether all the precious blood which yet in that country unhappily must be risked, and possibly may be spilled in this unhappy war—whether this is to be risked on the chance that the future course of the Government may be more resolute, more consistent, more sagacious than it has been in the past. In the presence of the sacrifices, of which there are many in prospect, the issue is one of no light moment. It is an issue that Parliament has to decide to-night. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies tried to speak as if the decision of this House was uniformly opposed to a Liberal Government, and in that way to discount and depreciate its vote; but the noble Earl of all men knows that this is not the case. I can remember—I am going to appeal to decisions which were contrary to my own opinions—I can remember when the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was Leader of the House, as he is now, when the Danish policy of Lord Palmerston was impeached. This House agreed with the other House of Parliament in upholding the Danish policy of the Government, and in that were in accordance with the public opinion of the time. But I remember yet another precedent a few years before. I remember that Chinese question, which was a more distinguished instance than any other of that resolution to stand by his subordinates which so distinguished Lord Palmerston. In that case the House of Lords supported Lord Palmerston against the action of the Conservative Party. The House of Commons took the other view by a small majority. The people were consulted, and it turned out that, on this question of a foreign policy, the House of Lords had truly represented the judgment of the people, and that the House of Commons was wrong. I do not know which of those two precedents will be followed to-night. I believe that your Lordships will condemn the policy of the Government. What the action of the House of Commons may be, I do not know, and I believe that noble Lords opposite do not know; but I am quite sure of this—that if it should be that our recorded decision differs from that of the House of Commons, our decision, dictated far less by the pressure of political organizations, which have no weapons that they can use within the walls of this House, will, more truly, represent public opinion out-of-doors and the matured judgment of the people of this country.

EARL GRANVILLE: I beg to state, with regard to the remarks of the noble Marquess, that my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies was not my informant with respect to what I stated relating to Prince Bismarck and Egypt. But I am quite ready to refer the matter to Lord Derby for decision.

On question that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the motion?

Resolved in the *affirmative.*

Original Motion put.

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Ashford, L. (*V. Bury.*)
Aveland, L.
Bagot, L.
Bateman, L.
Blackburn, L.
Blantyre, L.
Borthwick, L.
Boston, L.
Botreaux, L. (*E. Loudoun.*)
Brabourne, L.
Brancepeth, L. (*V. Boyne.*)
Braybrooke, L.
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Chelmsford, L.
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Colville of Culross, L.
Congleton, L.
De L'Isle and Dudley, L.
de Ros, L.
De Saumarez, L.
Delamere, L.
Digby, L.
Dinevor, L.
Donington, L.
Douglas, L. (*E. Home.*)
Dunsany, L.
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Ellenborough, L.
Forbes, L.
Forester, L.
Foxford, L. (*E. Limerick.*)
Gage, L. (*V. Gage.*)
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Grantley, L.
Harlech, L.
Harris, L.
Hartismere, L. (*L. Henniker.*)
Hastings, L.
Hawke, L.
Headley, L.
Heytesbury, L.
Hopetoun, L. (*E. Hopetoun.*) [*Teller.*]
Hylton, L.
Keane, L.
Kenlis, L. (*M. Headfort.*)
Kenry, L. (*E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl.*)
Ker, L. (*M. Lothian.*)
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lamington, L.
Langford, L.
Leconfield, L.
Londesborough, L.
Lovel and Holland, L. (*E. Egmont.*)
Lyveden, L.
Manners, L.
Massy, L.
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Mostyn, L.
Napier, L.
North, L.
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Ormathwaite, L.
Penrhyn, L.
Petre, L.
Poltimore, L.
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Rayleigh, L.
Romilly, L.
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Saltoun, L.
Scarsdale, L.
Sherborne, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Somers, L.
Stanley of Alderley, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
St. John of Bletso, L.
Strathnairn, L.
Templemore, L.
Tollemache, L.
Tredegar, L.
Tyrone, L. (*M. Waterford.*)
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Wigan, L. (*E. Crawford and Balcarres.*)
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Canterbury, V.
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Resolved, That this House, having taken into consideration the statements that have been made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, is of opinion that—

1. The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided councils of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations;

2. That the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations will be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire.

House adjourned at a quarter before Twelve o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 27*th February*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered—First Reading*—Waterworks (Local Authorities) * [75]; Public Health Acts Amendment (Improvement Expenses) * [76].

QUESTIONS.

—o—

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FOREIGN JUDGMENTS.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the International Conference on Foreign Judgments has arrived at any decision on the subject; if not, when the next meeting will take place?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government are not aware that any meeting of the Foreign Judgments Conference has taken place at Rome. They were informed by the Italian Government, in October last, that the sanitary condition of Italy at that time, and the period which must necessarily elapse between the convocation and the meeting of the Conference, rendered it impossible that it should meet before February or March. No further information has reached them on the subject.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—OYSTER BEDS.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the number of oyster licences at present existing in Ireland, and the number of cases in which the holders of such licences are using no effort to cultivate the oyster beds; and, if the Inspectors of Fisheries will be directed to exercise their powers, and cancel the licences held by such persons?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am informed that there are 125 licences for oyster beds at present in existence in Ireland, and that the holders of about 80 of these are using no efforts to cultivate the beds. The Inspectors of Fisheries purpose holding inquiries as soon as their present engagements will permit, with the view of cancelling the licences held by such persons.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LICENCES TO CARRY ARMS—CASE OF JAMES LORD.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If a youth named James Lord has got a licence to carry arms in the district of Mount Nugent, county Cavan; and, whether Lord is a holder of land; and, if not, what special reason is there for his having a licence?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: From the Reports I have received I have thought it necessary to make further inquiries in this case, and would ask the hon. Member to put the Question on the Paper again for Monday next.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. OLIVER S. NUGENT, CO. CAVAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Oliver S. Nugent has recently been appointed a magistrate for county Cavan; what is the qualification of that gentleman for the office; and, does he reside in the county?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Oliver Nugent was placed in the Commission of the Peace for the county of Cavan in September last, on the recommendation of the Lieutenant of the county. He is a gentleman of considerable property in the county, and has a residence there; but is understood to be at present serving with his regiment.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SITTINGS AT NENAGH.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Land Commissioners Court abandoned its sittings at Nenagh on the 19th February, on the ground that a public meeting was to be held in the neighbourhood of the court-house, and has not since returned to the town or appointed a day for the hearing of more than twenty appeals which their departure interrupted; whether he has observed that Mr. Justice O'Hagan declared—

> "For myself I should, in view of the great public inconvenience that will be caused, have preferred to adjourn only during the time of the meeting taking place. However, my colleagues are of the other opinion, and consequently after to-day the hearing of the remaining appeals on the list must be adjourned sine die;"

whether he is aware that Mr. George Posnett, official, held an inquiry under the Labourers' Act in the court-house upon the day of the meeting, and expressed himself satisfied with the arrangements for the inquiry; and, what steps will be taken to protect litigants from the expense and inconvenience entailed by the action of the Land Commissioners?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Land Commissioners found, on going to their Court at Nenagh on the 18th instant, that preparations were being made to hold a political meeting in close proximity to the Court. They at once communicated with the authorities of the town, pointing out the inconvenience that must arise to suitors and witnesses, as well as to the Commission itself, if the meeting were held in the place proposed, and suggesting that it should be held in some other part of the town; but the reply was that this could not be done, and it was suggested that the Commissioners should adjourn their Court for an hour or two while the meeting was going on, or, if they thought fit, for the day. The Commissioners declined to adopt this suggestion, and, for reasons which they publicly stated, adjourned the Court *sine die*, Mr. Justice O'Hagan stating that while he concurred with his colleagues as to the impropriety of a public meeting being held in the close neighbourhood of the Court, he thought that, under whatever circumstances, they should endeavour to hear and decide the cases in the list. I regret if any inconvenience or expense has ensued to litigants; but the responsibility lies with those who, by calling a public meeting, for which a platform was erected immediately in front of the Court House, and close to the railings, interrupted a sitting of the Court, which had been publicly announced so far back as the 11th of December last. I am informed that Mr. Posnett did hold an inquiry at Nenagh on that day; but he is absent from Dublin at present, and I have not been able to ascertain at what time he held his inquiry, or whether he expressed himself as satisfied with the arrangements.

Mr. HEALY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Home Secretary in this House completely justifies the holding of a meeting in the vicinity of the High Court of Parliament, although it inconvenienced 200 or 300 Members who were coming to the House?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware that there was any meeting held close to, or under the windows of, the House of Commons in such a way as to interrupt its proceedings.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there was no other place available for the holding of the meeting except the place in front of the Court House; and that if they erected a platform in any other part of the town the promoters of the meeting would be liable to be prosecuted by the County Surveyor?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have already said that it was stated that there was no other place available; but there was an element behind that, and the promoters ought to have provided for the holding of a meeting some other day than the day on which the sitting of a Judicial Court had been announced.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT—BOYCOTTING—MR. CUSACK.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has observed that Mr. Cusack, of Drangan, county Tipperary, has been sentenced to imprisonment, under the Prevention of Crime Act, for reading out, as secretary of the local branch of the Irish National League, the following resolution:—

> "That, as land-grabbers are in our midst, we propose to hold no communication or dealings with them;"

whether the evidence of the police was that the resolution was handed to Mr. Cusack as secretary, according to the ordinary routine, by the gentleman who proposed it; and, upon what principle one officer of the branch was selected for punishment, while other officers and members were not summoned?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Member has been misinformed if he would imply that Cusack was the only person summoned on this occasion, the fact being that four other members of this branch of the National League were included in the charge. The evidence showed that Cusack not only read out, but that he drafted and called on members present to propose and second two resolutions; the first being—

> "Resolved that we condemn land-grabbing, and that we condemn the O'Briens of Coolquil, for taking a farm which was surrendered by Mr. Chadwick for being rack-rented;"

and the second—

> "Resolved that, as land-grabbers are in our midst, we propose to hold no communication or dealing with them."

Cusack, and the proposer and seconder of each resolution, were accordingly summoned; and the Bench convicted Cusack and the proposer and seconder of the second resolution.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: Has the right hon. Gentleman read the report of the evidence; and is he aware that what he has now said is entirely at variance with the facts as reported in the papers? I beg to give Notice that I will call attention to this matter at the earliest opportunity.

MR. SEXTON asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman thought the communication with land-grabbers would be increased by such prosecutions as these?

[No reply.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS, BOROUGH OF ATHLONE.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the President of the Local Government Board, Why the fee charged for auditing the public accounts of the borough of Athlone amounts to so large a sum as £12 per annum, considering that the auditor merely spends one day in the year at the work?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (who replied) said: The charge for this audit in 1873 and 1874 was £10 10*s.*, four days being returned as the time occupied in the audit. In 1875, in consequence of the appointment of an additional Auditor, the assessment had to be raised, and the charge on Athlone became £12 5*s.*, which was altered to £12 in 1877, and has so continued since. There has been no application for a reduction until this month, when the Local Government Board stated, in reply to a letter from the Town Clerk on the subject, that they would bear the case of Athlone in mind when the next assessment is made.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—DISORDERLY LANGUAGE—CASE OF GEORGE BARKER, CLIFFONEY, CO. SLIGO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether George Barker, a gamekeeper, being in a public house in the village of Cliffoney, county Sligo, on the evening of Friday last, the 20th instant, used language provocative of a breach of the peace, challenging "any Papist ——— to fight;" attempted to turn other persons out of the house; being then himself expelled, drew and brandished a revolver in the street, shouting that he "would blow the brains out of any Papist that dare come near him;" discharged one chamber of the revolver at a constable who arrested him; further violently resisted the arrest; and, upon being taken to the police station, drew a large knife on the constable in charge; what steps have been taken by the police in reference to this case; and, whether Barker holds a licence to have and carry arms; and, if so, whether it will be now revoked?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Very short Notice has been given of this Question; but, from the information I have received, it would appear that the hon. Member is not quite accurate in some particulars. Barker will be prosecuted at the next Petty Sessions on a charge of being drunk with loaded firearms; and, as is usual in such cases, the question of the revocation of his arms licence must await the result of these proceedings.

MR. SEXTON asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman considered the danger to the public peace of allowing this drunken firebrand to remain in possession of arms in the meantime?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the case being *sub judice*, they could not do anything at present.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC—TREATY WITH THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that a Treaty is being negotiated or has been concluded between the German Empire and the South African Republic; whether before entering upon such negotiations or concluding such Treaty the Transvaal Government asked for the consent of Her Majesty's Government; whether such consent was given or refused; whether, if given, such consent was subject to any and what conditions; and, whether, if such Treaty has been concluded, its provisions are known to Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, when the provisions of such Treaty will be made known to this House?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: We understand that on the 22nd ultimo a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between Germany and the Transvaal Republic was signed at Berlin, preparatory to being submitted to the Federal Council, and to subsequent ratification. In a Protocol attached is an express declaration that this Treaty will only be ratified after the expressed or tacit approval of Her Majesty's Government has been obtained. This is in full and complete accordance with the stipulation of the London Convention of 1884. We have not yet received a copy of the proposed Treaty; but we know that its provisions are similar to those of other Commercial Treaties recently concluded by Germany. I apprehend there will be no objection to laying the Treaty on the Table of the House as soon as Her Majesty's Government have received and considered it.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—QUEEN'S SCHOLARSHIPS AT TRAINING COLLEGES.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he will cancel or relax the rule of the Education Department under which pupil teachers, having failed in the examination for Queen's Scholarships at the training colleges, are not allowed to be made acquainted (as is freely done in other cases) with the particular subjects in respect of which they have been unsuccessful?

MR. MUNDELLA: It has been found impossible to inform the candidates for Queen's Scholarships of the subjects in which they have failed. It is probable that there are about 40,000 papers worked at the half-yearly examinations; and it is obvious that the Department could not undertake to answer questions as to each of them; and I am informed that it would be contrary to the practice of Examining Boards to do so.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SITTING AT ENNISKILLEN (APPEALS).

MR. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will represent to the Land Commissioners that their refusal to alter the day fixed for hearing appeals at Enniskillen of cases from the county of Leitrim, viz. 2nd March, is equivalent to a grave denial of justice to the appellants, who both themselves, their legal advisers, witnesses, and others concerned, are compelled to attend at the Assizes of the county Leitrim, which commence on the same day, and it is therefore impossible for them to be present at Enniskillen?

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that the Irish Land Commissioners have fixed the 2nd March for hearing the Leitrim appeals at Enniskillen; whether the Leitrim Assizes commence on the same day; and, whether this fixture may not cause great inconvenience and expense to suitors from the county Leitrim?

LORD ARTHUR HILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any representations have been made to the Land Commissioners as to the serious inconvenience and injustice to litigants which must follow their refusal to alter the date of hearing appeals from county Leitrim at Enniskillen from the 2nd March, on which day the Assizes for county Leitrim begin at Carrick on Shannon, and at which both the litigants and their legal advisers are obliged to attend?

MR. LEWIS asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is not the case that the Land Appeal Cases from county Leitrim are fixed to take place at Enniskillen on the 2nd of March, the same day as the Assizes for county Leitrim at Carrick on Shannon; whether he is aware that such an arrangement will be greatly prejudicial to suitors, solicitors, and others; and, whether the Government will use its influence with the Land Commissioners to adjourn the Appeal Cases in the Land Court to a suitable day?

MR. BERESFORD asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Land Commissioners have appointed the 2nd of March for the hearing of Land Appeal Cases at Enniskillen from the Manorhamilton, Ballyshannon, and Bawnboy Unions, in county Leitrim; that the Assizes for county Leitrim commence at Carrick on Shannon on same date, and that it will be impossible for the solicitors and others engaged in these land cases to appear at Enniskillen as required; and, whether he will take steps to have these cases postponed until after the termination of the Assizes at Carrick on Shannon?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I have communicated with the Land Commissioners in this matter, and have received the following reply:—

"The various sittings of the Court of Appeal of the Land Commission up to the middle of August next have been fixed and advertised since December 13 last. The sitting at Enniskillen was settled long before it was, or could be, known when the Leitrim Assizes would be held. Applications have been constantly made to the Commissioners to postpone their sittings at particular places or times on account of the sitting at the same times of other Courts; but the Commissioners have found that to yield to these applications, considering the number of other Courts, both of Quarter Sessions and Assizes, would involve such a total derangement of their business as would render the arrangement beforehand of sitting for appeals in any part of the country almost impossible. The Commissioners, however, are always disposed to yield to applications for postponement in particular cases where parties have public duties to perform elsewhere, and they will do so at Enniskillen whenever it may appear to be just; but to yield to the proposal now made would involve the abandonment of the sitting at Enniskillen, to the great inconvenience of a large number of the suitors."

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—THE FORCE AT SUAKIN.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked the Secretary of State for War, What answer was received from Lord Wolseley to his telegram, No. 17 (Egypt, No. 2, 1885), dated February 9th 1885, 8 p.m.—

"Force proposed for Suakin. . . . about 9,000 all ranks. I apprehend difficulty in providing transport for so large a force. Give your opinion as between this and smaller force. . . . Indian brigade and cavalry demanded in your No. 55 is ordered."

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Lord Wolseley's reply entered into some details which I do not think it is desirable to publish; but it was to the effect that he did not think the proposed force too large, and that the larger the force the more likely were the tribes to help us with camels.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—LORD WOLSELEY'S DESPATCH OF FEBRUARY

MR. BRODRICK asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Despatch of the 5th February from Lord Wolseley to Sir R. Thompson, in which he says he "awaits decision of Government to give further orders," is in answer to a Despatch from the Secretary of State for War; and, whether he would have any objection to giving the Despatch to which it is an answer?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The telegram from Lord Wolseley to which the hon. Member refers was in reply to a telegram from the War Office. So long as our troops were at Gubat and Abu Klea, military considerations rendered it inexpedient to give that despatch, or the first part of Lord Wolseley's reply. Those considerations have now ceased, and I have no objection to give the message which was sent from the War Office, and a further portion of Lord Wolseley's reply. The message sent from the War Office was whether Lord Wolseley's communications between Gubat and Korti were quite secure against any advance of the Mahdi? On the same day Lord Wolseley replied—

> "The dangerons part of our communications is between Abu Klea and Gubat, distance 25 miles. I have ordered all wounded to be removed as soon as possible from Abu Klea and Gubat. I only await decision of Government to give further orders."

It would be inexpedient even at present to state the remainder of the message.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER ADJUTANTS.

Colonel SEELY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, while so many officers are employed in Egypt, it would be desirable to relax the provisions of the Royal Warrant of the 28th July 1881, so as to allow Adjutants of Volunteer Corps to retain their posts for a time after they reach the age of 55 years, when they are quite capable of performing their duties, and so avoid the necessity of removing officers of the Line from their regiments?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Only six Adjutants of Volunteers will be affected by the 55 years' Rule before the close of 1886. It is not considered necessary to make any change in the Royal Warrant.

SOUTH AFRICA—DAMARALAND.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that a Royal Commissioner has annexed Damaraland; and, whether Mr. Palgrave, the so-called Royal Commissioner, is in the service of the Cape or of the British Government?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: No, Sir; a Royal Commissioner has not annexed Damaraland, and Mr. Palgrave is only Resident Magistrate at Walfisch Bay, and is only in the service of the Cape Government. But as it is important there should be no misunderstanding, I will state shortly what has passed relative to Mr. Palgrave's presence at Walfisch Bay and neighbourhood. In November last we heard through the newspapers that he had been sent to Damaraland. We telegraphed at once to the High Commissioner to ascertain what were Mr. Palgrave's instructions. The Premier of the Cape was then away in Bechuanaland; but we received from the High Commissioner on December 18 a despatch inclosing a communication from the Cape Ministers, in which Mr. Palgrave's duties at Walfisch Bay were described, and in which the following important sentence appeared:—

> "Palgrave has no authority to deal with Native territories beyond Border."

On January 14 the Secretary of State, in a despatch to the Cape, wrote as follows:—

> "Seeing that there has been no Resident with the Chief Kamaherero since the end of 1880, the appointment of one now would have the appearance of an attempt to thwart the development of the German Protectorate which Her Majesty's Government has recently recognized, and such a measure, therefore, could not be ratified or defended by Her Majesty's Government; and, in these circumstances, I have no doubt your Ministers will perceive that even the presence of Mr. Palgrave in Native Damaraland would at the present moment be undesirable. I informed you, in a former despatch, that it would not be in accordance with international courtesy to annex the territory immediately adjacent to the existing German limit; and the same observation applies, although in a less degree, to placing a Resident with a Chief whose country Germany may legitimately desire to acquire if the Chief assents."

Mr. Palgrave had started on November 8; and if there is any truth in the present newspaper reports, I can only suppose that his instructions have not reached him. We adhere to what was said in the despatch above quoted, and have telegraphed to Sir Hercules Robinson to urge his Ministers to instruct Mr. Palgrave to act in accordance therewith, if they have not already done so.

POST OFFICE—ACCELERATION OF MAILS TO SCOTLAND.

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR asked the Postmaster General, If he would state whether the arrangements for accelerating the mails to Scotland have been completed; and, if so, whether he would state generally what that arrangement is?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I am glad to be able to say that I have been able to conclude the negotiations which have been going on for some time past with the London and North-Western and

Caledonian Railways for the acceleration of the Scotch Mails, and for several other improvements. This will be secured partly by a special train to Perth every evening starting at 8.30, from which passengers will be excluded, and by means of additional trains both for mails and passengers. As an illustration, I may say that the mails will arrive at Aberdeen 40 minutes earlier than at present, and be despatched from thence more than two hours later; and nearly all the towns in Scotland will also benefit. The benefit will not be confined to Scotland, as it will admit of letters for Lancashire and North Wales being posted in London much later than at present. Substantially, there will be six mail trains from London to the North in lieu of two, as at present. I have every confidence that all the complicated arrangements rendered necessary by this can be completed about the end of June next, and will come into effect on the 1st of July. As many hon. Members will be interested in this matter, I will lay on the Table of the House a Paper giving the full details of the arrangements.

MR. BARRAN asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has succeeded in making arrangements to facilitate the transmission of mails between the Continent and Yorkshire, in accordance with the request of the important deputation which waited on him a short time since, representing all the manufacturing towns of the county?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE promised to reply to the Question on Monday.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether, when he replies on Monday to the Question of the hon. Member, he will undertake also to reply to a Memorial signed by a number of Members of Parliament with regard to the acceleration of the mail service between Dublin and the West of Ireland?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The question of the acceleration of the mails to the West of Ireland is under consideration. I am sorry to say that the terms made by the Midland Railway Company are very high.

MR. HARRINGTON: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether he is taking into consideration a Memorial from the inhabitants of Tralee and other portions of Kerry, seeing that he has in this case two Railway Companies to choose between?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Perhaps the hon. Member will ask the Question on Monday.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE CONSTITUTION.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he proposed to act on the recommendations of the Committee appointed to consider the present constitution of the Education Department?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he must refer the hon. Member to an answer he gave on the 6th of November to a Question put by the noble Viscount the Member for Barnstaple (Viscount Lymington), in which he explained that the solution of this question was connected with the arrangements to be made under the Secretary for Scotland Bill. He hoped to be able to make some announcement on the question before the Education Vote was taken.

VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES TO IRELAND.

MR. SEXTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Government will announce, before the visit of the Prince of Wales to Ireland, whether they intend to allow the Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act to lapse, or mean to apply to Parliament to renew it; and, whether the occasion of the Royal visit will be signalised by the proclamation of an amnesty to political prisoners, and by the appointment of a Royal Commission to publicly inquire into the system of Dublin Castle rule, and especially into the cases of persons now enduring imprisonment or penal servitude as the result of judicial proceedings and Executive decisions impeached by Representatives of the Irish people in this House?

MR. GLADSTONE: With regard to the first part of the Question, I must reply that I have nothing to add to the answers which I have already given with respect to the Prevention of Crime Bill to Gentlemen who have put them from the other side, though not from the same quarter of the House. The visit of the Prince of Wales to Ireland is fixed upon; but I am not aware that the absolute date is fixed, or the plans determined upon in all particulars. With regard to the latter part of the

Question, I hope the hon. Member will not think me disrespectful when I say that it is a matter of great importance and delicacy, and that it would be quite impossible to enter upon such matters in reply to a Question in the House.

Mr. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to ask him whether, supposing that he is next week responsible for the direction of public affairs, he will allow us the privilege of assisting him to make up his mind upon the policy of continuing the Prevention of Crime Act by giving a day for the discussion of the Motion for the appointment of a Select Committee standing in the name of the junior Member for Cork (Mr. Deasy)?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Before answering that Question I had, perhaps, better wait and see whether I continue to be responsible for the direction of public affairs.

THE IRISH BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS—LETTER OF THE BISHOP OF RAPHOE.

Mr. HEALY asked the President of the Local Government Board, If his attention has been directed to the letter of the Lord Bishop of Raphoe on the divisions of county Donegal by the Boundary Commissioners; if he is aware that His Lordship accuses the Commissioners of "lending themselves to a piece of sharp practice," and with having adopted the scheme put forward by the Conservative agents, "considerably improved in the Conservative interest," that he describes this as a "public scandal;" and, whether, as His Lordship declares the boundaries of Donegal "have been thrown into a state of discreditable confusion," the Government, in view of the position and influence of the Most Rev. Dr. Logue, will refer his letter to the Commissioners, and give them an opportunity of publicly justifying their conduct?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: My answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. With regard to the third Question, I cannot ask the Commissioners to hold any fresh inquiry into the subject. Her Majesty's Government have adopted, and intend to support, the decisions of the Boundary Commissioners in all cases.

Mr. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the important part of my Question either in the affirmative or in the negative. Will the Government give the Boundary Commissioners an opportunity of justifying their conduct, as this is a matter surely in which they were entitled to some consideration?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he intended to answer that part of the Question distinctly in the negative.

Mr. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that on the Motion to go into Committee on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill I will move, as an Amendment, that the single seat system has been specially adopted as a swindle on the people.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Notice just given by the hon. Member will not appear upon the Paper in that form. The expression is irregular, and ought not to have been used.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked, Whether Mr. Patrick Gallaher, of Strabane, a prominent local Nationalist, spoke of the scheme put forward by the Nationalist as follows:—

> "The question was, what was best for the Party—the national ticket. They did not care a twopenny ticket physical or geographical considerations provided they could jerrymander the country [laughter]. They could carry all the constituencies, supposing the divisions were left as they were; but they wanted to pulverise them [laughter]."

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In answer to the noble Lord's somewhat argumentative Question, I wish to state that I would be prepared to discuss this matter in Committee. I am thoroughly aware of the facts of this case, and I had the advantage of going into it this morning with my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), who takes a great interest in this Bill. The noble Lord may not be aware that the Commissioners did not reject all the schemes put forward by the Boundary Commissioners. They adopted the scheme put forward by the Bishop of Raphoe for the Southern portion of the country.

Mr. HEALY remarked that the gentleman quoted by the noble Lord did not live in Donegal at all.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I beg your pardon; he does.

Mr. HEALY: Strabane is in Tyrone.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—MINISTERIAL POLICY.

Mr. M'COAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, after having "broken the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum," it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to wholly evacuate the Soudan, or to occupy any, and what, portions of it until "an orderly Government" has been established; and, if evacuation be intended, what, after that has been achieved, will be done with the Suakin and Berber Railway?

MR. GLADSTONE: The first part of the Question really opens up the subject-matter of the important debate on which we are now engaged. I do not think it would be wise for me, having already had an opportunity of expressing my views, to attempt, within the limits of an answer to a Question, to enter into the subject, the more especially as other Members of the Government will have an opportunity of taking part in the debate. With regard to the latter part of the Question, it refers to an important but comparatively narrow point. Upon that point I will only refer the hon. Member to what was said last night by my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board, as, in my judgment, a fair, adequate, and recent statement of the views of the Government.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, on the 23rd of April 1884, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt addressed to him a letter, in which there occurred the following passage:—

> "Since then I have most opportunely received information which leads me to feel certain that, if properly approached, not only could there be obtained terms from the besiegers of Khartoum, which should include General Gordon's safe return from Khartoum, with such of his companions as might choose to accompany him, but that a general pacification of the Upper Nile might, at the same time, and by the same means, be effected;"

whether, this letter having been submitted to the Cabinet, an answer was returned to Mr. Blunt on the 30th of April, in the following terms:—

> "Mr. Gladstone desires me to thank you for your offer to act as mediator in the Soudan, of which, however, Her Majesty's Government are not able to make use, inasmuch as it must already be known throughout that region that they, in common with the Government of Egypt, have no other desire than to promote the evacuation of the country, and the restoration of its liberties;"

whether, on Christmas Eve 1884, Mr. Blunt, together with the President of the International Peace and Arbitration Association, and an Egyptian gentleman in full possession of the Mahdi's views, called on him, but were refused admittance; and, further, if he can state the reasons for which Her Majesty's Government, knowing Mr. Blunt's intimate experience of the Arab tribes, peremptorily dismissed his proposals, without first examining the proofs and details of the allegations he had made that it was possible, by peaceable means, to deliver General Gordon and his companions from the hands of the Mahdi and his adherents?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will answer this Question as well as I can, in view of the shortness of Notice that has been given by the hon. Gentleman. I have no doubt that the citations contained in it are correct. As far as I am able to recollect the circumstances of Mr. Blunt's proposed visit on Christmas Eve, a rather unusual method of proceeding was adopted. Instead of conforming to the conditions on which alone Public Business can be carried on by a man in my Office, and writing to make arrangements for an interview, Mr. Blunt telegraphed to me from Chester that he and others were coming to see me upon a subject involving grave difficulty. I thought it was my duty, whatever regret I might feel at the inconvenience those gentlemen had suffered in coming to Chester, to decline to receive this body of gentlemen in my private home, where I would, in a sense, be completely at their mercy with regard to an interview so irregularly arranged. I cannot undertake to state all the reasons which led me to decline the interview. The request, the House will observe, turns upon the citation from the letter of Mr. Blunt. Mr. Blunt, in his letter, said he had received information which led him to feel certain that, if properly approached, certain terms could be obtained from the besiegers of Khartoum. Well, Sir, I consider that the evident meaning of that letter was that the British Government were to go, cap in hand, to the besiegers of Khartoum, with the object of obtaining certain terms from them if they could. I do not think that that would have been a proper attitude for us to adopt. In my letter in answer to Mr. Blunt I stated that it was well known to the tribes that General Gordon had gone to the Soudan with a pacific object, and that those who spoke of the Mahdi's pacific intentions ought obviously to be in a position to give something of a positive substantive character to that statement, and that it was idle to ask the Government to go beyond General Gordon's declarations and assume an attitude of something like supplication. I have not the smallest doubt that Mr. Blunt is a man of most perfect honour, and would not wilfully commit an inaccuracy; but I must remind the House that last year an hour was spent in discussing a disputed account of an interview between Mr. Blunt and my Private Secretary, Mr. Hamilton. I think that, in such circumstances, persons should be very careful as to the certainty of the ground on which they stand; and that if the Government does enter into communication with anyone at all they should do so with very great care. That is all I have to say upon the subject.

GENERAL GORDON'S CYPHER.

Mr. FINCH-HATTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that the cypher agreed upon between General Lord Wolseley and General Gordon was that despatches from Khartoum should be read as indicative of the reverse of their apparent meaning—e.g. that "Khartoum all right, can hold out for years," should mean "Khartoum in danger, can hold out only a very short while;" and, if so, when information to that effect first reached Her Majesty's Government?

Mr. GLADSTONE: There is no foundation whatever for the statement.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—KASSALA.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the perilous position of the great town of Kassala, which contains 20,000 inhabitants; and, whether Her Majesty's Government are taking steps to prevent the brave defenders of Kassala from sharing the fate of those of Sinkat, Berber, and Khartoum?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE (who replied) said: Yes, Sir; if the hon. Member will refer to the Papers before the House he will see that Kassala is specifically mentioned in Lord Wolseley's instructions. Colonel Chermside is authorized to make, so far as the means at his disposal allow, arrangements with the local tribes to endeavour to send aid in money and provisions to Kassala; but that town is outside the range of the present projected British military operations. The reported victory over the rebels near Kassala was confirmed by Her Majesty's Consul at Suakin on the 25th. The enemy's loss was estimated at 3,600.

AFRICA (THE RED SEA COAST)—MASSOWAH.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, before the despatch of the Italian Expedition to Massowah, any communication on the subject was made to Her Majesty's Government by the Government of Italy; if so, whether any and what reply was made by Her Majesty's Government to the Italian Government; and, whether any communication or Correspondence has taken place on the subject between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of any other European Power or Powers?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I do not think there is much to add to what has been already stated on this subject. It was announced last night in this House, and by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs "elsewhere," that communications had taken place between the Italian Government and Her Majesty's Government on the subject to which the noble Lord refers. That is quite understood, and I made an answer to the same effect myself. There have also been communications from the Porte and other Powers to Her Majesty's Government on the same subject. The substance of these communications has been given; but a further statement will be made this evening more conveniently than I can make it now, by my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The Papers will also be presented to Parliament.

EGYPT (AFFAIRS OF THE SOUDAN)—GOVERNORSHIP—PRINCE HASSAN.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether any hopes have been held out by Her Majesty's Government to Prince Hassan of obtaining the Office of Governor General of Khartoum?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that he thought it had been clearly understood—and there was no doubt Prince Hassan understood—that Her Majesty's Government were not in any way committed to any course beyond what was known.

ARMY—ROYAL ARTILLERY AND ENGINEER OFFICERS—THE NEW HALF-PAY RULE.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Secretary of State for War, If, during the present emergency, he would suspend the new rule which places on half pay Majors of the Royal Artillery and Engineers after seven years' service in that rank; and, if such a suspension of this rule would not save the Exchequer an appreciable sum of money?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There is provision in the Royal Warrant for the temporary retention of officers under special circumstances, if their services are required; and, moreover, retired officers are available for employment up to specified ages in case of emergency. Under these circumstances, I do not see any necessity for suspending Rules which have been made in the interests of promotion of junior officers. I may add that no major of Royal Artillery now commanding a battery on active service is likely to be affected by the seven years' Rule; and that this Rule cannot apply at all in the Royal Engineers for nearly two years.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEERS AND GARRISON DUTY.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a return of the various Volunteer Corps who have offered their services for garrison and other duties in the present emergency?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: We highly appreciate the spirit of patriotism which has prompted many corps to offer their services for garrison and other duties; but to publish such a Return as is called for by the hon. Member would establish an inconvenient precedent, and would be somewhat unfair upon other corps which have not thought it to be their duty to make such offers, but which are, I am confident no less willing to respond to any call upon them.

ARMY (THE EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN)—PROMOTION OF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Secretary of State for War, How many Non-Commissioned Officers and Soldiers who were engaged in the Tel-el-Kebir Campaign have received Commissions, other than those of Quartermaster or Riding Master; and, if, in the case of the vacant Commissions created by the deaths of Officers in action during the present Campaign, he will award a large proportion of these to the Non-Commissioned Officers engaged?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Of the Non-Commissioned Officers who served in the Egyptian Campaign of 1882, three have been promoted to lieutenancies, and two were offered the same promotion, but declined it. The utmost possible consideration will be given to the cases of any Non-Commissioned Officers who, during the present Campaign, may be brought to notice by their Commanding Officers.

EGYPT (THE NILE EXPEDITION)—DAMAGE OF WAR STORES.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the following extract from a letter of the special correspondent of *The Morning Post*, dated Gakdul, January 13th:—

> "The groceries for this force have been taken entirely from the Nile boat stores, that is to say, from the whalers, and it has been discovered, with dismay, on opening these stores here, that from one-half to two-thirds of the tea and a large proportion of the rice and sugar have been hopelessly damaged by damp, and are unfit for use. These provisions were what is called 'trade packed,' that is, packed by the different firms who supplied them, and there should be no difficulty in discovering with whom the blame for this severe loss lies, and the sufferers may justly hope in exacting retribution. There is reason to fear that not the best exertions of the Commissariat Department, which has worked so well and succeeded so completely, will avail to avert from the hard worked force on the line between Korti and Metammeh a want of tea and other groceries, which in such a climate must be a severe suffering. The cause of the damage to the stores lies evidently in a neglect to solder the cases in which the stores were packed;"

whether any information has been received as to the stores in question; if so, what was the amount of groceries received at Gakdul from the whalers, and how much of them were damaged; and, what official bought the stores in question; through whom were they bought; was any inspection made to see that they were properly packed; and, if so, who inspected and passed them?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Information up to the end of January has been received about the whaler supplies generally; but there is no precise information as to the quantities of groceries sent to Gakdul. The whole of the whaler groceries were packed in the Government establishments, none being in trade cases. The whaler supplies were originally intended for consumption in the boats after leaving Wady Halfa. The packages were made somewhat lighter than the ordinary field cases, in order to economize the carrying power of the boats; and two articles out of the five composing grocery rations—namely, salt and sugar—were for the same reason packed in bags instead of cases. The packages were settled by a Special Committee on Nile Boat Service. These supplies were, by local order, not consumed between Wady Halfa and Korti; but were kept in reserve for subsequent Nile or Desert routes. Bulk was broken 27 times between Alexandria and Korti, besides special portages, and the packages were thus exposed to extraordinarily severe usage beyond what was contemplated as incidental to their original purpose. The loss, on examination at Korti, is estimated at about 25 per cent on this particular portion of the supplies. The loss of sugar and salt was due to the submersion of bags in water, and to theft by Native boatmen and camel drivers. The loss on tea and pepper is supposed to have been due to the tops of the tins being secured by shellac instead of solder. Shellac has been used with perfect success in all climates since 1878, and the immediate causes of its failure on this Expedition are not yet ascertained. All tins are now soldered. The supplies were purchased by the Army and Navy Directors of Contracts, through brokers or contractors, and inspected at the Government establishments, a medical officer of special experience having been attached to Woolwich to assist in this duty. In the Report of the senior Commissariat officer, forwarded by the Chief of the Staff, it is stated that—

> "There is no doubt that in the important respects of strength, size, and weight the packages sent out on this occasion are an immense advance in the direction of improvement on anything that has fallen to the lot of previous Campaigns."

As regards quality, the Report adds that while it is too soon to speak about the whaler rations, which were only beginning to be consumed, all were agreed that the quality of every article, without exception, was excellent, and better than had ever been supplied before. Considerable losses were inevitable in such a Campaign; and, in spite of those reported in a portion of the supplies, great credit seems due to the officers and others at the Government establishments at Woolwich and Deptford, who carried out this service under extraordinary pressure.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will place in the Library of the House of Commons, so as to be open to the inspection of Members, the surveys and sections on which the calculations as to the cost of the Railway from Suakin to Berber, and the period within which it is to be completed, have been founded?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Suakin-Berber route has never been surveyed for the purposes of railway construction, and no estimate can be framed beyond the cost per mile of the permanent way, material, and plant. No definite date for the completion of the railway to Berber has yet been arrived at. It will depend on military contingencies, which cannot be foreseen.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: How long will it take to survey the line?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The line cannot be surveyed as long as the enemy is in possession of it.

INDIA—THE MEETING BETWEEN THE VICEROY AND THE AMEER OF AFGHANISTAN.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Prime Minister, Whether there was any truth in the report that the Ameer of Afghanistan was to meet the Viceroy of India; and, if so, whether the right hon. Gentleman would not, under present circumstances, impress on the Viceroy the necessity of holding the meeting as soon as possible?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he was not at present in full possession of particulars; but there was no doubt that an interview had been arranged between the Viceroy of India and the Ameer of Afghanistan, and that the interview would take place at an early date. If the hon. Gentleman would give Notice of another Question upon the subject, he would be able to give further particulars.

ARMY — ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT — EXPLOSION AT SHOEBURYNESS.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether he could give the House any further information as to the nature and cause of the terrible accident at Shoeburyness yesterday afternoon?

MR. BRAND: It is impossible for me to express adequately in words the sorrow which I feel, and the sorrow which must be universally felt, on account of the loss of valuable lives by the terrible catastrophe which occurred yesterday at Shoeburyness. Departmental experiments were being made by Colonel Lyon with the delay-action percussion fuses. At about 3.30 P.M. they were fixing a fuse in a 6-inch breech-loading live shell, when it exploded, the result being that several of those around were killed or wounded. Colonel Fox-Strangways has since died; Colonel Lyon, Superintendent, Royal Laboratory, has also succumbed; Captain Gould-Adams is also dead; Major Bally, R.A., Instructor in Gunnery, is severely wounded; Sergeant-Major Daykin has since died; Gunner Allen was killed; Gunners Underwood, Webb, and M'Annalla were severely wounded. Mr. Lowe, assistant manager of the Royal Laboratories, and also an *employé* (Mr. Rance), were wounded. The catastrophe is being inquired into by a Court at Shoeburyness, and a Report will be submitted as soon as it has been received. Since I have been in the House a note has been put into my hands, to the effect that the wounded officers and men are doing well.

COLONEL NOLAN asked, whether the families of the officers and men killed yesterday at Shoeburyness would be treated in the same manner as if these officers and men had been killed in action?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The families of the warrant officers and men would be treated in the same way as if the men had been killed in action The families of officers killed in the execution of their duty otherwise than in action receive the intermediate scale of pension as laid down in the Royal Warrant.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—SIR REDVERS BULLER'S FORCE.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he had received information from Lord Wolseley that Sir Redvers Buller's Force had arrived in safety at Gakdul?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Lord Wolseley telegraphs that the following message was received last night from General Wood:—

"Gakdul, Feb. 25.

"Buller has sent in Khasm El Mûs, and will be here to-morrow with his whole force. He has three wounded officers and 16 other ranks. and 15 sick; 34 invalids in all. Wounded, including Captain Walsh, doing as well as possible.

"Major Poë, Lieutenant Crutchley, and all wounded here are also doing well."

PARLIAMENT—ORDER OF BUSINESS—THE AMENDMENTS ON THE VOTE OF CENSURE.

MR. BRYCE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask you whether, in the event of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) being put and rejected, it would be open to myself and to my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) to move the Amendments which now stand upon the Paper in our names?

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the hon. Gentleman I have to say that if the result of the Vote to-night—which is "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question"—be in the negative, then the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) would become the substantive Question. In the event of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member being rejected there would still remain the word "That," to which, in accordance with the practice, it would, of course, be competent to move that any addition should be made. If the hon. Gentleman wishes to move that any addition should be made he can take that course.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: May I inquire what course the Prime Minister proposes to take with respect to the various Amendments?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I presume that the Amendments will be moved in the order in which they stand upon the Paper; and it is my intention to vote in the negative in each instance upon the various Amendments as they are put in succession. The first division, as I understand, will be upon the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote), then upon the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and in succession upon the other proposals.

MOTION.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY—BUSINESS FOR MONDAY.—RESOLUTION.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: May I ask what will be the Business on Monday?

Mr. GLADSTONE: We shall, of course, have to put that down to-night. We shall put down first the Queen's Message, and also a communication with respect to the Indian troops, and after that the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. I have now to move—

> "That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan have precedence of other Orders of the Day."

Mr. DEASY said, that he wished to protest against the course which had been adopted by the Prime Minister in bringing the Motion for a second time before the House. He (Mr. Deasy) had, owing to his having been successful in the ballot, a question of the greatest importance down upon the Notice Paper for the evening. It was—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the administration of the Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act."

He and the other Irish Members of Parliament felt very strongly upon this matter that they had been unjustly treated. He had gained first place in the ballot, and was, therefore, entitled to bring forward the Motion which stood in his name; and, therefore, seeing that all the laws of the House were upon his side and that of the other Irish Members, he felt that they had abundant reason to complain of the manner in which they had been treated by the Government. By the Standing Orders Supply was directed to be put down as the first Order of the Day on Fridays; and he was the more anxious to bring forward his Motion, because as yet he had been unable to learn whether the Government intended to renew the Prevention of Crime Act or not. It was the gravity of the case which had induced him to put the Motion down for the first available evening, and his object was to obtain, if possible, from the Government an explanation of their intentions in regard to the renewal of the Act. He need scarcely say that had the Government given them the slightest intimation upon that day week of their intention to bring forward this Resolution, they would have chosen another day for the discussion of his most important Resolution. He did not intend at all to discuss the question of the administration of the Prevention of Crime Act in Ireland; for he was aware that such a course would be a breach of the Rules of the House. He would, however, ask the Prime Minister to afford them some facilities for the discussion of the subject. It seemed to him, however, that the Government did not wish any Irish question to be discussed in the House during the present Parliament; for if the Prime Minister would only carry a little further the course which he had adopted that week, it would be absolutely impossible for them to get any Irish question adequately considered before 12 o'clock, except upon the Estimates. It would be impossible, even after 12 o'clock, to bring these questions forward if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General would pursue the course which he had adopted on the last day. Now, he would ask the Prime Minister whether it was his intention to give any opportunity for free debate to Irish questions? If it was the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to disfranchise Ireland altogether, it would be as well for the Irish Members to remain at home, and not put themselves to the trouble and inconvenience of coming over to England at all. He did not propose to occupy the attention of the House any longer; he only intended, as had his hon. Friend, to make a strong protest against the Notice of Motion given by the right hon. Gentleman, because the Irish Members were aware that no prolonged discussion on their part upon this occasion would bring them anything nearer the discussion of the subject which they desired to bring before the House upon the administration of the Prevention of Crime Act in Ireland. He would, therefore, content himself with protesting against the Motion, and appealing to the Prime Minister to give them some assurance that he intended to give the Irish Members some fair play.

MR. PARNELL: I think that the request my hon. Friend (Mr. Deasy) has made is a very reasonable one, and should not be overlooked by the Government. I am sure that the Irish Members should not be denied by the present Government the opportunity, which they ask, of discussing the doings of the Irish Executive during the Recess in administering the very exceptional system of law which now prevails in Ireland. The question which I will put to the House and the Prime Minister is, whether private Members—and especially Irish Members—are to be deprived of the ordinary facilities which the Rules of the House give them for the purpose of discussing the grievances of their country as has been done to-night? If the matter is dealt with in this manner, this cause of disagreement will crop up in some irregular way; and the result will be that, instead of time being saved, it will be wasted. I should prefer to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman and to the House from another point of view. This is not the first time this Session that the Government have taken away the time which ought to be at the disposal of private Members; and it is feared that the Irish Members may have to face this Session with a probability of being completely shut out from all opportunity of discussing the acts of the Executive in Ireland. I would ask, is it fair to ask us to consent to that? It appears to me that it would come to that in the end, if we are to be deprived, by such a Motion as that now proposed, from the advantage which the chances of the ballot may have given us; and it would necessarily follow that Irish questions will be raised, either upon Motions for Adjournment, or on the consideration of the various items in the Estimates; so that, in addition to the doubtful position in which the House puts itself by refusing the immemorial privilege of discussing grievances on going into Supply, it will be found that no time has been gained in the long run. Taking it for granted that it is right to devote all the time at the disposal of the House, from day to day, to the prosecution of such Motions as that of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, and taking it also for granted that it is just the Government should have all the time at the disposal of the House after that Motion, for the prosecution of one of the stages of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman and the House that after the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill has passed through the Committee stage, in the necessary interval which must elapse before the Report stage, we might devote a night to such a discussion as that which the Irish Members desire to have—a discussion upon the acts of the Irish Executive. All legitimate objects for discussion are entitled to be brought before Parliament, and no more legitimate a one could be brought before it. You have an unprecedented system of law in Ireland at the present moment—a Coercion Act of the most extreme stringency—and it is most desirable that the House, for the sake of its reputation, should not lose its hold over the doings of the Irish Executive. On every ground, therefore, I submit that we are entitled to receive some of the Government time at the conclusion of the present pressure of Business, for the purpose of putting our views before the House.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not in a condition, at the present moment, to make any concession to the hon. Member (Mr. Deasy). I must, however, admit that the hon. Member has stated his case with moderation, and I think he is justified in taking up the position which he has taken up this evening, and in saying that he and his Friends should not be compelled to pass the Session over without being able to discuss the conduct of the Irish Executive in the administration of the Prevention of Crime Act. In making that admission, I cannot now go further in carrying out what would be desirable in the matter; but I have no doubt that he and his hon. Friends will exert themselves as regards the chances which they may have when we reach a certain stage of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. Undoubtedly, I shall not forget the position in which they have been placed; but it is now out of my power to give them the facility which they seek. Should it ultimately become so, however, I shall be glad to do so.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan have precedence of other Orders of the Day.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

——o——

EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF CENSURE.—RESOLUTION.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [23rd February],

> "That an humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them to assure a good and stable Government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security."—(*Sir Stafford Northcote.*)

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out from the first word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi,"—(*Mr. John Morley,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, with the exception of a few halting, and somewhat unworthy, arguments from the Treasury Bench, there has been, so far as I know, in the whole course of this debate, no real attempt on the part of any one speaker to controvert the charge which has been made against the Government with respect to the capture of Khartoum and the loss of General Gordon. I take that charge to be this—that by declining to utilize the victories of General Graham for the relief of General Gordon the Government rendered necessary both the Expedition of Lord Wolseley and all that it may yet involve, and that General Gordon has perished and Khartoum been lost simply because the Government would not make up their minds to act in time. A more solemn pledge was never made by any Minister to any Parliament or country than the pledge given by the right hon. Gentleman opposite to this House in May last. He told us then that Parliament and the nation had covenanted to do all that might be necessary to rescue General Gordon. Sir, that covenant has not been kept. The responsibility for not keeping it must rest on the Government; and I think that the nation, while recognizing with admiration the great qualities of their hero, and mourning for his loss, will visit the conduct of the Government in this matter with that indelible disgrace, which the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War told this House in May would rest on the Government if they should neglect any means at the disposal of this country for the rescue of General Gordon. Can it be contended that there has been no such neglect? Why, what happened during those three months which passed between the debate in May and the date when the preparations for Lord Wolseley's Expedition were commenced? The Government knew that General Gordon was cut off from communication with the outer world; they did not know his actual position; and yet they spent more than three months, according to the statement of the Prime Minister, in examining the routes by which aid might be sent to him, and this statement is made although the right hon. Gentleman has told us that in August military operations had not been decided upon as necessary. How can this be reconciled with the words of the President of the Local Government Board, who said last night that by the 15th of July orders had been given to despatch certain steamers up the Cataracts of the Nile, in readiness for the relief of General Gordon. The fact is, that the Government deliberately chose to run the chance of his being able to maintain himself for an indefinite time at Khartoum, or to escape without any assistance from them. They delayed the commencement of their Expedition until a date when it was absolutely certain that the state of the Nile towards the end of the year must inevitably delay the accomplishment of its object. And the result has been that they have been again too late. The only serious argument which has been brought forward by the Government in defence of their conduct in this matter is that it is probable that the fate of General Gordon was due to treachery, and that treachery would in any case have occurred on the near approach of British Forces. If that argument were carried out logically, it might be maintained that no British Force ought to have been sent at all. But is it not manifest that time was of the essence of the question? Can it be seriously argued that the risk from treachery would not increase with the length of a protracted and dangerous siege, marked by a growing scarcity of provisions, and by almost daily losses in engagements with the enemy? Would not also the risk increase in consequence of the repeated declarations of the Government that the country would be evacuated as soon as Gordon should have been rescued? I cannot conceive a state of affairs more calculated to encourage the inhabitants of Khartoum to commit those acts of treachery which Gordon himself anticipated, and against which we warned the Government. I do not think that anyone can believe that the death of Gordon was due to inevitable calamity, or to an unexpected visitation of Providence. I think it is clearly due to the apathy and procrastination of the Government, from whom a heavy penalty will be exacted by the country before long. What are you now going to do? To overthrow the Mahdi at Khartoum, and to make a permanent railway from Suakin to Berber. Let me say a few words on the proposal to overthrow the Mahdi at Khartoum. Gordon told the Government, at a very early period of his mission, that it was essential that they should smash the Mahdi, and he added words which now seem prophetic—"Remember that when Khartoum once belongs to the Mahdi, the task will be far more difficult, yet you will, for the safety of Egypt, execute it." necessary to hold it. What was their reply? They rebuked him, saying that military operations against the Mahdi were beyond the scope of his commission, and at variance with the pacific policy which was the purpose of his mission to the Soudan; and yet the Prime Minister comes down to this House and says that the policy of the Government has undergone no change. It has undergone a very serious change. I do not say that the change is not warranted by the change of circumstances; but I want to know what they intend that this Expedition shall do? The question has been asked over and over again, and the Government have failed to answer it—I believe for the simple reason that they do not know themselves what the Expedition is to do; they cannot make up their minds as to their future policy in the Soudan. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary told us last night that it was unreasonable and improper to ask questions of this kind, and the President of the Local Government Board told us that they were speculative questions, and that the Government ought not to be asked to pledge themselves to details. But no one asked them to do that. What the House is entitled to have an answer to is this—when they have overthrown the Mahdi, what are the principles which are to govern their policy in the Soudan? Speaking early after the catastrophe at Khartoum, the hon. Member for Bath (Sir Arthur Hayter) expressed the opinion that this Expedition was sent out to rescue or to avenge General Gordon. But the Home Secretary has utterly repudiated any idea of vengeance, and very properly. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the Government had no intention of occupying or annexing any portion of the Soudan for Egypt, or for England, and that the Expedition was sent solely for the purpose of evacuation. Why is it necessary for this purpose? The right hon. Gentleman says because it is the only means by which the evacuation of the Soudan can be accomplished consistently with the safety of Egypt. The Prime Minister, in addressing the House upon this subject, also stated his view of the intimate connection between this matter and the safety of Egypt when he said—

> "Our concern in the Soudan is dependent upon our concern and obligations for the safety and defence of Egypt."

But at the very same time that the Home Secretary was defending this Expedition as necessary for the safety of Egypt, he took the opportunity of again proclaiming that over-mastering desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to get out of Egypt as soon as possible with little regard to the future which has characterized their Egyptian policy from the very commencement, and which, I will venture to say, has been at the root of half our difficulties in Egypt. It is this which has made the best Decrees of the Khedive absolutely valueless, because no one could be certain that there would be any continued policy in their execution, and has compelled the Prime Minister himself, when he was attempting to inform the House the other day of what he was pleased to call the beneficial results of our occupation of Egypt, to give such a pitiful catalogue as he then presented to us. I should like to ask the attention of the House to this matter for a few minutes, because it seems to me to be an essential part of the Egyptian policy of Her Majesty's Government, and one with which the country ought to be acquainted. I should like to ask whether there really have been any beneficial results from the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt; and whether any of the abuses which exist in that country have been remedied? We were told by the Prime Minister that Her Majesty's Government had introduced representative government in Egypt. When that statement was made, it was received with the ridicule it deserved, for everybody knows that all the representative government that exists in Egypt is practically no more than a paper Constitution. I remember that last year a great deal was made by Her Majesty's Government of that important reform which had been effected in Egypt for the benefit of the Native population by making foreign residents liable to the house tax. If hon. Members have looked at the Papers recently presented, they will see that the execution of that Decree of the Khedive has been, I believe, indefinitely postponed. Then the Prime Minister brought forward the suppression of the kourbash. No doubt the use of the kourbash has been materially diminished; but it still exists to some extent in Egypt, as the Report of Sir Evelyn Baring shows. What, however, has been the result of its diminution? Sir Evelyn Baring says—

> "The change has greatly enhanced the difficulty of governing Egypt, the prisons being so comfortable as compared with the homes of the prisoners that imprisonment is little feared, and no other punishment having been substituted."

Lord Northbrook says—

> "These changes have weakened the power of the local officers, and have thus contributed to the increase of crime."

Then we heard a great deal last year of the New Code of Criminal Procedure, and of the wonderful effects it was to bring about. But what does Sir Evelyn Baring say with regard to it? He says that it is not well adapted to the circumstances of the country, or to the customs and manners of the people, and that some important modifications will have to be made in it. I really think that if hon. Members opposite would read that important despatch from Lord Northbrook which appears in the Papers from which I am quoting, they would see how shadowy and flimsy are the claims of Her Majesty's Government to have brought about any beneficial results by their occupation of Egypt. According to Lord Northbrook, the indebtedness of the cultivators of the land still largely prevails in Lower Egypt, while land in Upper Egypt is still over-assessed to taxation. He admits that the system of the *corvée*, sometimes enforced by the kourbash, still continues. There is a general impression that the official classes are still corrupt. Prisoners are still kept in confinement for a length of time without being brought to trial, and no great confidence is placed by most of the best authorities in the fighting qualities of the Egyptian Army. There is a very important sentence in Lord Northbrook's despatch upon this question of the Army. He says that it is his decided opinion that it would be neither safe nor wise to fix any definite time for the entire withdrawal of the British troops from Egypt. What a contrast is that to the light-hearted proposal for the evacuation of Egypt made by the Home Secretary last night, and to the extraordinary clause contained in the Anglo-French Agreement entered into last year, by which Her Majesty's

Government fixed a definite time for the withdrawal of our troops. I would like also to know how the policy announced by the Home Secretary last night is consistent with another opinion expressed by Lord Northbrook in the despatch from which I have already quoted? Lord Northbrook looks for a prompt settlement of the finances of Egypt through the instrumentality of England, so that the difficulties in which the former country is now placed may cease, and the salutary influence of the English Government may be sustained. We do not know what were Lord Northbrook's recommendations in reference to that financial settlement, because his Report has never yet been presented to Parliament, and I dare say it never will be presented; but I should like to know how far they tally with that Financial Agreement which we understand is now on the point of being made by Her Majesty's Government with the other European Powers. I should like to know whether that Agreement contains any security for maintaining that salutary influence of England in Egypt to which Lord Northbrook attaches such immense importance? Or is that Agreement even worse than that uncertainty for the future which has paralyzed the action in Egypt of the friends of reform, while it has encouraged the efforts of its enemies? Is it true that that Agreement contains the idea of a Multiple Control, which is calculated absolutely to neutralize English influence in Egypt, and to work untold mischief in the country? The President of the Local Government Board last night made a very suspicious reference to that. He said that he hoped the control of Egypt over its own government would not be lessened by any steps which we were taking in this matter at the present time. But the Egyptian Government rests, as everybody knows, upon English influence. I suppose that nobody who has devoted a minute's thought to this question would consider that it is possible for this country to take any action in Egypt without having due regard to the rights and interests in that country of all the other European Powers and to the obligations of Treaties. But the Government certainly cannot deny that we have special interests in Egypt, and that we have made sacrifices to maintain those interests, and that by those sacrifices, and by our duty in the matter both to ourselves and to Egypt, we are bound to maintain a special influence in the future in the government of Egypt. What I fear is that in the Financial Agreement which I understand Her Majesty's Government have made there will be in place of that special influence of England an admission and perpetuation of that system of international interference in Egyptian affairs which has already been for so many years past such a curse to that unfortunate country, and which is absolutely incompatible with the influence which England does at this moment exercise over the government of Egypt. Let it not be said that an International Guarantee of an Egyptian loan does not mean international interference with the government of that country. Even the Turkish Government read us a lesson, in replying to the invitation to the late Conference in London, on the indissoluble connection between finance and administration; and it is perfectly obvious, both from what has passed on the subject and from what has been said with regard to it, that this is its intention and object. Such a Guarantee certainly forms a real liability to the Guarantors, because, by your own contention at the Conference of London, the Egyptian Revenues cannot bear the burden which will be imposed upon them, and the first Guarantor which has to meet its Guarantee will not only have the right, but will be forced, for the sake of its own subjects, to inquire into the administration of Egypt. That will mean a system of international supervision, which will certainly not sustain the influence of England, and may even end in a European war. I am quite aware that some hon. Members in this House do not think it necessary to interfere in Egypt for the sake of British interests; but I think I might appeal even to them as to whether we do not owe a duty to the people of that unfortunate country? We have suppressed the independence of their Government; we have, through what occurred at Alexandria, imposed upon them a vast liability; we have deserted—or allowed to perish, at any rate—their Armies and their garrisons. Now, can we in honour leave this country, after all that has passed, to be a field for the conflict of opposing nationalities, whose mandates, I suppose, whether we approved of them or not, whether they were or were not oppressive to the people of Egypt, would have to be practically executed by British soldiers? Sir, that appears to me to be a position in which this country ought not to be placed; and I cannot understand how it can be consistent with the immense liabilities which Her Majesty's Government are now about to undertake in the Soudan. Is it possible that Her Majesty's Government are going to incur all this vast expenditure of blood and treasure, and then to evacuate the Soudan, for no other purpose than to maintain the safety of a country whose interests they are doing their best to ruin by depriving themselves of all real power to protect them? I do not see how anyone can suppose that it is possible for Egypt to run alone. I wish I could think that it was possible, for our real interest in Egypt is that it should be inhabited by a peaceful, friendly, and, as far as possible, self-governing people. I do not think that this country would desire to burden itself with the government, or even the protection, of Egypt unless such a step were absolutely necessary. The question is, Is it absolutely necessary? And that is a question which Her Majesty's Government decline to face, and which I do not think Members below the Gangway have really considered. If Her Majesty's Government really suppose that the action they have undertaken in the Soudan can be followed by the evacuation suggested by the Home Secretary, it appears to me as complete an illusion as that which the Prime Minister entertained last year regarding the intentions of the Mahdi. I do not think it is possible for Her Majesty's Government to adopt a policy of massacre and retire with safety to the interests of this country or Egypt. I am quite aware that this Expedition must be sent; but the people of this country will not support the policy of the Government if there is an intention that all which may be won by the bravery of our soldiers, and by the money of our taxpayers, shall be thrown away by the timidity and vacillation of the Government. I do not see how Her Majesty's Government can carry out in practice the policy of evacuating the Soudan. The Home Secretary seemed to think that after the Mahdi was overthrown it would be possible to set up the local Chiefs in the various towns and villages as independent Governments. That was not the view of the President of the Local Government Board, who suggests that the difficulty is susceptible of an easier solution. He would protect a few of our more important friends, like the Mudir of Dongola, by taking them to Upper Egypt; but if Her Majesty's Government adopt that policy they will have to carry them a great deal further than Upper Egypt. Such suggestions are like that made by the Prime Minister with regard to the Chiefs in Bechuanaland, when he proposed that the Chiefs should be located elsewhere, and the people left to their persecutors. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster appeared to have some idea that it would be possible to utilize the Mahdi by negotiations for the pacification of the Soudan. And yet he does not, like the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), consider the Mahdi a highly respectable Mahommedan gentleman, who might attend a Soudanese banquet given by the National Liberal Club, and expound the indestructible principles of the Liberal Party to the great satisfaction of his audience. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster knows that the Mahdi is a fanatical Leader, who has proclaimed his intention to conquer Egypt, overthrow Turkey, and convert the world. How can he suppose that such a man would now be likely to accept the proposal to give up Khartoum and to retire to Kordofan, which was made to him by General Gordon at the outset of his mission, and which met with insulting rejection? But perhaps negotiation with the Mahdi is to take place after his overthrow. And does the Government really mean to repeat the experiment of the restoration of Cetewayo in Zululand? Do they think that a fanatical Prophet, who has been discredited by defeat, would have any authority over his followers? What is much more likely to happen after his overthrow is that he will retire where neither Her Majesty's Government, nor any other Government, would care to follow him. What happened in the case of Osman Digna? You defeated him, and when you retired he followed upon your footsteps. The idea of negotiation is based upon the idea of the Mahdi which was in the mind of the Prime Minister when he held him up to the House as the Chief of men fighting for their freedom. I think it will now be admitted that if we gave up the Soudan to the Mahdi, either anarchy or a slave trading despotism would be the future of the country; and I do not think the people of England will agree to that. With regard to the railway from Suakin to Berber, that work is to be of a permanent character. It may take a couple of years to make. The surveys have not yet been made, and it cannot be begun till Osman Digna's forces are disposed of. When once this railway is made it cannot be abandoned to be destroyed by the wild tribes, or used by their Rulers for the conveyance of slaves. It has been asked what is the policy embodied in my right hon. Friend's Motion? It is not possible for an Opposition, who are not in possession of all the facts of the case, to expound with perfect accuracy of detail any proposals they might have to make on such a matter as this; but I think what I have said will show the House what, in our opinion, are the essential elements of this question. You cannot, when you have marched through this country, and made this railway, abandon the tribes who have assisted you and the railway you have made, and retire into Egypt again. You must retain the control of the Nile Valley, as far south as Khartoum; and you must see that there is established at Khartoum a Government, subject to your influence, in close connection with the Government of Egypt, ruling with a due regard to the habits and customs of the people, promoting trade with the interior of Africa by the channel of the Nile, and using its power at the most vulnerable point for the extinction of the Slave Trade. That appears to me a policy which is at least definite, and if followed would not impose on this country any such terrible burden as appears to be supposed. The Home Secretary spoke of 30,000 troops being required to protect the railway——

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: He quoted the opinion of the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin).

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I thought that the right hon. Gentleman adopted it, and I cannot understand how a railway which is to be made under the protection of 6,000 or 7,000 men could require 30,000 to guard it when completed. The Prime Minister told us in more menacing language that the policy to which I have referred was in the teeth of common prudence, in the teeth of the forces of Nature, and that it would be like trying to chain the sands of the Desert when the tempest is howling over it. I do not think the country need be frightened by these terrible words. I remember when, last May, I said that it was necessary that the advance of the Mahdi should be stemmed, and that the longer the Government hesitated the more difficult would be the task, the Prime Minister told me that I was calling upon the Government to adopt schemes as wild, as impracticable, as ruinous in their consequences and unsound in their principle as any he had ever known propounded. My proposal, said the right hon. Gentleman, meant "the reconquest of the Soudan," and a "war of conquest against a people rightly struggling to be free," which he was determined not to undertake. Yet, in spite of that language, the Prime Minister has undertaken it; and so I feel sure that the policy which has been suggested from this side of the House with reference to the future of the Soudan will be undertaken by a Government of this country, though it may not be the Government of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not believe that England will allow her lives and her treasure to be spent for nothing. Every fresh expenditure of this kind, such as the Government have now made up their minds to incur, ought to be, and must be, a fresh nail in the coffin of that wretched system of dual government in Egypt which deceives nobody but Her Majesty's Ministers, and the only use of which has been to thwart necessary reforms and impose unnecessary burdens upon an impoverished people. Well, then, Sir, I must say that I think the time has come when this country is bound to recognize that Egypt cannot stand alone. If we were to go out of Egypt to-morrow, as hon. Members below the Gangway desire, some other Power would take our place. They know that very well, and, knowing that, they propose such a Resolution as has been submitted to this House by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). While we are in Egypt we are bound to do our duty to the people; and we cannot do our duty to the people without admitting and fulfilling those responsibilities which, though Her Majesty's Government will never remember it, are inseparable from the possession of power. I do not know whether I shall be charged by hon. Members opposite with propounding a policy which may lead to war; but I think they have seen in the past that what leads to war is vacillation, indecision, and procrastination, such as have characterized the policy of Her Majesty's Government. I do not know whether I shall be told that I am anxious to extend the responsibilities of this country. No, Sir; those responsibilities exist already. They certainly will be extended if they are not fulfilled. I do not think that I or my right hon. Friend shall be charged with desiring by this Motion merely to embarrass Her Majesty's Government. In the present position of affairs both at home and abroad—a position recognized as being most grave even by the hon. Member for Newcastle—such a course would be unpatriotic and unworthy. This Motion has been proposed because we desire to impress upon the House and the country the policy which we believe is the only wise and safe policy to pursue, and because we are convinced, both by their conduct in the past, and by their reticence in the present, that it will not be carried out by a Government whose only idea seems to be to reconcile differences of opinion between the fragments of their own Party. Sir, we are conscious of the responsibilities that attach to the action which we have taken. No one need be anxious, no one need desire, I am sure, to undertake the government of this country with such a heritage as will be left by the right hon. Gentleman; but, Sir, if we are required to do it, we shall to the utmost of our power endeavour to fulfil the undertaking.

Mr. COURTNEY said, that in the few remarks with which he should venture to trouble the House he proposed, as far as possible, to confine himself to the practical question what should be done now, and to examine the decision which Her Majesty's Government had taken under circumstances which afforded the country ground for a new departure. He would, therefore, refrain from following the right hon. Baronet in an examination of the interesting question how far Egypt could be internationalized, or how far its autonomy could be established. The question they had really to consider had reference to the necessity of the Expedition, and of the policy which had been resolved upon by the Government. He would endeavour to show that there was no necessity for that policy being adopted; and he would adduce what were the necessary consequences of the Expedition if the fatal first step was taken. His right hon. Friend at the head of the Government had observed that in what had hitherto happened there had been no choice at any moment as to what should be done; and Lord Derby used almost the same language, subject, however, to this considerable admission—that apparently, in his Lordship's opinion, the first step of all was not necessary. The Secretary of State for the Colonies was now disposed to think that our first intervention in Egypt was a mistake. But, whatever our opinion might be as to the past, we were now at a point where a new issue was presented to us, and where a new departure might be taken. He challenged the necessity of the policy which was about to be adopted, and which was said to depend on the circumstances immediately presented to us. What was this policy which he questioned? It was the policy of overthrowing the Mahdi at Khartoum. The first authority to whom we should refer, if we wished to inquire into the necessity of that resolution, would surely be Lord Wolseley himself. Had his authority been adduced to show that it was necessary? Did Lord Wolseley support Her Majesty's Government in declaring that that must be an inevitable consequence of the fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon? To everybody who had heard the speeches of the Prime Minister and the President of the Local Government Board, it must be evident that Lord Wolseley insisted upon no such decision, and that he asked the Government to decide the political issue, declaring that he himself was willing to adopt the consequences which would be involved in whatever decision the Government might arrive at. Lord Wolseley was as ready to retire as to advance, and he represented the one course to be as easy as the other. There was, in fact, no military necessity requiring the decision which had been arrived at by Her Majesty's Government. They were entitled to ask—"How can we connect this decision to overthrow the Mahdi at Khartoum with the consequences which were going to flow after it?" If this decision were adopted, what did it entail? What was the further policy of Her Majesty's Government, for they must have some further policy? Here we had a most remarkable variety of declarations on the part of the Government. His right hon. Friend had said that the policy of the Government now was what it always had been—namely, the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt and its restoration to freedom; but afterwards he had said that he did not mention evacuation by England in that declaration; and the Home Secretary said last night that nothing could induce him to take any step which would lead to the annexation of any part of the Soudan, either by Egypt or by England. In the Home Secretary's opinion, the complete retirement of the English power and influence from the Soudan was to be the complement to the determination to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. We had, indeed, a different speech afterwards from the President of the Local Government Board, who appeared to have addressed himself to one section of the House, while the Home Secretary addressed himself to another. There had been a still more remarkable declaration made "elsewhere." The First Lord of the Admiralty, in a very able and elaborate speech, said that certain persons who had supported us—for example, the Mudir of Dongola—might be utilized hereafter at Khartoum—that was to say, that a person who was an Egyptian Turk, a representative of Egyptian influence, who was at present our ally, might remain in authority at Khartoum. How did that statement agree with the Home Secretary's speech last night? How did it agree with the statement of the Prime Minister? But, putting aside these questions, what did the First Lord of the Admiralty next say? The noble Lord, speaking of the action of the Government and its policy in respect to the Soudan, used these remarkable words—"As far as the Government are concerned, our policy is a clear one." That in itself was a very remarkable phrase. Let hon. Members remember the declaration of the Home Secretary, and observe the clearness—

> "We should hold our own," said Lord Northbrook, "in that country, and conduct its affairs for the benefit and advantage of the people, and in the best manner we could arrange with the people."

Then our "clear policy" was to "hold our own" in this country, with which the Home Secretary said we would have nothing to do. First, we were to overthrow the Mahdi at Khartoum. Then, according to one, we were to "hold our own;" according to the other, to have nothing to do with the country. Then came the question of this extraordinary railway from Suakin to Berber. On Thursday in last week the Prime Minister had said—

> "Among the necessary consequences of adopting the policy of overthrowing the Mahdi at Khartoum are, first, engaging in certain military operations along the Suakin-Berber route, and, secondly, making the Suakin-Berber railway."

These were two distinct things. But in speaking on Monday, his right hon. Friend, having in view the possible adoption of the hon. Member for Newcastle's Amendment, said that whatever decision they had come to on the issue presented to them—whether to advance or retire—operations would be necessary on the Suakin-Berber route. Some Members thought the right hon. Gentleman was repeating then his declaration about the making of the railway, which he had stated to be a necessary consequence, whatever course was adopted. They remarked that the surveys had not been made on the route—that the railway could not be made in less than 12 months, probably not in less than two years. But, in point of fact, on Monday the right hon. Gentleman said nothing at all about the railway. His observations then were entirely directed to the necessity of opening operations along that route, supposing the Government were in favour of retreat. No doubt, some operations might, in that case, be necessary. Just as in the Mid Lothian contests, bogus contests were got up to divert the country from Mid Lothian, so, if Lord Wolseley were to retire, it would be necessary to have operations to amuse Osman Digna. Thus the necessity of the railway insisted upon last week was not insisted on this week. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman still thought the railway important. It was simply tntended to facilitate the overthrow of the Mahdi at Khartoum, and was only to be justified, if at all, for that purpose. What was the policy of the Government in connection with that overthrow? How was the right hon. Gentleman's silence at one time to be reconciled with his speech at another? There was a good deal of mystery about it; but, after all, it was an open secret. The explanation was that when the terrible news of Gordon's death reached us, and the Cabinet met, they were under the influence of the idea that no Government could be maintained that did not determine to overthrow the Mahdi; and they arrived at that conclusion, and nothing more, and upon that, and nothing more, they were at present agreed. The Home Secretary, challenged last night about the policy of the Government, retorted by asking what Prince Bismarck would have said if he had been asked a similar question on the outbreak of the Franco-German War. But there was no analogy between the two cases, because Germany was repelling the attack of the foreigner, whereas we should be the aggressive party in the Soudan. Even if there were such a parallel, he could not reconcile the language of the Home Secretary with his reply to the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) that the Prime Minister should not be changed to please Foreign Powers. But surely the dignity of that House required that the conduct of Ministers of the Crown towards Members of the House should not be guided by the conduct of Prince Bismarck towards Members of the Reichstag, and that a Minister should not stand in the face of the House and claim for himself, with respect to Members of Parliament, the liberty and licence that Prince Bismarck arrogated to the Reichstag. Surely it struck at the root of Parliamentary Government if, at a crisis of this kind, when a Resolution of a decisive character was being discussed, the Executive Government could not be asked what was their policy. Where, in that case, was the power of Parliament and the responsibility of the Government? The Government, at present, were not proposing defensive operations. This was an aggressive and forward movement, and not required by any military necessity, and it was undertaken for political reasons. Lord Wolseley, on receiving the terrible news, applied to the Government to ask on what policy he was to shape his measures—the policy of advance, or that of concentration. That in itself was sufficient evidence that the policy of the Government was not founded upon considerations of military necessity. Lord Wolseley was ready, so far as he could understand, to accomplish the determination of the Government, whichever way it should tend. The President of the Local Government Board had fully admitted that Lord Wolseley expressed his ability to retire, taking concentration as his first step to retirement. But his right hon. Friend tried to justify the resolution of the Government by declaring that Lord Wolseley was too sanguine. Thus, instead of following the advice of their Commander in the field, that advice was disparaged by the suggestion that Lord Wolseley was too sanguine. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had said that the resolution of the Government was a military resolution. No doubt, it was; but it was not founded on military requirements. If a man determined to go on horseback, that was an equestrian determination; but it might be for purposes of business, pleasure, or health. To call this a military determination was to confuse the issue. It was a completely voluntary movement for a political object. He went back to the point from which he started. Here, at all events, it was possible to break the chain; there was a point of discontinuity. What the Government had determined on did not necessarily follow upon the past. We were entering upon a new path, full of danger and of important consequences for the future, and we could not justify this course except upon the political grounds of the supposed necessity of meeting the Mahdi. This was undoubtedly the case, having regard to the original instructions or to any instructions that were given to General Gordon. As it was supposed by some that he had elsewhere done General Gordon an injustice, he desired to say that his position was based wholly on the attitude of the Government. He was endeavouring to show what was the action to be taken now, having regard to their instructions in the past. No doubt, the instructions in the past did involve a duty now. General Gordon was instructed to do many things and permitted to do others. The permission terminated with his death, and we were not involved in any duty to do what he was permitted to do. But it might be necessary for us to carry out what he was instructed to do. The Government were making a new departure of a positive and aggressive kind. His speech, quoted by the Home Secretary on the previous evening, had been very much misunderstood by that right hon. Gentleman, and also by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who wished to suggest that he (Mr. Courtney) wanted to retire post haste upon Cairo. What he said, perhaps, was not of very much importance. [Mr. WARTON: Hear, hear!] He agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman; but it was important the issue should not be misunderstood. Both he and the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had been misunderstood by Members of the Government. When he and his hon. Friend spoke of retirement, they conceded that the mode of retirement must be determined by the Military Leader on the spot. We had to concentrate our troops and retire step by step, having regard to the necessity of keeping our face to the enemy if he advanced upon us. But retirement itself involved no suggestion of haste, and admitted the repelling of attack if we were pursued. It had been suggested that he and his hon. Friend did not assume that an attack was to be repelled, and that was not their position. All they wanted was that we should abstain from further aggressive movement, and that we should withdraw, as military considerations would allow us, from our forward position in the Soudan. Of course, it was not easy to do it; nobody thought that it was; but we had a choice of difficulties before us. Was it easy to go forward? As we retired we should have to remember our obligations to those who had assisted us, among whom was the Mudir of Dongola. But there was no such great danger to the mass of the people as had been suggested. Experience had shown that the fearful consequences that it was said would follow our retirement were, to a large extent, dangers that existed only in imagination. We had to compare the various and enormous evils that would accompany our advance with those which would attend our retreat. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) had said in his eloquent speech, with some exaggeration, that we were up to our ankles in blood; but because we were in the morass, ankle-deep in mud—[An hon. MEMBER: Blood!]—he preferred to say mud, because they were in that state—was that a reason why they should go and get up to their haunches? Yet the arguments used amounted to this—that, as we could not escaped unstained, we must be more deeply immersed. It was supposed by some that all the Moslem world was in unity with the Mahdi, and at one with the progress of the Mahdi; but were they certain that, if we retired, he would follow with an ever-increasing force? The apprehensions as to rousing the Moslem world against us were not shared by those who knew Egypt and India best. He had just received from a friend in India a paper written before the news of the death of General Gordon could have reached India, in which he recommended a settlement with the Mahdi as the only means of getting out of our difficulties; but the writer had no alarm whatever about the power of the Mahdi, nor had the people of Egypt. The Sultan was, as far as he could be, an enemy of the Mahdi. The Mahdi would have as much difficulty in following us as we should have in following him. He would find the country denuded of supplies by us, and he would have the greatest difficulty in crossing the desert. His power was great where he was; but it did not extend very far, and his power would be diminished as he followed us. At all events, let us try and see if it would not be so. What was the necessity for our advancing? There was no military necessity. The burden of proof was entirely upon the Government. They had adduced nothing to sustain a positive step, and every argument was against it. Yet a positive step might be fatal. If the railway was made from Suakin to Berber, our settlement in the Soudan was certain; and he hoped it was not yet too late to prevent it being made. But if that railway were made we were permanently lodged in the Soudan. It might be disconnected from Egypt, and Suakin might become the port of the Soudan; but we should be lodged in that country permanently. By making the railway we should cut off a great part of the Soudan from the Nile route. It was said we must destroy the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum; but suppose he did not stop there for us, should we follow him into the desert, thereby increasing his strength as we weakened our own? The moment we retired he would turn upon us. We must destroy him for our own security. Suppose our success was complete, what were we then to do? The Government appeared to have no plan; and the plan to which they would drift was that of setting up certain authorities in the Soudan. That was the plan of General Gordon. He hoped to set up the descendants of certain Sultans displaced by Mehemet Ali. That would be rather difficult, as would be manifest to those who understood the Mahommedan Law of Succession. When you had got these descendants, what kind of people were they likely to be? General Gordon picked up one and tried to keep him, but found him so drunken and dissolute that he sent him back at the end of the first stage of his journey. That was a specimen of the success likely to attend us. Moreover, there was one place for which there was not a dispossessed Sultan, and that was Khartoum. Here Gordon proposed that the non-existent Sultan should be represented by Zebehr. The Sultan at Khartoum would be the most powerful, and would swallow up all the rest. Was not this an exact reproduction, as the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had said, of what was attempted in Zululand—strange to say, by the same man who was now in the Soudan? Sir Garnet Wolseley set up his 13 Kinglets in Zululand, and now it was possible that he might set up some 13 Sultanets in the Soudan, John Dunn being represented by Zebehr. We swore that we would not interfere in Zululand, and that we would let it alone; we did not desire to annex a single bit of territory there; we said we would have nothing to do with the disputes there, and that the Natives should fight it out and come to some solution which the course of events would prove to be the ultimate one. But we have had to go there. A part of the territory had been reserved, and another part might possibly be annexed, and the whole scheme of settlement had proved to be an absolute dream. If we attempted to set up 13 Sultanets in the Soudan, precisely the same difficulty would arise. We should have to assist them on starting; there would probably be a British Resident who might have a guard; and if we established a railway we should have to watch it that it should not be used for the Slave Trade; and the whole fabric dreamed of now, as the consequence of overthrowing the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, would turn out to be as baseless and insubstantial as any vision of the air. Was history written in vain? Our conquest of India showed the same thing. We advanced, we overthrew the Native power, and we attempted to set up some puppet in its place, who could not stand because he had no inherent power of his own, and bit by bit we were drawn in to assert our authority. This was the inevitable consequence of the action which the Home Secretary approved, and it was vain for him to refuse to recognize the consequence, and threaten that he would never have anything to do with the annexation of any part of the Soudan either for Egypt or for England. It was the inevitable consequence of the first step which the Government were now taking, and he asked them to think before they made that step irrevocable. They had, fortunately, some hot months before them, which he hoped would be productive of thought. If the Government adopted the step they now proposed to take, we should have an African Empire to add to the responsibilities of our Indian Empire. Our power in this way would be drained, and our men and money exhausted, for what General Gordon had said had always been and would always be a worthless possession. It was in view of these momentous consequences that the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) had put his Motion on the Paper. His hon. Friend had told the Government that they had got to decide what they would do under the new circumstances, and the Government had decided that the thing to be done was to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. At that step his hon. Friend arrested the attention of the House, and called upon hon. Members to declare against that step of the Government. That was the issue. If hon. Members were not prepared to undertake all the consequences of the first step, they should not allow that step to be taken. If they allowed the first step to be taken, they must not flatter themselves that they could possibly avoid a further step. His hon. Friend, in his expression of regret that the Government had decided to employ the Forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the Mahdi at Khartoum, had nothing to say as to the past, because he had recognized the fact that they were at the opening of a new scene. A new epoch was about to be commenced, and new responsibilities were about to be incurred; and whatever hon. Members might have said and thought in the past, let them determine at this point that they would not sanction the new step. The hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) expressed nearly the same view. In his Amendment his words were—

> "That this House, while ready to support Her Majesty's Government in any steps which may be necessary to protect the dominions of Egypt from attack by the Mahdi, would regret the extension of offensive military operations beyond the limits which may be adopted as the permanent frontier of Egypt."

That was a protest against any new offensive military operations beyond the Egyptian frontier and against the position of the Government, and it was identical in effect with the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle, opposing the policy of overthrowing the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. The Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) proposed—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, further military operations in the Soudan ought to be confined to the purposes of protecting the frontiers of Egypt, providing for the fulfilment of engagements already entered into, and securing the speedy and honourable withdrawal of British forces from the interior of the Soudan."

The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) made a speech last night, he believed, in perfect agreement with the policy of the hon. Member for Newcastle and the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London, and in opposition to the forward movement; but the hon. Member preferred his own words. He would point out that the words of the hon. Member, however much he might dislike the forward movement, could be adopted by those who supported the forward movement. The hon. Gentleman did not secure his own idea; he wanted to prevent the forward movement, and yet he used words which the Government might adopt as justifying that movement. If it was necessary to protest against the forward movement, let them do it openly, and in no words which the Government might adopt as justifying their own plan. This was not a time to indulge in ambiguous words that might mean anything. They had before them in that House two combinations of Gentlemen. They had a Ministry who recommended the forward movement to Khartoum, involving the necessary consequences to which he had referred; and, on the other hand, they had right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite who were advocating those consequences by themselves. The right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) directly advocated the setting up of an orderly Government, supported by English power, at Khartoum, which was the necessary consequence of the step which Her Majesty's Government had resolved to take. The Home Secretary last night showed that if hon. Gentlemen opposite came into Office they would not be able to carry out their present policy. In fact, the two sides of the House were very much in the position of the two sons mentioned in the Scriptures, who were instructed by their father to go and work in the vineyard. One said, "I go," but went not; the other said, "I will not go," but afterwards went. His right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, and others were very much opposed to increasing our responsibility in the Soudan. But they could not prevent that increase if they took the first step. Hereafter it would be said of them, "They went, although they stated that they would not go." Having taken this first step of overthrowing the Mahdi at Khartoum, it was perfectly idle to talk of shrinking from their responsibility. It was self-deceit of the grossest character to do so, whether in the case of India, Zululand, or Egypt. It was the greatest self-deceit to try if they could avoid the consequences of their own acts. But the other side might say they would go, and yet they would not go. They would find considerable difficulty in carrying out their policy. He believed the right hon. Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) shrank as much as anyone from increasing the responsibilities of the Empire, and in that he would find supporters among those behind him. But there was another point. If by a combination of persons Gentlemen opposite came into power, they would find themselves in a minority, and the majority of that House would be of an entirely different opinion then from what they were now, and public opinion would be entirely different. He asked hon. Members who read the newspapers and met Party managers, what answer they got when they inquired as to what was thought about this Egyptian matter? Was it not—"We wish we had never got into it. Nothing but our respect for the Prime Minister induces us to tolerate it." But if the opposite Party were in power that feeling would be intensified, and would be directed against them with far greater force. If the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) thought of accomplishing his object by bringing those Gentlemen into power he would find himself very much mistaken. On the other hand, let the present Ministry be retained in power, and there was great danger of that being done. The Home Secretary last night, from a feeling of delicacy which they all understood, did not refer to the fact that if he was out of power we should have his massive eloquence used against increasing the responsibilities of the Empire. No longer fettered by the ties of Office, his power would be directed, without reserve and without stint, against the policy of the Conservative Party. But a still more powerful voice on the same side—a voice which was foremost in condemnation of such enterprizes in the past, but which now pleaded in a faltering manner—might be heard denouncing the extension of responsibilities to which now he was a party. Awakening, as it were, from a frightful nightmare, his voice would be raised; and the attempts of the Party opposite to carry out the policy which they had now declared would be foiled by the opposition they would encounter. His right hon. Friend said just now, interjectionally, that if this contention was right, he and his Friends ought to alter the votes they intended to give in the division. Undoubtedly that was a question which would have to be considered, and much searchings of heart must follow. If they had regard to the present issue alone, and to the probable developments of policy in the Soudan, their purpose would apparently be better served by the introduction of Gentlemen opposite to Office than by the present Government. That was a very important thing, which would have to be considered; but the responsibility was not confined to them. He had thought frequently of late of an incident in our Parliamentary history which seemed applicable to the present day—an incident always to be remembered, because two of the most illustrious names in the Parliamentary history of England were engaged in it. Before the repeal of the Corn Laws, when a half-persuaded Minister was hesitating as to the step he should have to take in the near future with respect to those laws, Mr. Cobden in his place, speaking words of truth and soberness, said to the then Prime Minister—"Upon you and you alone rests the responsibility for the maintenance of this iniquity." The Prime Minister misunderstood what was said; he thought he was threatened with personal consequences, and we knew a painful scene followed. He would not dwell further on the incident; he should not have alluded to it, had he not felt deeply that precisely the same language might be used on this occasion. The issue before the nation now—and no more momentous issue had ever been presented—rested upon the decision of one man. At a whisper from him, a change of tone, a single utterance, the nation would be found rising to condemn what it now sullenly acquiesced in. The increase of our responsibility which had now arisen depended on the utterance of one man. This was a fact full of solemnity. He had not himself shrunk from recognizing the responsibility which rested upon each of them, especially upon hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House; but there was this crowning responsibility to which he would draw attention, because, if it was fully realized, it might induce a half-reluctant Minister to do what a great Minister only could—retrace his steps, and undo the mischief which, so unwittingly and for so long a time, he had supported and carried forward.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, that the right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), following the lines indicated in the speech and Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman, had brought against Her Majesty's Government three principal charges. He told the House, as it had been told by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Hardinge Giffard) under the late Government and the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), that Her Majesty's Government had abandoned Gordon, and that they were guilty, chiefly because they had done nothing to rescue him between the 14th of May, the day on which the debate was raised by the right hon. Gentleman, and the Vote of Credit proposed on the 5th of August. He also brought forward by implication these charges—that they had done nothing to establish a stable Government in Egypt, and nothing also to establish a stable Government in the Soudan, which was necessary to the safety of Egypt. He would endeavour to follow the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman said that, by not utilizing the victories of General Graham, the Government had themselves rendered necessary the Expedition of Lord Wolseley. He should have thought that past debates had shown that it was absolutely impossible to send General Graham's Army to Berber after the victories referred to. It had been stated in some quarters that General Graham had himself expressed a contrary opinion; but he did not credit the statement. General Graham's Army could not have traversed the distance between Suakin and Berber, for at that season the difficulties connected with the questions of transport and water were too great to be overcome. General Hicks, it was true, accomplished the feat; but his transport had been organized beforehand for that special purpose, and the enemy was not at the time of his Expedition in possession of the road and the wells. It had been said that the Government remained inactive between May 14 and August. But was this statement correct? He asserted that it was not. After the debate of May 14, the Government gave their most careful consideration to the subject of the routes to Khartoum. They considered the route by Massowah, the Suakin and Berber route, and the Nile route. The first was very soon dismissed as undesirable. To the Suakin and Berber route the Government were themselves at first favourable, and certain preparations were made in the port and harbour of Suakin, which would now be of use in the debarkation of General Graham's Expedition. But many military authorities were in favour of the Nile route, and certain events occurred which led the Government to select that route. In the first place, measures had already been taken for facilitating the despatch of a Force up the Nile to control a certain portion of it. In the second place, hostile operations were threatened in Upper Egypt, which caused a certain movement of troops along the Nile; and then came the fall of Berber, when it became clear that the Suakin-Berber route was no longer of the same value, Berber being in the hands of the enemy. Lastly, that remarkable man, the Mudir of Dongola, appeared upon the scene, gained a victory over the allies of the Mahdi, and inspired confidence among the surrounding population. All these events, taken together, caused the Government to determine to operate by the Nile route. But other steps were also taken between May and August. The Foreign Office were given to understand that there was a reasonable hope of operating through the medium of the Kabbabish tribe for the relief of Gordon, there being a blood feud between them and the Mahdi; and Major Kitchener was accordingly sent to negotiate with them, an almost unlimited supply of money being placed at his disposal. This step had been productive of advantage, inasmuch as the tribe had since greatly assisted us; and for the courage and diplomatic skill which Major Kitchener had exhibited in establishing relations with them that officer deserved very great credit. Those who accused the Government of dilatoriness should bear in mind that as early as July 18 orders were given that measures should be taken to enable steamers to pass through the First Cataract of the Nile. He did not, however, wish to base the whole of his defence upon the preparations made by the Government. Whether preparations might have been made earlier or not, the fact remained that had it not been for treachery, which no preparations could avoid, Lord Wolseley's Expedition would have been in time to rescue Gordon. Had it not been that in Khartoum, as in Troy of old, someone was prepared to open the gates of the city to the enemy at the critical moment, the House would not then be engaged in a bitter Party debate, but would be rejoicing over the rescue of the hero whose loss all now deplored. As for the loss of life in connection with the fall of Berber, the number of 5,000 was given as that of the Mahdi's killed; but the accounts were by no means trustworthy. The right hon. Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) entered upon the financial question, and he further attempted to anticipate the arguments which, no doubt, from both sides of the House would have to be addressed to it, whenever they were able, as he hoped they would before long be able, to lay before it those Agreements which had been come to with the Powers of Europe with regard to the finances of Egypt. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had never been able to see that there was more than one of four policies at the very most which they could pursue. There was the policy which was generally known as the policy of scuttle —not merely of leaving the Soudan, but of leaving Egypt at once, irrespective of the consideration of what might happen when they left. That was not a policy which had ever recommended itself to Her Majesty's Government. It was a policy which would end not merely in disaster to those persons in Egypt to whom we were honourably pledged, but would end with discredit to the reputation of this country, and also with disaster to its material interests. Then there was the policy of assuming a Protectorate of Egypt. He could hardly imagine anything more impossible, more difficult to defend in that House, than the policy of those who would go to Egypt, and who would, at the same time, put England in the position of bringing herself practically into a sort of partnership with the existing Egyptian Government, obliged at every step to consult other Powers in regard to those ties which internationally bind the Egyptian Government. Then there was the policy of those who advocated a more violent course, who said—"Take a Protectorate of Egypt, and sweep aside at one fell blow all those institutions, all those Conventions, and all those International Agreements which now exist." Such a course would not merely imperil the reputation of this country for good faith among the nations of the world, but it would also, in all probability, at once produce complications which might bring about a European war. If they were to adopt none of those three policies there remained but one other, that one which the Government had adopted from the commencement, and to which, he contended, they had been faithful all through, the policy of scrupulous regard for the engagements—the international engagements—which bound us on the one hand to the great nations of Europe, and on the other to the Sublime Porte—engagements which maintained on one hand the liberties and privileges of Egypt, and also recognized the rights of the Porte, which were probably the best guarantee against the interference of any Foreign State — engagements which also bound us to such countries as France and Germany, and which the Government believed, if honourably fulfilled, would in the long run produce far less difficulty than any one of those violent courses which at times had found advocates in that House and in the country. Sneers had been levelled at the Government in regard to their internal reforms; but he asked, was it fair, in circumstances of such difficulty, and considering they only exercised a general control in Egypt in regard to its administration, to turn to ridicule and depreciate everything that had been done by the Government? He admitted there was a great deal yet to be done; but much had been accomplished already. No doubt the kourbash was still used, but there was a great diminution in its use; and although the *corvée* still existed, no doubt it had been found possible to diminish and almost to abolish its use. If witnesses who could be depended upon were examined, it would be found that a great deal had been done by Her Majesty's Government in Egypt, in spite of the condition of the country and the fact that they had been there a little more than two years. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) and the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had appealed to him for information with regard to the interference by Italy with Turkish possessions on the Red Sea. They said —"How can you reconcile that with any respect for the international position of Egypt and the Sublime Porte?" There was no mystery upon that question. An attempt had been made, but it had been an entire failure, to show that between his language and that of the Prime Minister of Italy in the Parliament of that country there was confliction. What struck him as very remarkable upon that was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) professed to give to the House an account of what had passed in Italy in regard to that subject; but he unfortunately left out the most material part of the story. The right hon. Gentleman quoted his (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice's) statement in the House, and a statement made in the Italian Parliament on this subject; but he entirely failed to quote a further statement made by the Italian Prime Minister in reply to a distinct challenge upon the question. An eminent Italian Member of Parliament brought up a debate on the question, and he accused the Italian Minister of having used language at variance with his (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice's); but the Italian Prime Minister said that his (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice's) language had been entirely consistent with his own. The course of proceedings had been this. On the 3rd of November the Italian Ambassador inquired whether Her Majesty's Government were in any way opposed to an extension of Italian jurisdiction to the north of their settlement at Assab, so as to include Beilul, in the same way as Raheita had already been included in the south. Lord Granville assured him that Her Majesty's Government felt no jealousy of the extension of Italian influence over that part of the Red Sea coast, but would, on the contrary, welcome it. Her Majesty's Government could not, however, undertake to give away that which did not belong to them, and Lord Granville suggested the desirability of the Italian Government coming to an arrangement with the Porte on the matter. On the 22nd of December Count Nigra inquired in what manner Her Majesty's Government would view a provisional occupation of Zulla by Italian troops. Lord Granville informed him that the Egyptian Government, being unable to continue their hold on all the African littoral of the Red Sea, the ports naturally reverted to the Sultan, whom Her Majesty's Government had advised to retake possession of some of them. If the Italian Government desired to occupy some of these ports, it was a matter between Italy and Turkey. Her Majesty's Government, for their own part, had no objection to raise against the Italian occupation of Zulla, Beilul, or Massowah. On the 10th of January Musurus Pasha referred to the reports current as to the intentions of the Italian Government on the Red Sea, and Lord Granville stated that it was to be regretted that Turkey had not acted on the suggestions of Her Majesty's Goverment that she should herself occupy these ports. When the Porte protested subsequently against the Italian occupations, Lord Granville expressed a strong hope that Turkey and Italy should amicably arrange the matter, but informed the Turkish Ambassador that Her Majesty's Government must disclaim any responsibility, as their advice to the Sultan to occupy the ports had not been acted upon. He might add in regard to that matter that, although there was no special alliance or understanding in regard to this subject between Italy and Her Majesty's Government, there were relations of very great amity at this moment between this country and Italy. At this moment, which was undoubtedly one of difficulty, Italy had shown that, in regard to her relations with this country, the proverb "that there was no such thing as gratitude in politics," did not hold good. Italy had shown that she recollected the assistance and the sympathies given without hope or intention of obtaining any reward, given by us from our admiration of that country and the remembrance of its great past, given to Italy at the moment of her difficulty, when she was struggling to be free, in the days when the policy of this country was directed by Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell, and inspired also, in no small degree, by the present Prime Minister. In reply to a Question put by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had to say that there was no intention of departing in any way from the 1st Article of the Abyssinian Treaty, by which the inhabitants of Abyssinia were secured free access to the port of Massowah, which was, he believed, a stipulation of very great value to the commercial development of Massowah, and for that reason to the prospects of that country, because a very considerable trade would flow into Abyssinia from Massowah. In the course of his speech the right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) had also made an extraordinary allegation with respect to a conversation between himself and Hassan Fehmi. He said Hassan Fehmi told him that Lord Granville had said certain things. When the right hon. Baronet had that interview with the Turkish Minister, did he first tell him, as he was bound to do, speaking to a man ignorant of English customs, that he was questioning him with the intention of quoting his answers in this House? He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) could hardly conceive anything more unfair to a foreigner and a stranger than to speak to him in a moment of confidence, obtain from him a statement, and then quote it in this House, without having given him previous warning, or submitted the statement to him. Now, what were the facts with regard to the right hon. Baronet's quotation? It was entirely incorrect. No such statement was made by Lord Granville. He had the authority of Hassan Fehmi and of Lord Granville for saying that the right hon. Baronet entirely misunderstood the eminent diplomatist whom he quoted. It would be generally agreed that a right hon. Gentleman occupying his position ought not to have made such a statement until he had fully satisfied himself of its accuracy. He would now refer to the main charge against Her Majesty's Government—namely, that they had made noclear statement of their policy in the Soudan. This point had been elaborated with great detail by the two able speakers who had preceded him. When the country was passing through a period of difficulty, it was easy for an Opposition to find fault with and make cheap capital if, at every moment of its career, interrogatories were piled on interrogatories as to every passing incident of every passing hour, and as to what they intended to do under such and such unknown circumstances. There was an old proverb which said "It is a rash thing to prophesy before you know." And for the Government to come forward and state beforehand everything they intended to do in the Soudan in the course of the present year would be an act of folly which no Government would commit. The policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Soudan was carefully set forth in the following instructions given to Lord Wolseley, and printed in the Blue Book [Egypt, No. 35 (1884), p. 113]—

> "You will use your best endeavours to insure the safe retreat of the Egyptian troops which constitute the Khartoum garrison, and of such of the civil employés of Khartoum, together with their families, as may wish to return to to Egypt. As regards the future government of the Soudan, and especially of Khartoum, Her Majesty's Government would be glad to see a Government at Khartoum which, so far as all matters connected with the internal administration of the country are concerned, would be wholly independent of Egypt. The Egyptian Government would be prepared to pay a reasonable subsidy to any Chief or number of Chiefs who would be sufficiently powerful to maintain order along the valley of the Nile from Wady Halfa to Khartoum, and who would agree to the following conditions:—(1.) To remain at peace with Egypt, and to repress any raids on Egyptian territory. (2.) To encourage trade with Egypt. (3.) To prevent and discourage by all possible means any expeditions for the sale of and capture of slaves. You are authorised to conclude any arrangements which fulfil these general conditions. The main difficulty will consist in the selection of an individual, or of a number of individuals, having sufficient authority to maintain order. You will, of course, bear in mind that any Ruler established south of Wady Halfa will have to rely solely on his own strength in order to maintain his position. I have already mentioned that under certain conditions the Egyptian Government would be prepared to pay a moderate subsidy in order to secure tranquillity and fairly good government in the Valley of the Nile. Beyond the adoption of this measure neither Her Majesty's Government nor the Egyptian Government are prepared to assume any responsibility whatsoever for the government of the Nile Valley south of Wady Halfa.

The general policy of the Government was still to be found in those instructions. What the Prime Minister stated the other night was that the fall of Khartoum only rendered more important that which was necessary before—namely, that the power of the Mahdi should be broken, and that some stable form of government should be established at Khartoum—a government as stable as circumstances of time and place admitted. The President of the Local Government Board had stated to the House that no pledge as to "the ultimate future" of the Soudan could be given. To do so would be to give details in regard to a position which must largely be influenced by the course of the military campaign. If the House would consider the statements made by Ministers in the two Houses, they would find that those were four clear statements as to the policy of the Government—namely, that the Soudan was to be separated from Egypt; that it would be placed under such stable government as the circumstances of the time would permit; that a railway was to be constructed from Berber to Suakin; and that Her Majesty's Government believed that the construction of that line would insure the independence of the Soudan from Egyptian interference, and be a guarantee for the permanence of any Government which it might be found possible to establish. The Suakin-Berber railway would develop the commerce and civilization of the Soudan. It would insure a considerable supply of English goods, and induce a wholesome trade to spring up that would give shape to the Soudan economically and commercially. It was not too much to say that no port of any importance existed on the East Coast of Africa between Zanzibar and Suakin; and, therefore, it was no rash thing to say that the Suakin-Berber railway would have a very great influence. The Government were told that when it was made they would abandon the country, and, no doubt, that was their policy; but it did not in the least follow that the railway would be abandoned, or that there would not be established a stable Government in the Soudan which would maintain that railway as an aid to civilization. The case of the Government was a clear one, and there was no discrepancy between the statements of the Prime Minister at different times. To ask them to say more would be to ask what no Government in their sound senses would consent to do. He would only further add that if, before long, it should be his fate to sit on the Benches opposite, he should not follow the example of those who were now in Opposition, but would carefully abstain from coming down and asking the Government of the day to make detailed statements of the policy they would pursue while military operations were going on, and when their policy must, to a great extent, depend upon military considerations. He thanked the House for having listened to a lengthy and, he feared, somewhat dry statement, in which he had been obliged to meet the successive arguments by which the Government had been assailed.

Mr. TYSSEN - AMHERST: Mr. Speaker, I think it a great honour, Sir, to be allowed to make a few remarks in a debate at such an important crisis; but, though I do not wish to detain the House long, I feel it a duty to one's country, and to those who have gone out to fight for it, and also to those who from bereavement or anxiety for the future are sorrowing at home, to speak out plainly. I may say that it is incumbent on me perhaps to do so, as my constituents know that I am well acquainted with a large portion of that country to which all our eyes are turned. I speak, therefore, as one who has been on the border of the Northern Soudan, although it is many years since I stood on that rock near the Second Cataract, so well known to African travellers, and cast a longing eye towards the South, where then all was quiet, and the English name respected from Alexandria to Gondokoro; and I often think how ashamed I should be were I brought again face to face with those Nubians and Egyptians and black Soudanese who served me so faithfully for many months. As my object in rising is only to add my voice in denunciation of the conduct of the present Government, it is needles for me to weary the House with repetitions of the quotations from the Blue Books, alas! too well impressed upon our minds; but I will say this, knowing the country, and having been acquainted during several years with its people, from the Khedive then ont he Throne to the fellah at his shadoof, that if there had been honesty of purpose and a decided policy in the acts of the Government with regard to Egypt, there need never have been a war at all. But the fact is, the war was undertaken to cover the defects of the Government with a halo of what they hoped would be cheaply purchased glory; for they felt that the country could not sit quiet after such a disgraceful peace as had been concluded in South Africa. They thought they would try their hands at what has turned out to be a very spurious Jingoism upon a foe they were certain to vanquish. That being accomplished, the Egyptian Army being scattered, and most of them having laid down their arms and retired to their villages after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, I need not waste the time of the House by pointing out by what blunder after blunder the present crisis has been brought about. Nor will I give the Cabinet the excuse of ignorance, for the country knows perfectly well that the Prime Minister and most of his Colleagues cannot have erred on that account. Therefore, this fearful state of things has been created, as the country well knows, by culpable negligence, and the day of retribution has come at last. The censure, not only of this House, but of the civilized world is upon them. I am one of those, Sir, who think the terms of the Resolution are not strong enough for the occasion. It is a mere matter of detail, and I feel it is, perhaps, almost presumptous on my part to take exception to a Resolution moved by the Leader of our Party in this House, who has, so deservedly, the respect and esteem of the whole Conservative Party; but I should like to explain my reasons. In former days the political honour of the Liberal Cabinet stood so high that it was more than likely it would take a mere protest as a Vote of Censure. In former days it was understood that the Government of the day would declare its policy in plain, unmistakable terms, and stand or fall by it; but now a Liberal Government pieces together its policy haphazard from day to day on the chance of what may turn up. Now, instead of submitting it to Parliament, a Liberal Minister merely announces a measure to the House, and waits for the comments of the newspapers before he dare trust himself to give any explanation of it. In fact, the reason, in my opinion, why this Vote of Censure is not strong enough is, that the political honour of the present Cabinet is so low, that it requires the strongest language to prevent their having the chance, by volubility of phrases and dexterity of eloquence, of avoiding the direct issue. I consider that I am fully confirmed in my opinion after hearing the speeches of right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench opposite, and especially those of the Prime Minister and the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board. I consider such evasive statements, at a time like this, nothing less than an insult to this country, and not to this country only, but to the whole Empire. The Government are asked to declare their policy; but the phrases used by the Prime Minister seem to admit of so many interpretations that it is utterly impossible for an ordinary mind to understand what is meant. It may be that, as one of the Members for an agricultural constituency, I am open to the charge, which I have heard used by a Minister in this House, of Arcadian simplicity; but I think that the manner in which the Government has conducted the Business of the country during the past painful five years may fairly be described as savouring of the Cretan. I say, they have already had too much latitude; they have had their last chance; they have been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and they have shown themselves utterly unworthy of the confidence of the country. For our Empire's sake let this Cabinet of all the talents be exchanged for one of honesty and common sense. No one can envy the Conservative Party having to take Office at such a time, with such a *damnosa hereditas* as this Liberal Government leaves behind it; but the country knows they will not shrink from the task, however great; and there can be no doubt now, after the speeches in this House, and especially after the speech of our great Leader in "another place," as to our policy; as much of which has been shadowed forth as it is possible for any Opposition to give. I should like to say one word about the letter from General Gordon on the 4th November. The expression he uses there is—

> "Your Expedition is for relief of garrison, which I fail to accomplish. I decline to agree that it is for me personally."

No, Sir, General Gordon was not the man to wish that the blood of one single English soldier should be shed on his behalf alone. I wish also to allude to the Mahdi. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon has pretty well disposed of a "smashed Mahdi;" but I wish the House to consider seriously what a "smashed Mahdi" really means. There is no necessity to follow the Mahdi into the interior; if you drive him back, and he dares not come out and oppose you, he is no longer a Mahdi; he is plain Mohammed Ahmed, or whatever his name may be. In fact, he retires into private life, just as a "smashed" Prime Minister; and I hope, for the sake of the whole British Empire, that we shall soon see such a thing. The Prime Minister will retire into private life; but he will retire with the knowledge that he has harassed and shaken every institution in this country, and that it has been his fate to wither and blast everything he has touched. And now, Sir, before I sit down, allow me to say but a few words about those who are fighting for us in the far distant Soudan, or who have laid down their lives there, having fought for us ever since the first commencement of the war in Lower Egypt. I am only echoing the voice of the country when I say that every soldier, from the greatest General to the humblest private, has done his duty to maintain his country's honour. Many have fallen bravely on the banks of the Nile, or in the thirsty Desert in the hour of victory; but I think I may specially allude to the death of one who, though wounded in a victorious fight, knew that the retreat was sounding as he died. I need hardly say that I allude to the gallant General, Sir Herbert Stewart. There is a strong resemblance in the circumstances of his death to one which occurred at the beginning of a great war, and which has, I think, already been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy. I need hardly say that I mean the death of Sir John Moore. Sir Herbert Stewart and those brave men who have fallen rest with their comrades in their glory; and may the retreat that was sounded then be only, as it was at Corunna, a prelude to splendid victories such as rendered the British name so renowned throughout the Spanish Peninsula. But there is one hero who rests "alone in his glory," and upon his grave may be, alas! too truly written that an English Government left him "alone in his hour of danger;" and, while it is ringing through the world how nobly Gordon died, defending the honour of his country, it would remain an "indelible disgrace" to that country if it allows that Government who sent him out to save themselves, and to keep the Prime Minister in Office, to remain in existence one moment longer to complete the ruin of this great Empire.

MR. RICHARD: I am glad to have the opportunity of saying a few words in this discussion, as I represent a small body of persons who probably approach the question from a point of view different from that taken by most of those who have hitherto borne part in the debate. There is no doubt that we are in the midst of a grave national crisis; and if the projects advocated on both sides of the House are carried into effect, we may not be far from heavy national calamities, resulting entirely from that fatal, inveterate propensity to meddle in other people's affairs, which is the chronic malady of our race. It is natural enough that there should be a good deal of crimination and recrimination as to who is responsible for this state of things, each Party trying to make a scapegoat of the other. My contention is, that all those who promoted, who instigated, who sanctioned our unhappy armed intervention in Egypt must be held more or less responsible for all that has ensued. The Prime Minister said the other day that the first step taken in that direction led, as by an inevitable necessity, to all that followed. I am thankful that, for myself, I lifted up my feeble voice from the first against these Egyptian proceedings, and have not ceased to protest against them ever since by vote and voice, in this House and out of it. My hands are clean from any stain of the blood that has been so copiously shed. I am glad it is no part of my duty to defend either Party in this House as respects our Egyptian policy. I think they are both tarred with the same brush. I hold that both are equally guilty, or, rather, that the heaviest measure of guilt is at the door of the Party opposite, and that for two reasons. First, because the miserable complications in which we have been involved in Egypt have sprung from the course they took when they were in Office; and, secondly, because they have done their utmost to push the Government further and further into the policy of aggression and war. It is customary, on these occasions, to deprecate any reference to the origin of things. We are told that what is past is past, and cannot be recalled; and it is useless to discuss it. I was glad to observe that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, in his speech the other night, repudiated this doctrine. It is a very convenient doctrine for those who wish to draw a veil of forgetfulness over their own past errors and misdeeds. But it may be necessary to draw back that veil. Hon. Gentlemen opposite dislike any allusion to the Dual Control. They wince away from it as Sir John

Falstaff did from the men in buckram; and yet it may be required, for a full discussion of this question, to cast a retrospective glance even so far back as that. For no man who has traced this wretched Egyptian imbroglio to its source can doubt that the fountain and origin of the evil was the policy established by Lord Salisbury, when he was at the Foreign Office. It was unfortunate that we should have ever got mixed up with the finances of Egypt; and I am bound to say that the mission of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) was attended with some mischievous consequences, for an attempt was made to give that mission something of an official or semi-official character. The right hon. Gentleman himself, before setting out, wrote a letter to Lord Derby, who was then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, saying that—

> "He had been requested by 2,000 holders of Egyptian Stock to represent their interests in the existing crisis of Egyptian finance,"

asking his Lordship, "in the interests of the English bondholders," to give him "such moral support" as he could afford, and to instruct Her Majesty's Consul General in Egypt to give him assistance. And the British Consul General did give the right hon. Gentleman moral support and assistance, telling the Egyptian Government that he "was a Member of the late Cabinet, and a person of high position and reputation in this country." And this led to the first establishment of the Dual Control, which afterwards became the source of so much oppression and misery in Egypt. I hope one good result that may flow from this miserable Egyptian business will be this —that we shall lay it down as a fixed principle, and adhere to it with inexorable rigour, that when British subjects enter into pecuniary speculations in foreign countries, as they do it for their own interests, so they should do it at their own risk, since it is neither just, nor wise, nor expedient, that the moral responsibility of this nation should be pledged on their behalf, still less that the blood and treasure of its people be expended in defending the interests and collecting the debts of money-lenders and usurers. But it was Lord Salisbury who saddled Egypt on our shoulders. It was Lord Salisbury who converted what was merely a private arrangement between the Egyptian Government and certain English and French gentlemen, undertaken of their own free will, and upon their own exclusive responsibility, into a binding political engagement, which involved the British nation in heavy and lasting obligations as regards the affairs of Egypt. It was Lord Salisbury who compassed and effected the deposition of Ismail Pasha, the Khedive, whom General Gordon describes as "one of the ablest and worst-used men in Europe," and the substitution on the Throne of the present Khedive, expressly and avowedly as the *protégé* of the English and French Governments, with all the responsibilities and obligations which that act implied. What has been the primary reason assigned for our invading and occupying Egypt? Was it not this—that we were bound to protect and to uphold the authority of the Khedive? The Prime Minister, a few days ago, said—

> "We have been bound from the time that we first covenanted to keep the Khedive upon his Throne, and at no point have we had before us the choice or the possibility of return."

But by whom were we bound in this sinister obligation? By Lord Salisbury. I contend, further, that a large share of the blame for the present position of affairs lies at the door of hon. Gentlemen opposite, because they have used their utmost efforts to egg the Government on in all the fatal measures they have adopted. They approved openly of the armed intervention in Egypt, which was the source of all the mischief and misery that ensued. Did they object to the bombardment of Alexandria? Not at all. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), indeed, greatly to his honour, separated himself from his Party, and did denounce it in a vigorous and eloquent speech. But the Party as a whole cheered the announcement, when made in this House, that the British Fleet was firing into the forts of that city. And what was the object of the meeting at Willis's Rooms, except to drive the Government, by sarcasms, taunts, and reproaches, to put down Arabi by force of arms? And did anybody join louder than they did in the glorification of the victory of Tel-el-Kebir? Did they raise their voice against the invasion of the Soudan and the Expedition under General Graham, which led to the slaughter of thousands of Arabs to no purpose whatever? Did they object to the mission of General Gordon, or the means that were taken to rescue him? No; in all these cases they did what they could to push the Government on, deeper and deeper, into the fatal policy of armed intervention. But I am not going to absolve the Government. They have sins enough on their own heads. Their first mistake, in my opinion, was that they did not cut themselves loose from the policy of their Predecessors in Egypt, as they did in Afghanistan, the Transvaal, and Zululand. Their plea has been that they were bound by some Convention with France. That is not a valid plea. When the Government of this country entered into a Convention with France—a most preposterous Convention—for conducting combined hostilities in Mexico, when they found that the Expedition was assuming proportions and taking a direction of which they did not approve, they did not hesitate to break away from that Convention. And they need not have been very scrupulous as respects the Egyptian Convention, since the French, when they found we were about to bombard Alexandria, in utter disregard of any agreement as to joint action, ordered their Fleet to sail out of port, and so avoided the shame and guilt of having any part in that transaction. The second false step the Government took was when, at the instigation of M. Gambetta, they sent British men-of-war into Egyptian waters. I call that a false step, among other reasons, for this—that when the movements of Armies and Fleets begin, the control of events passes out of the hands of statesmen into those of naval and military men, who can only do one thing, and that is to fight. And I should not very much wonder if, when the secret history of this business comes to be written, it will be found that the real author of the Egyptian War was the British Admiral. And verily he has had his reward. But a third false step taken by the Government was to depart from their policy of neutrality as respects the Soudan. Again and again did they declare that they had nothing to do, and would have nothing to do, with the Soudan. The Prime Minister said in this House—"It is no part of the duty incumbent upon us to restore order in the Soudan." And when the Egyptian Government was sending out the Expeditions under Hicks and Baker, Lord Granville was never weary of disclaiming all responsibility for those acts. Would to Heaven the Government had adhered to their decision as respects the Soudan! But when the intelligence came that Hicks and Baker had been defeated with great slaughter, then there was a loud outcry raised by certain classes in the country, and the Government, most unhappily, yielded to that clamour, and, in spite of their protests, did meddle in the Soudan, and they did so in this singular way—by simultaneously sending General Gordon to one part of the Soudan, to proclaim the independence of the people, and an Army and Navy into another part of the Soudan to slaughter the Soudanese for their efforts to secure independence. No doubt, they meant the mission of Gordon to be a mission of peace—to effect the evacuation of the garrisons by pacific means. It was so recognized and so accepted by General Gordon himself, for, in writing to Sir Evelyn Baring, these were his words—

> "I understand your desire to be the pacification of the country without bloodshed, and the formation of Native Government; also that, on public grounds, I am to run no risks. I will fulfil your orders."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 88.]

For a short time he seems to have acted on this view of his duty. On his arrival, or, indeed, before his arrival, at his destination, he issued a Proclamation declaring that—

> "The Soudan and its Government have become independent, and will look after their own affairs, without interference by the Egyptian Government in anything whatever."

But he very soon forgot this, and began to call the people and to treat them as "rebels." What right have we to call these people rebels? Against whom are they rebelling? Not against us, as they owe us no allegiance. Not against the Egyptian Government, since we have proclaimed, through the mouth of our chosen Representative, that they were absolutely independent of Egypt in every respect whatever. I ask what right had we, or have we, to fight the Soudanese? Why were these men in arms? Because, as the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) said in this House—

> "They had revolted against what was undeniably acknowledged to be an intolerable and oppressive Government."

And, surely, there is evidence enough to sustain this allegation of the noble Marques—evidence from our own countrymen and officials, who were most conversant with the state of the Soudan. Lord Dufferin said that—

> "Whatever might be the pretension of the Mahdi to a Divine mission, his chief strength was derived from the despair and misery of the Native population."

Sir Samuel Baker, who knows the country well, and once acted as Governor of the Soudan, says—

> "If you had only seen what I have seen in that fertile region—whole tracts of territory left deserted and desolate because the soldiers were out collecting the taxes—that is to say, they were plundering the villagers, violating the women, maltreating the men, and generally making hell upon earth—you would not be astonished at the insurrection. If I had been a Native of the Soudan I would have rebelled long ago, and so would Gordon, and so would anyone; but they are a patient and long-suffering people, and it has taken years of injustice and cruelty to force them into rebellion."

And General Gordon said—

> "That the people were justified in rebelling, nobody who knows the treatment to which they were subjected will attempt to deny."

And the Prime Minister himself, when certain people were urging him to prosecute further hostilities in the Soudan, used these words—

> "Are you quite clear that we are justified in going on fighting and subduing these people? Because, if you are, I am not. It appears to me that they are fighting for their freedom, and I am not clear that we are justified in going to fight them."

And if all this be so, if these people are struggling to free themselves from an intolerable and oppressive Government, if they are fighting for freedom, what right have to go in there and slaughter them by the thousands while defending their own homes against an unprovoked invasion undertaken in the interest of their oppressors? There was one man in the Soudan who had acquired great influence and authority there, and with him, surely, we ought to have treated—and that was the Mahdi. It is the fashion now to stigmatize this man as a fanatic and a savage, and other uncomplimentary names. He may be all that; but our saying so does not prove it, for it is our invariable custom, when we invade or attack or wrong any people, to blacken and traduce their character as a justification of our own acts. So far as I know, no serious attempt has ever been made to negotiate with the Mahdi for the peaceful surrender of the garrisons. We have no reason to assume that he would not have met such negotiations fairly. We have some facts which point in the other direction. Three of the garrisons—namely, Obeid, Barra, and Tokar—did surrender. They were obliged to do so without conditions, because their food supplies were absolutely exhausted; yet the treatment of the soldiers and inhabitants left no room for complaint. The noble Marquess told us in this House that when Tokar surrendered there were 700 persons within its walls, dwelling in apparent safety under the protection of Osman Digna's Army. Did Gordon ever try to treat with the Mahdi? We have a vague report, depending on the oral testimony of a Native, as to a letter sent by Gordon to the Mahdi. But he acted not in the spirit of a negotiator, but in that of a Dictator and King-maker. He sent him a robe of some sort, and offered to make him Sultan of Kordofan. But he could not have meant even that as a serious attempt at conciliation; because, on the 27th of February, nine days after his arrival in Khartoum, and three weeks before the return of the messenger he had sent to the Mahdi, he is writing home that the Mahdi must be smashed, he was sending troops to show his force, and that an expedition would start immediately to attack "the rebels." The fact is, that his military instincts proved too strong for him, and overpowered all sense of his proper mission; for within a very few weeks of his arrival at Khartoum we find him writing to Sir Evelyn Baring, deploring that his "lovely Krupp guns" were doing so little execution upon the Natives.

> "We see masses of the enemy," he said, "yet fail to do much. The enemy lost by shells yesterday 16 horses and 40 men killed and eight wounded."

This he calls "awfully bad practice." The whole history of this war, among other things, proves the utter absurdity of putting any attempts at conciliation into the hands of naval and military men. Sir Evelyn Baring and Lord Granville instructed Admiral Hewett to make an announcement to the Chiefs, recommending them

> "To meet General Gordon at Khartoum, where, by accepting the terms offered, they might secure their independence, and be re-

lieved from the oppression and misgovernment they have hitherto suffered."—[Egypt, No. 12 (1884), p. 55.]

But Admiral Hewett would have nothing to do with such a suggestion.

> "He thought it undesirable to issue such a proclamation. The rebels must be defeated first."

Similar instructions seem to have been sent to General Graham; and how did he fulfil them? Why, before the battle of Teb he sent a letter to the outposts, which, I believe, was affixed to a pole and stuck in the sand, addressed to the Sheikhs of the tribes, in which he said—

> "I summon you, in the name of the English Government, to disperse your fighting men before daybreak to-morrow morning, or the consequences will be on your own heads."—[*Ibid.* p. 181.]

That was General Graham's notion of pacific negotiation. But what are we to do now? Well, let us start fair. What was the object of Lord Wolseley's Expedition? Here are his instructions—

> "The primary object of the Expedition up the Valley of the Nile is to bring General Gordon and General Stewart from Khartoum. When that object has been secured, no further operations of any kind are to be undertaken."

As the safety of these distinguished men is no longer in question, why should we advance? I own that I was astounded and appalled by the policy developed in the speech of the Prime Minister on the first night of the Session. We were told that there should be immediate action from Suakin against Osman Digna; that we are to attempt no accommodation with the Mahdi, but we are to overthrow his power at Khartoum; that we are to construct a railway across 280 miles of desert, from Suakin to Berber; and to all this is now joined the ominous intelligence of the appointment of Prince Hassan to join Lord Wolseley as the Representative of the Egyptian Government. When I hear all this, it seems to me that we are about to launch into enterprizes so vast and so vague, involving inevitably such an enormous expenditure of money, and such a terrible waste of human life, and especially implicating us in such immense and illimitable consequences and responsibilities for the future, that I was fairly staggered to find such a policy coming from such lips. I do devoutly hope that the Government may yet be induced, before it is too late, to modify this tremendous policy. I warn the Government that there is a great and growing feeling in the country against any further aggressive policy in Egypt or the Soudan. I have no difficulty as to the vote I shall give on the Motion of the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote). If the right hon. Gentleman had stopped at the first part of his Motion, I might have felt constrained to vote with him; though when I find the Party opposite stigmatizing the policy of the Government as one which "has involved great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure, without any beneficial result," it sounds to me very much like the Devil rebuking sin, for did not their policy in Afghanistan, in the Transvaal, and in Zululand, lead to a great sacrifice of valuable life, without any beneficial result? But when the right hon. Gentleman goes on, in the latter half of his Motion, to commit us, in vague and general terms, to indefinite responsibilities in the Soudan, I am obliged to part company with him. I shall vote unhesitatingly for the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), as that points to what seems to me the only true and safe policy—that is, the withdrawal, at the earliest practicable opportunity, of our troops from the Soudan. But when we speak of the withdrawal of the troops, nobody means a sudden and precipitate retreat without regard to the safety of our countrymen. Too many precious British lives have been already sacrificed in these unhappy Expeditions to make anyone desire that those who remain should be exposed to any further unnecessary hazard. But what we mean is—no more aggressive operations; no war for revenge or military *prestige;* no smashing of the Mahdi; no conquest of the Soudan; no attempt to impose Egyptian rule on the Soudanese; and, above all, no countenance to any insane projects permanently to occupy and govern those vast and worthless deserts.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought it would be well if the hon. Member for Merthyr could manage to abstain in the future from introducing Party attacks upon the Opposition into his harangues in favour of peace. The hon. Member said that everything that occurred in Egypt was due to Lord Salisbury; and he alluded, in illustration, to a financial undertaking which was the work of one of the most eminent statesmen of the Party opposite—Lord Derby. The hon. Member actually appeared to think that the cause of the bloodshed at Alexandria, Tel-el-Kebir, El Teb, and subsequent engagements, was the fact that the late Government, at a given period, insisted that in the affairs of Egypt England should not have a less important influence than France. With regard to the controversies before the House, he held that, whatever might be the result of the division, it would still remain true that the country had unanimously condemned the past policy of the Government. The Home Secretary himself adopted, on Thursday, a humble and deprecatory tone, which clearly showed that he did not believe that the acts of the Government could be substantially defended. Fortune did not declare itself systematically against a Government; but the present Government had failed all round, and, therefore, it was useless for them to blame their ill-fortune. The Government had been exceedingly well served by the Army, the Navy, and their Diplomatic Agents. Whatever had been done by their servants had been done well; but everything that the Government had themselves done had been done badly. The Government had also had good service from the Opposition. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, shortly before the Session began, asked, what had the Opposition done to assist the Government? He would answer that the Opposition had given the Government a very great deal of good advice, which had, unfortunately, been systematically neglected. Almost every misfortune that had happened to the Government had been prophesied in detail by Conservative or independent Liberal Members. The right hon. Member for Ripon asked the Government some very awkward questions. In reply, the Home Secretary also asked a number of questions, and then drew a series of parallels between himself and the First Napoleon, Prince Bismarck, Count Moltke, and, in fact, almost all the statesmen and generals of foreign countries. There seemed to be as little resemblance between the Home Secretary and Prince Bismarck as between the facts of the Franco-Prussian War and the circumstances of the present Egyptian War. The Government professed to have a policy, and for some time he thought he understood what their policy was. But doubts gradually arose in his mind, and now he was in a state of complete uncertainty on the point—the fact being that it was of the misty kind that lent itself to every variety of interpretation. The man who desired to see in it a peace policy must appeal to the speech of the Home Secretary. Anyone who wanted to find a forward or war policy must appeal to some of the speeches of the Prime Minister. For anyone who wanted to establish good government in the Soudan there had been some good phrases; and those who wanted to leave the Soudan after rescuing Wolseley would find that that was the main object of the Government. It was at once a peace policy and a war policy. At first Ministers produced this result by the use of ambiguous phrases; but yesterday a new device was adopted in debate. They were intelligible and consistent enough, each in their own way; but they absolutely contradicted each other. Thus, while the Home Secretary was saying that—

> "The only reason, in my opinion, that justifies our going to Khartoum is that that is the only manner in which the evacuation of the Soudan can be accomplished to the safety of Egypt,"

Lord Northbrook was telling the House of Lords that—

> "Our policy is a clear one."

Poor Lord Northbrook!

> "We shall hold our own in that country, and conduct its affairs for the benefit of the people, and of peace where we could arrange with the people."

He quite admitted the efficacy of this system in catching votes; but he felt bound to protest against the novel principle of Members of the Cabinet airing their dissensions in that House. It only remained for the Secretary of State for War to get up and endeavour to assuage the doubts of that peculiar political machine, the Whig mind. When that was done, the new device of the Government would be carried out to perfection. In his (Mr. A. J. Balfour's) opinion, it would be well, when the Members of Her Majesty's Government appeared in public, that they should proclaim one particular policy, and adhere to it. The hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) had delivered that evening one of the ablest and most eloquent speeches he had ever heard; and, curiously enough, the most damaging attacks upon a Government were always delivered by some hon. or right hon. Member who had just left it. The conduct attributed to Ministers by the hon. Member was, in the highest degree, flagitious. As a late Member of the Government, he, no doubt, knew them well; and if he said they were capable of such conduct, they, no doubt, were. He was entirely with the Government, as far as they were engaged in rescuing General Wolseley, who had been sent out to rescue General Gordon, who had been sent out to pacify the Soudan. But further than that he did not go with them. In the view of Her Majesty's Government, there was no blood-guiltiness in war as long as you got nothing by it, and merely wasted blood and treasure to no purpose; but the moment you fought for the sake of mankind, or of the country, and tried to get something for them, then the guilt of blood lay upon your head. He asked that we should not enter upon this gigantic operation, of which he was afraid we were only seeing the beginning, merely for the sake of destroying men who were fighting for their liberty, and then abandoning the Soudan; but that, when we called upon the country to make these enormous sacrifices, we should, at all events, gain something for England, for Egypt, and for civilization.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that, on the part of himself and of the hon. Member for Newcastle, he desired to enter their protest against Her Majesty's Government taking any single step in Egypt, or in the Soudan, which could be approved either by the Conservatives or by their allies, the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) and the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who, he had no doubt, they would hear to-night take the same view of this question as the right hon. Member for Ripon. Holding the opinions they did, he and the hon. Member for Newcastle were naturally anxious to find out what was the real policy of the Government with regard to the Soudan. The hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had said that he had some difficulty in discovering what the policy of Her Majesty's Government was. For his part, he had no such difficulty. Although, doubtless, the statements of the different Members of the Cabinet on the subject were somewhat at variance, it was easy to see that the policy of the Government was to overturn the Mahdi, to make an aggressive campaign in the Soudan, and to build a railway from Suakin to Berber, or to somewhere else. A good many reasons, or rather excuses, had been put forward in support of this policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The relief of the garrisons, the necessity for putting down the Slave Trade, and their old friend *prestige* had been put forward at first as the reasons why we should continue the war; but those reasons for that act had gradually disappeared from view. They had been told that it was necessary, in order to defend Egypt, that we must smash the Mahdi. He failed to see what ground could be shown for such a proceeding on the part of Her Majesty's Government. Ethiopia had been attacked from the time of Cambyses; but he never heard of Ethiopia attacking Egypt. We might as well send a Fleet to attack St. Petersburg in order to prevent Russia attacking us in Afghanistan. The right hon. Member for Ripon had said that we ought to take a portion of the Soudan, and then make friends with the Mahdi, and leave him in the Western Soudan; but would it not be more difficult to deal with the Mahdi then than now? Would he not be sure, in such circumstances, to attack the Government we left in Khartoum after we retired? The right hon. Gentleman said that we must occupy Berber for military reasons. Where did the right hon. Gentleman get that idea from? Certainly not from Lord Wolseley's despatches. Lord Wolseley was sometimes called our only General; but if he had made an advance which required a railway and 10,000 more troops to enable him to retire, no military man would be able to accord him the title of a General at all. But the fact was that it was not Lord Wolseley, but Her Majesty's Government, who were responsible for the plan of the campaign. It was true that Her Majesty's Government, following their usual course of endeavouring to shift responsibility from themselves to somebody else, had sought to make Lord Wolseley responsible for any steps that might now be taken by him in the Soudan; but

Lord Wolseley had declined to take the responsibility upon himself, and had said—"No; you, the Government, must tell me what I am to do." It was, therefore, Her Majesty's Government, sitting like an Aulic Council, who had determined that Lord Wolseley was to advance and overthrow the Mahdi. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board had told the House that his idea was that we ought to advance into the Soudan with the view of leaving peace and tranquillity behind us. But why should we undertake to do that in this particular part of the world at the sole expense of the people of this country? But what kind of peace and tranquillity should we leave behind us? Our troops conducted themselves well; but we had a number of Bashi-Bazouks with our Army, and they ravished women, burnt villages, and killed and murdered everyone they encountered. That was the sort of peace and tranquillity we were bringing upon the Soudan. The right hon. Gentleman said that unless the Government promised to remain in the Soudan he should vote against them. But it was precisely because the Government must remain in the Soudan unless they came back at once that he objected to their staying there any longer than could possibly be helped. Let them sweep away all this nonsense about taking one part of the Soudan and then making friends with the Mahdi. If our troops went to Khartoum and set up a Government there, how long would that Government last after they left? The truth was that if once we set up a Government at Khartoum our troops must remain to support it. The Prime Minister had said that he was not going to set up an Egyptian Government at Khartoum; but in that case why had he sent Prince Hassan with Lord Wolseley? They knew the Prime Minister's opinion of the Turks, and therefore they might be sure that he would not set up a Turkish Government there. Would the country consent to Zebehr Pasha being set up at Khartoum? Then, if not, what sort of a Government did Her Majesty's Government intend to set up? Her Majesty's Government had frequently alleged that the Conservatives were responsible for all that had occurred in Egypt and the Soudan. They went on the "This is the house that Jack built" principle. Why, they might as well say that Adam was responsible, because if Adam had not existed we should not have been in the Soudan. But now, at all events, the Government were going to take a new departure, and they could never say that the Conservatives were responsible for this campaign in the Soudan. Her Majesty's Government had always complained of the Convention entered into between the Conservatives and Tewfik; but now they themselves were going to enter into a Convention with a new Tewfik in Khartoum; and if they were turned out of Office they would be able to go about the country protesting against everything that was being done in consequence by hon. Members opposite. What ought to be the proper policy in the Soudan? We ought to withdraw from the Soudan as soon as possible. Lord Wolseley should be told that it was his business not to march to Khartoum or to overthrow the Mahdi, but to withdraw within the Egyptian Frontier. What were we about to do? We were going to fight a little at Suakin and to kill a few thousand Arabs there; we were going to fight a little at Berber and to kill a few thousand more Arabs there; and then we were going to wait until the autumn before going to Khartoum and killing a few thousand more Arabs there. And then we were going to retire. The Prime Minister said that evening that the Mahdi must have known the pacific character of General Gordon's mission, and that we could not now negotiate with him, because he might have entered into some sort of a Treaty with General Gordon. It appeared to him that if a General said he was an Egyptian Governor and intended to smash up some other person, that other person was not very likely to consider the mission a pacific one. At the present moment where was the pacific mission? The Mahdi must have learnt that we were sending Lord Wolseley to overthrow him; and how, then, could he think that it was a pacific mission? Let us, if necessary, convey to the Mahdi as soon as possible the terms on which we were willing to withdraw from the Soudan; and then let us leave the Soudanese to themselves, free to have as prophet General Booth, or anybody else they might choose. As a sensible man, he would probably rest satisfied with being master in his own home, and would not, by pursuing us into Egypt, court his own destruction. He hoped the Prime Minister would seriously take into consideration whether he was really fulfilling the policy of the Mid Lothian campaign. If the right hon. Gentleman frankly declared that he was opposed to the policy of aggression, annexation, and war, the Radical and Liberal Party throughout the country would rally to him. It was the right hon. Gentleman who was responsible for what was going on, as he occupied an exceptional position in the country, where no one enjoyed so much popularity. [*Ironical cheers and laughter from the Opposition.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite knew that he was speaking of facts. But the Liberals had a hard struggle at present to reconcile their desire to support the Prime Minister in the policy he was pursuing. The right hon. Gentleman had but to hold up his hand in order to make the whole Liberal Party rally and sustain him, not only against hon. Gentlemen opposite, but against the right hon. Members for Bradford and Ripon, and all those Whigs who had been the curse and the bane of the present Ministry. Radicals were told that they were impractical zealots and doctrinaires; but the truth was that it was in consequence of being in favour of the integrity and grandeur of the Empire that they were opposed to these useless, purposeless, and impolitic Expeditions. While he was opposed to Her Majesty's Government on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle, he was still more opposed to hon. Gentlemen opposite. He might be a very simple-minded person; but he was not so simple-minded as to jump out of the frying-pan into the fire. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, with their Amendments, were throwing a fly to catch votes on that side of the House; but he trusted no Radical would rise to the fly. The meaning of all these Amendments was—"Turn out the Government and put us in." What would be gained by that? It was said that no speech ever turned a vote; but Lord Salisbury's speech on the previous night would have turned his vote against any Gentleman of the same way of thinking as his Lordship. If the Party opposite came in, what would happen to the Redistribution Bill? He had seen it stated that they would appeal to the present constituencies. ["No!"] He distrusted them, and thought it would be better for the Liberal Party to remain in power and get the Bill through anyhow. If the House had to choose between Lord Salisbury and the Prime Minister, he trusted the House would decide in favour of the latter. He had himself placed on the Paper an Amendment to that proposed by the hon. Member for Newcastle. The Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Newcastle asked them to refrain from expressing an opinion on the policy of the Government. He (Mr. Labouchere) never refrained; and no doubt the Prime Minister, when thinking the matter over, would say—"Why did I not follow the Member for Northampton? I should not have been in such a mess as I am now." The Prime Minister's opinions were his, for the right hon. Gentleman agreed with him in everything. For his own part, he stood by the policy of the Mid Lothian campaign, when the Prime Minister denounced the Jingo policy of annexation and war. If anyone had then said—"You will acquire power and become the most powerful Minister England has had for many a day; you will bombard Alexandria; you will massacre Egyptians at Tel-el-Kebir and Suakin; and you will go on a sort of wild-cat Expedition into the wilds of Ethiopia in order to put down a Prophet," the right hon. Gentleman would have asked, in the words of Hazael, the King of Syria—"Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?" His complaint was that the right hon. Gentleman had not sufficient faith in the Radicals who brought him into power. The Radicals would stick to him now; but he was inclined to think the Whigs would not. In conclusion, the hon. Member said he was willing to make a sacrifice on the altar of simplicity; and therefore he proposed to withdraw his own Amendment, and support that of his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE: It is making a great claim on the indulgence of the House to address it on a night of this kind, and at this hour; but I assure the House I will not interpose longer than 10 minutes between it and the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). I do not know if any serious answer ought to be given to the speech which has been delivered to the House by that very impracticable politician, the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). It is supposed to be a speech in defence of Her Majesty's Government; but it has been a characteristic in this debate that the only difference between us on this side and those who sit below the Gangway on the other side is this—whereas we attack Her Majesty's Government, those who sit below the Gangway on that side reserve all their attacks for the Prime Minister himself. We have heard speech after speech in which the Prime Minister has been denounced as a man who might, if he chose, have saved the country from a policy of wickedness and disgrace, and has not used his power to save the people from the wickedness and shame of this policy. The fact that there are four Amendments in the name of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway shows that there is not one of the Liberal Party sitting there who can formulate a Motion with which any one of his neighbours will agree. With all the comment that is made upon the Resolution of the Leader of the Opposition, there is this about the Resolution. It is accurate, it is intelligible, and it will serve its purpose if it be passed. Her Majesty's Government could not continue to sit upon those Benches and still enjoy the respect of the only body of people who now respect them—I mean, of course, themselves. As to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), it is a sham Amendment. He knows perfectly well the sort of people among whom he is sitting. He knows they have not the courage for a real rebellion, so he proposes an Amendment in which he says—"We will refrain from expressing an opinion on the conduct of Her Majesty's Government." Why does he refrain from expressing that opinion? If, Sir, he could express an opinion in favour of Her Majesty's Government, and if he thought there were 50 Members of this House who would support him in that opinion he would be delighted to recognize the public and private ties of which he spoke so feelingly on Monday last. But if he, in fact, disapproves the conduct of the Government, why has he not the courage to say so? Because he knows the sort of Party by whom he is surrounded. The fact is, this is a sham Amendment. It is said, and I believe with some truth, that the intention of some Members of the Radical section is to vote for this Amendment, which they are quite sure will be defeated, and then to vote for the Government against the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet—one vote for their consciences, which they take care shall have no effect, and one for their Party; so that they will secure the continuance in power of a Government which, so far as we know, is committed to a course of wanton and objectless bloodshed, and, having by their votes made it possible that this course should be pursued, they can go down to their country constituents proudly claiming to be the friends of peace and freedom, and appeal for their justification to the Division List which records their votes on this futile Amendment. I said that if they take this course they will leave the Government to pursue a course of wanton bloodshed. I mean these words in the fullest extent. I believe that the course which has been indicated in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary would be a most disastrous, and, I think, a wicked course. If we are going to Khartoum, there to do the work of civilization, and put some Government there which may utilize the magnificent position and opportunities of that city, and establish an outwork of Western civilization—if you can do that without too great a sacrifice and expenditure then do it. But to go to Khartoum to fight the Mahdi, if he be there, and, if he be not there, then to abandon Khartoum to some imitation King that you may set up, whether in the person of an Egyptian Prince or anyone else, is a wild and wicked enterprize, and one to which I believe the country will never consent. Sir, this debate was relieved the night before last by a most interesting account by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster of his elementary studies in military science. He told us about the retreat of Sir John Moore, about the retreat of the Duke of Wellington on the lines of Torres Vedras, and he told us nobody should leave any position he was in until he had a perfectly safe place to fall back upon. Sir, he has taught a lesson to his Predecessor in one of the Offices he has occupied. The moral is that when a man is Chief Secretary to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he should not leave that post unless he has the Chancellorship of the Duchy to fall back upon. But it is not here amongst ourselves that we can discuss the question of military strategy. The conclusive condemnation of the Government on this matter is this —they have declared that they are going to Khartoum for military objects, and they have not produced a syllable of evidence that either Lord Wolseley, or anyone else of capacity to judge military matters, has shown that that movement is necessary; and not having done that, I say that the movement upon Khartoum, unless they pledge themselves to utilize it for the establishment of a Government, is a movement nothing can justify. We have been told by the Prime Minister that great difficulties have been in the way of the Government. Well, Sir, to the feeble knees every hill is steep. These difficulties which have existed have been made by the Government. They have never had a policy with regard to Egypt since the death of M. Gambetta. They put in a Joint Note by advice of M. Gambetta, which was a fatal step, and the next step was that which led them into this mischief—a step which Lord Granville declared in his own name, and that of the Prime Minister, he believed to be a mistake. On the 15th of May, 1881, Lord Granville wrote a despatch to our Representatives abroad, announcing that the Fleets were going to Alexandria; and a curious departure was adopted from the ordinary practice in diplomatic documents. He mentioned the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. He said he and the Prime Minister alike thought it would have been desirable to have had the concert of the other Powers; but as France had gone so far with us in other matters this was not pressed. From that time to this it has been a course abounding in difficulties, which, if Ministers had gone forward with a clear eye and resolute step, I believe they would have trodden down; but they have been stumbling forward on the path, always with their eye turned back to see if a majority of the House of Commons was being led in a web behind them, following and supporting them. Sir, as I listened to the right hon. Gentleman on Monday evening, I wondered if his memory reminded him that it was the anniversary of a notable event in his life. On the 23rd of February, 1855, the right hon. Gentleman announced in the House of Commons the reason for which he had left the Cabinet of which he had been a Member. It was a Cabinet that is now remembered by Englishmen with neither gratitude nor respect. In the year 1854 the weakness of the Government led us into a wholly unnecessary war, and the mismanagement of the Government almost destroyed an English Army. And now I think there is no division of opinion among Englishmen as to the merits of that Government. All Englishmen reproach it for the feebleness and incompetence which involved us in such heavy sacrifices. Sir, I believe that 30 years hence all Englishmen, without distinction of Party, will look back with reproach and indignation upon the Cabinet of 1884, which used a brilliant soldier that his name might cover and shield an imperilled Ministry, and, directly he had served that Party purpose, refused his appeals, neglected his counsels, and left him abandoned to perish. Sir, there is one man, and one man alone, upon whom the reproach of both these Ministries will fall. The Prime Minister shared the weakness of 1854. To him I believe are, in the main, attributable the disasters which we now deplore. But, Sir, there is one thing more, and it is the darkest line that can be added to this picture. The Prime Minister has more than once, here in this House, endeavoured to palliate the conduct of the Ministry by suggesting that the officer who, at their request, accepted the post of honourable danger, might, if he had so pleased, have found an opportunity to run away. In the debate of the 23rd of February, 1855, the right hon. Gentleman used these words—

> "The fault of our Constitution now, if it be a fault, is this—that public servants are, perhaps, not called to account with sufficient strictness."—(3 *Hansard*, [136] 1845.)

Sir, I agree with those words. Loss of Office is too small a punishment for the betrayal of public duty and the neglect of public duty, and even that penalty may be evaded. The trained fidelity of Party, personal combinations we have heard something to-night of in a whisper or a tone, and the subtle instruments of Parliamentary influence, in the use of which the present Government is experienced and skilled, may to-night prevent the expression by this House of the unhesitating condemnation which their fellow-countrymen have pronounced. But though Members may cling to the Office of which they are proved unworthy, they will not be unpunished. Personal humiliation, the discredit of their Party, the indignation and scorn of the people, will be a sure and severe, but still an inadequate, punishment.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. and learned Member who has just spoken (Mr. E. Clarke) has made a bitter and vehement attack upon the conduct of the Government. No doubt, some Member of the Government will reply to it. But what comes more home to us at this moment is their future policy; thereto, with regard to their past policy, I do not pretend to say that I approve of it. But I think the hon. and learned Member, when he reads his words, will come to the conclusion that the exceeding vehemence of his attack will not be justified by the opinion of the country or of the House. I will say little about the past, and that little will be in relation to General Gordon. I shall not dwell much upon his fate. I know very well that that great and noble and unselfish spirit would have revolted at the idea of a Party struggle over his dead body, or over the sufferings and anxieties of the last few weeks of his life. So far as he is concerned, I venture to hope that his self-sacrificing and patriotic spirit may have some influence over this debate. I cannot but believe that the Members of the Government—my old Colleagues—do feel quite as much as any of us his loss, and the circumstances connected with it. But I think it would have been better, from their own point of view and for their own feelings, if they had not been so anxious to justify themselves in every step they have taken, when, so far as I can see, such justification is impossible. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister evidently believes that the delay in the sending of the Expedition for his relief did not cause Gordon's death. He almost went so far as to suppose that this delay prolonged his life, because it had postponed that approach of the relieving Army which was to be the signal for treachery. I do not think that that is the opinion of the House or of the country. The Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) has made the same statement in "another place." One word with regard to this hypothesis. In order to secure the success of treachery, it was necessary that there should be not only treachery within the city, but also a strong force without the city. It was a very short time, only two or three weeks, before the last catastrophe, that the Mahdi, with his forces, took possession of that important place, Omdurman, just below Khartoum, the possession of which vastly increased his power, and prevented the escape of Gordon, if he had designed to attempt it with a few faithful followers, by the White Nile. I believe it was the possession of that place that gave the traitors encouragement and the means of carrying out their treachery; but how if the Expedition had arrived a month before? One word more. I wait, and all General Gordon's friends and admirers wait, for the publication of his diaries. We know there are six volumes of them, and I want to take this opportunity of saying that I trust, and cannot but believe, that the Government will take care that every word in these diaries comes before the public. I am not sure that the Government has the right to determine the matter. Unless they are official diaries, they belong to General Gordon's family. As it is sometimes suggested that his relations or friends might have some feeling on the subject, I take the opportunity of saying—and I am authorized to do so on behalf of his nearest relatives—that they are most anxious that every word in these diaries of public interest should be published. They will be the record of the agony of a noble soul, who cared not for his own life or what he suffered, but only for those who were trusting in him, whom he had in charge, and whose lives were getting day by day in more danger, and he did not know how to save them. My noble Friend the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) will, of course, close this debate. He will have much to say, and, therefore, it may seem hard to ask him further questions. But there is one question I should like to ask him. It was very late before the Expedition was resolved upon. It was August 20 before the despatches omitted the phrase "if it would be necessary" to send the Expedition. I want to ask this question, and it is fair that the

House should have an answer. Were there no representations made by Lord Wolseley as to the delay of this Expedition? If so, why were they not attended to? Were the reasons political or military? Were they fully considered or not? My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave a military reason. He said that when the possibility of its being right to send an Expedition had come into view, no doubt much time was spent in the examination of the question of the two routes. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] Yes; that is so. Only this morning I took down from the report of my right hon. Friend's speech in *The Times* these words—

> "When the possibility of its being right to send an Expedition to relieve General Gordon had come in view, no doubt much time was spent in the examination of the question." [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] "I think I may say, for some months, the balance of evidence appeared to be in favour of the Suakin route. It was not until after that period had elapsed that at length, and with deliberation, and therefore in time, judgment appeared evidently to preponderate in favour of the Nile route."

Now, I think this military reason requires some explanation from my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War. It was not merely that the life of Gordon was at stake, but also the success of the Expedition. We know that the result of his death and the fall of Khartoum has enormously increased the difficulties and dangers to be confronted by the Expedition. We have the right to ask—Are the affairs of the War Office so conducted that doubts with regard to these two routes could continue so long unsolved? Did this need for balancing advantages last so long as to make the failure of the Expedition, in any circumstances, so much more probable?" Again, I think we ought to know whether it was solely on military grounds that there was this long examination, or whether there were not also political and Parliamentary considerations? The hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), in his remarkably terse and vigorous speech, made a remark about myself which gave me pain. He said that if one cause more than another had conduced to the final catastrophe and the death of General Gordon, it was the attitude taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite and by myself in the pressure they put upon the Government to prevent the appointment of Zebehr. Now, that was a very serious charge. I knew General Gordon. He was a personal friend. I am proud to say he was a distant relation of mine; I am in constant communication with his family; and when I am told that I caused his death, hon. Members will not be suprised that I feel the charge.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I desire to explain that nothing could have been further from my intention than to impute any such aim or object to my right hon. Friend. What I said was this. General Gordon applied for Zebehr to be sent to him from February 18 onward. So late as March 5 Lord Granville wrote that the question was still open. On March 10, my right hon. Friend, in an extremely powerful and vigorous speech, said he hoped Zebehr would not be sent without the House being consulted. On the very next day Lord Granville wrote the despatch stating that Zebehr could not be allowed to go. Surely, then, I may be permitted to say that my right hon. Friend was partly and gravely responsible for the non-sending of Zebehr.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I did not for a moment suppose that my hon. Friend, or, indeed, any individual in the Three Kingdoms, could have charged me with having such an aim and object. But I would like to know how my hon. Friend would feel, under the same circumstances, if he were charged with having acted in such a manner as to cause Gordon's death. The hon. Member has described what happened. I objected strongly to the appointment of Zebehr Pasha. Afterwards, finding the Government had felt some objections, I said the House ought to be informed of the reasons why Zebehr should be sent, before he was sent. The Government thought the same, and they instituted inquiries; they got reasons from General Gordon, and they were not satisfied with the appointment. My hon. Friend says they were wrong; but I very much doubt whether he, in the same position, would have acted otherwise. Would he have been prepared, not merely to send Zebehr, with his antecedents, but to support him with the power of England after he got to Khartoum? I will not dwell further upon this subject, except to say that I thank hon. Members for allowing me to defend myself from this charge—for I still think it a charge—and that I adhere to what I stated on May 13. If hon. Members will kindly refer to my speech of that date, they will there see that I stated, what I repeat now, that the Government were not so much to blame for refusing to send Zebehr, as for their lamentable refusal to take the consequences of their decision. Zebehr Pasha was not sent. General Gordon then said—"Let me retire." But he was not allowed to retire, nor was he helped to remain. I will detain the House no longer on this branch of the subject; but let me now turn to the future policy of the Government. What is the future policy of the Government? Nobody knows. I do not know. My hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) said he did know; but, having discovered it, he did not like it at all. He began by saying that the object of his speech was to prevent the possibility of my views and the views of my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) being carried out. But although he stated that to be the object of his speech, his attack was directed entirely against the Government. The hon. Member gave me a name which I have never been called before. Although I have been called by many names, both outside the House and in it, I do not remember ever before having been called a Whig. The hon. Member did not correctly state the view of my right hon. Friend. What my right hon. Friend stated—and I agree with him — was that if we go to Khartoum or anywhere else, and if we take upon ourselves responsibilities, then we must fulfil them. We must, therefore, be careful how we incur these responsibilities. I say we do not know what the policy of the Government is. We know that the Government have pledged themselves to use the power of this Empire to do a certain thing; but we do not know, nor can we discover, what is their policy or object in doing this thing. The Prime Minister, yesterday week, when he made his first careful statement—we have got it now by heart—said that, upon hearing of the fall of Khartoum, the Cabinet had a most momentous question before them, and had to decide what steps they should take. The question which seemed to be put before them—I cannot understand why it was the only alternative—was, whether or not they should proceed to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum? The Government decided that it was their duty to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, and to use the Forces of this country for that purpose, and to send out this Expedition for that purpose. It is one thing to prevent the Mahdi from taking Khartoum, and another thing to pledge the country to the overthrow of the Mahdi at Khartoum. What does that pledge mean? If it be carried out —and it is a very serious matter before England, before Europe, and even before Africa to make this pledge, unless there be a most determined effort to carry it out—it means a most bloody and most costly war — hundreds and thousands of our brave men killed, and tens of thousands of brave Arabs. I have to answer to my conscience and to my constituents for the course I take in this matter. Some of my hon. Friends below the Gangway find no difficulty whatever in voting confidence in the Government. My hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney)—I do not know what he will do exactly —said that if he wished his views to be carried out—and anyone who heard his most powerful and eloquent speech will feel with what earnestness he holds his views—he should most certainly not vote with the Government, but with the right hon. Gentleman opposite. What are the reasons which the Government have given for the course they propose to take? Again, I must go back to the statement of yesterday week with reference to the Expedition, that any other resolution than the one for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum would be an abandonment of the original objects of the Expedition. I wish that these objects had been as clearly stated months ago as they were yesterday week. I am not sure, if they had, that the Expedition would not have been far less costly, less large, and probably would have succeeded better. What are the objects now, when they do not appear to be so necessary as before Gordon's death? The first is to "rescue those to whom Gordon felt bound in honour, and for whose safety he was pledged." That object must be abandoned. Gordon is dead; those whom he had pledged himself to protect were killed with him, or they have fled, or they have joined the Mahdi; at any rate, they are not there to rescue. The next object is to rescue other garrisons in the Soudan. Again I say, if we had made that our object a few months ago, it might have been more useful. But what garrisons? Khartoum is taken. Bahr Gazelle may be holding out; Kassala, according to the last accounts, was holding out with great bravery. But if the Government were to send an Expedition to rescue the garrisons of Kassala and Bahr Gazelle, it would probably march, not by way of Khartoum, but of Abyssinia. The next object is to establish some orderly Government at Khartoum, and the last is to check the Slave Trade. I take them together, because, if there be no orderly Government at Khartoum, there will be no check upon the Slave Trade. What does my right hon. Friend mean by the establishment of an orderly Government? I do not know, nor does the House know. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition asks, as he has a right to ask, by the terms of his Motion—"Do you mean a good and stable Government?" I do not myself see the difference between the two. We all remember the eloquent fervour and indignation with which my right hon. Friend denounced the idea of establishing a good and stable Government. Then, what is the real difference between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition on this point, between establishing an orderly Government and a good and stable Government? I confess I do not understand the difference in the mere words themselves. But my right hon. Friend, as we all know, is the greatest master that ever existed of distinctions and differences. He convinces himself of them, as he does others; but he does not always convince facts. If a real attempt be made to establish an orderly Government, it will be much the same thing as trying to establish a good and stable Government. But then comes the question whether the Government are going to make such attempt or not. If they are going to overthrow the power of the Mahdi, what are they going to put in the place of it? My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department hoped they would set up the power of the Native Sultans. Many remarks have been made about that. It is much the same as the policy which was adopted in Zululand. My right hon. Friend quoted the authority of General Gordon in favour of it. I wonder at that, because General Gordon, before his arrival in Khartoum, found that it was impossible and hopeless to attempt it. Are you going to put up at Khartoum a puppet to be knocked down when you leave it, or will you put up a man whom you will undertake to support? If the latter, then there is no difference between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, as far as Khartoum is concerned. But I must say that I agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) that if you are to put up a puppet for the purpose of being knocked down when you leave, a war for such a purpose would be a useless war, costing men and money, and leading to no result, or, if to any result, to anarchy; and if I be asked by my constituents whether there is not blood-guiltiness in such a war, I shall be unable to reply. But other Members of the Cabinet have spoken. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) made a most interesting speech, full of the most delightful historic illustrations; but he took very good care, I observed, to say nothing about overthrowing the Mahdi at Khartoum. What he did say was that it was our duty to pursue the war. I suppose it is; I imagine that, if we do not pursue the war, the war will pursue us. Then came the speech of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, one of the most powerful speeches I ever recollect hearing in this House—a most eloquent speech, full of argument. But for whom? Not for the Government, but for my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle. What he wished to do—what he showed to be his great desire—was to get out, not only of the Soudan, but of Egypt. Not a word in his speech about establishing a stable Government at Khartoum. I suppose it might be included in the objects which the Head of the Government declared were not to be abandoned, but which he described as merely secondary objects. Then why does the Secretary of State for the Home Department go to Khartoum? Because it is, he says, the only manner in which the evacuation of the Soudan can be accomplished consistently with the safety of Egypt; but he gave not the slightest shadow of an argument for this opinion. Then came my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). He gave this definition—"It is our intention to use all reasonable care to leave behind us in the Soudan a state of tranquillity." That is a new version of the Government policy. We are to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, not because it is necessary for the safety of the Army, or conducive to the success of the military operations — not because it is necessary for the safety of Egypt —but because, having gone to Khartoum, and having left it, we may leave it with the comfortable conviction that we have taken every reasonable care to insure tranquillity. Yes; but what is reasonable tranquillity? It may be interpreted to mean putting up some puppet, and giving some verbal or written declaration that he will be supported, and then, after destroying the only possible Government at Khartoum —the Government of the Mahdi—which might secure tranquillity, although probably accompanied by cruelty, leaving the place really to anarchy. It might be that, but it will not be; because the British people would come forward, and, in spite of the prophecies of the hon. Members for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) and Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), would express the conviction, which is strong in their hearts, that if this country undertakes great responsibilities, even among barbarous nations, it must fulfil them. Not being able to obtain much information in this House, I read the debates of the other, where I found that the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook) had declared that the policy of the Government was clear, and that they would hold their own in the country, and conduct its affairs for the benefit and advantage of the people. But his policy is very different from that of the Home Secretary; and considering the power of that right hon. Gentleman in the Government, and everywhere else where he takes a part, I very much doubt whether the First Lord of the Admiralty will be able to carry his policy out. Now comes the question, What are we to do? There are a large number of Motions before us, and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has no easy task before him when he has undertaken to say "No" to all of them. I cannot vote for the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle. What would the Amendment of the hon. Member mean, if there were a possibility of its being carried? I do not believe that he himself would have moved it if he had thought that it would be carried, though there are, I imagine, some Gentlemen who will vote for it, as he would not do so, if they expected such a result. But what would it mean? It would mean retreat, acknowledgment of defeat, and, what is of more importance, a declaration that we do not intend to fulfil the responsibilities which we have already incurred. There is, however, in reality only one question before us; and that is whether we can repose confidence in the Egyptian and Soudan policy of the Government? It is impossible to separate the one from the other, for their Soudan policy is only an illustration of their Egyptian policy. My hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard, in his eloquent peroration, made an appeal to the Prime Minister, asking him to wake up and to dictate a policy to the country which would be right and consistent with the views of my hon. Friend. He gave the House to understand that he knew that was the real policy of my right hon. Friend. My hon. Friend is a man of great eloquence, earnestness, and great knowledge; but, if he will allow me to say it, with the belief that he has even more knowledge than he possesses. One way in which he shows this belief is by stating, as he has done in Cornwall and in this House, that he knows what are the real and inmost thoughts of the Government, although they have not been expressed. However, we cannot jump to the same conclusion, because we have no facts to warrant it. What are the facts which we have before us? My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made a most remarkable statement in his speech the other night. I do not know that I ever heard from him, or from any Prime Minister, such a speech. Replying to the charge of the hon. Member for Newcastle, that they had not the courage of their convictions, he said—

> "We had no alternative in this Egyptian policy. Each step was inevitable; our decisions, sad and deplorable as they may have been in themselves, were yet inevitable in the circumstances, and at the moment when we were called upon to take them."

Why this helpless position? Why this slavery to circumstances? Why is my right hon. Friend, with all his power, his wonderful faculties and popularity, such as no other Prime Minister in our days has ever possessed—why is he, with his Colleagues, who are also men of ability such as is rarely met with in the same number of men, forced to make this confession of helplessness? Why avowed policy of drifting? For this reason—because, in every step which they have taken, they have not looked forward to the next step. That has been the case from the beginning. When, by the power of our arms, we overthrew Arabi and the Egyptian Government, there was no acknowledgment for a long time afterwards by the Government, even in their own minds, of their responsibility for securing that there should be good government. When the Expedition of General Hicks was permitted to go to the Soudan, there was no thought of what might happen in the event of its probable failure and destruction. When the Egyptian Government were ordered to abandon the Soudan, no attempt was made to secure the retreat of the garrisons; and when Gordon came forward, with his devotion, to undertake his mission, there was an absolute and almost child-like refusal to face the responsibility of his possible failure. When our Government appointed General Gordon Governor General of the Soudan, they had no knowledge or comprehension of the responsibilities of that appointment; when his proposals were rejected—that of sending Zebehr among others—there was no suggestion of other plans; when he was ordered to remain at Khartoum, there was no attempt to secure his safety. The danger to him was at last realized, and then there were months of indecision as to whether he should be relieved, and how. And now, when we are asked to take this new departure, as my hon. Friends call it, and are asked to support the pledge of the Government to overthrow the Mahdi at Khartoum, there appears to be no consideration of what is to be the next step. Why, even in the matter of this railway we do not know what is to be done, There are different stories given by all of the Ministers as to what is to become of this railway. All I can find out is that it will be made, probably for military reasons, just about the time when the Nile will be full, and the troops could go by that route. There is no doubt the railway might do a great deal of good; but we cannot get from the Government any sort of definition as to what their object is. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister put this question, last Monday, upon very high grounds. He described it not merely as a Vote of Censure, but as a Vote of Confidence. He evidently wished us to understand that we were to give this vote, not as we often have to do, in Votes of Censure, in consideration of everything that might happen from their success, but upon the merits of the particular question. He was quite right. The merits of this question are so important that the vote must be given upon them. What did he say? He said that this was a serious crisis, and deprecated the spectacle, in the face of the world, of a disparaged Government and a doubtful House of Commons. There is, however, one thing worse than a disparaged Government, and that is a doubting Government. We have a doubting Government, because we have a divided Government. We often hear of differences in the Cabinet, and I know very well that such rumours are generally unfounded. But no one can have heard the speeches that have been made by Members of the Government, or watched the decisions that have been come to, and also the want of decisions, without being certain that rumour, in this case, has been right. It is clear there have been two parties and two voices in the Cabinet for months—on this Soudan and Egyptian policy—those who wished to fulfil the responsibilities we have undertaken, and those who have tried to evade their responsibilities. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department has shown clearly enough how difficult it must be for any Cabinet of which he is a Member, with his power and his energy, to fulfil those responsibilities. We have no right to incur responsibilities unless we intend to fulfil them. We have incurred responsibilities which we must fulfil, and therefore I cannot vote for the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle. My right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon has been charged with saying that he goes further than the Government. What he really said, and I agree with him, is that whatever responsibilities we incur, whether we go forward or not, having incurred those responsibilities we must fulfil them, and that we should not incur them unless we intend to fulfil them. But although I will not vote with my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, if these two policies are to go on in the Cabinet, neutralizing one another and making no policy a success—in fact, preventing any real policy from being carried out—I say that better than that would be even the policy of my hon. Friend. But, Sir, this doubt and vacillation have continued long enough. We have one more speech to hear to-night—namely, one from my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War. If it were not for the views expressed in the speech of the Home Secretary, I dare say we might have implicit confidence in the speech we are about to hear from my noble Friend. His earnestness of purpose is well known. No one disputes it; but what guarantee have we that he will have the power to give effect to his desires? I fear that this policy of doubt and vacillation will continue? If I thought it was at an end I would throw all considerations of the past to the winds, and not only vote for the Government, but support them with all my might; but I see every reason to believe that it will continue, and therefore I cannot record my vote in their favour.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Mr. Speaker, there are on the Paper to-night many Amendments to the Resolution which has been proposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), who has just sat down, says there is only one issue before us. I cannot altogether agree with him in that statement, because, in my opinion, there are two very distinct and important issues upon which the House will have to decide to-night. One is placed before us by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley)—namely, whether we are to adopt the policy of retreat, or whether we are to go forward and break the power of the Mahdi, with whom we have been in conflict. The issue submitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, which, although a part of the Resolution, professes to lay down a policy for the future, is substantially whether, on account of the alleged shortcomings of the Government in the past, and the inadequacy of their present declarations of the policy in the Soudan and the conduct of the operations which are now in progress—in fact, that the policy of this country throughout the world should be placed in other hands. Well, Sir, both of these issues are, or certainly may be, of great and supreme importance. The first of them is of the most immediate and pressing urgency, although I agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford that, for the present, it is an issue not in doubt. Probably, as has been said by my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) to-night, it may be an issue which may eventually come before the country, and it would be rash and imprudent at the present time to say that the country has absolutely made up its mind with regard to it; but it is not an issue before the House to-night. Whoever may sit on these Benches, the Expedition in the Soudan will proceed, and such help as he may demand will be given to Lord Wolseley in the enterprize in which he is now engaged. The issue may, in the future, involve larger issues than any that are in question at the present moment; but, as regards immediate action and policy, the vote of to-night can make no change. With the permission of the House I will say a few words on each of the issues which has been placed before us. With reference to the issue raised by the hon. Member for Newcastle, I would ask whether, under present circumstances, we intend to retreat from the Soudan? It is very easy for the hon. Members for Newcastle and Liskeard to make academical, and I dare say strictly logical, declarations as to the inexpediency of the course we have adopted in this matter. My hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard has, however, omitted one thing from his speech and argument to-night. He has said that the step we have recently taken in Egypt was the necessary and logical consequence of the steps we had previously taken there, and that it was impossible, having once commenced to interfere in Egyptian affairs, for us to have stopped short of anything which we have done up to the present time. But my hon. Friend says that we have now reached a point when it is possible to take a new departure; and, indeed, he says that the recent decision of the Government is, in fact, a new departure. I think that a mere statement of the facts and of the position in which we stand will show that my hon. Friend is mistaken in his assertion, and that the present step which we are called upon to take is the inevitable consequence of the previous steps which he himself approves. Let us see what is the position in which this country stands at the present moment. We sent General Gordon to Khartoum; we may have been wrong in coming to that decision; but I should like to ask any of the hon. Members who take that view to consider what was the state of public opinion on the subject in this House, in this country, and throughout the world, at the time that General Gordon was sent out. I will ask those hon. Members to say whether that public opinion was an unwise or an ignoble public opinion? That public opinion, although it did not desire to continue Egyptian rule in the Soudan, protested against the abandonment, without an effort at rescue, of those garrisons and those Egyptian subjects who, through no fault of their own, and many of them against their own will, found themselves in the Soudan, and who were exposed to the imminent danger of massacre or of slavery. In the circumstances, it was impossible for us to refuse to attempt to rescue the whole of those garrisons and those Egyptian subjects. We carefully considered the case of the different garrisons, and we took into account the enormous distances which separated some of the positions, together with the conditions of climate, and we found that it would be impossible to reach all those garrisons; but, at the same time, we felt that, in the opinion of the country, something ought to be done to relieve them. It was the opinion of the Egyptian authorities that something might be done by the mission of General Gordon; and it was the opinion of General Gordon himself, as well as of many others in this country. It was also the opinion of the Government; and we felt that we were not entitled, in the circumstances in which we were placed, to refuse General Gordon's self-sacrificing offer, that if he could do something he would gladly go out. Well, then, Sir, what have we done further? We have sent out an Expedition to endeavour to relieve General Gordon and the garrison of Khartoum. Perhaps some hon. Members may think that we were not bound to send out such an Expedition; but here, again, I ask hon. Members to consider what was the state of opinion in this House and in this country upon that subject, and to consider whether it was possible, when the fact of General Gordon's imminent danger was made known, that public opinion would have been satisfied if no effort had been made to relieve him and the garrison of Khartoum? Now, we are in this position. First, in the form of a British officer, General Gordon, and next in the form of a British Army—a victorious British Army—the power of civilization has been brought face to face with the power of barbarism and anarchy. It might, in these circumstances, have been open to my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, but it certainly is not open to my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard, to contend that we have been mistaken, and that we should have adopted a policy which, in our opinion, it would have been impossible for us to adopt, and which the sense of the country would unanimously have repudiated. After the gallant defence of Khartoum for a whole year by General Gordon, after the Relief Expedition has come into conflict with the forces which were besieging it, after they have uniformly triumphed in those conflicts, and have approached within a few days' march of Khartoum, not only to rescue Gordon, but to carry on his successful resistance against barbarism—I say that, in such a position as this, it is impossible that the march of that victorious Army should be stayed and converted into a retreat, owing to an act of treachery on the part of one of General Gordon's Army; but a lesson must be taught, not only to the people of Africa, but to the whole world, that the policy of the

British Empire is not to be reversed by the single act of a traitor in General Gordon's camp. My hon. Friend has said that this is a new departure; but does he think the alternative he suggests would not be a new step and a new departure, and does he think that a step of that kind, converting a triumph into a retreat—a new step of most momentous importance, independently of the consideration whether it could be honourably adopted—would be a step of an authoritative or binding character that it would be politic or wise to take? Sir, that would be a lesson, indeed, which I hope we shall be slow to teach, either to the people of Africa or to the world. We owe something to the people of Egypt, for whose affairs we are responsible; and can it be supposed that so great an encouragement could be given to the forces of anarchy, which are opposed to civilization as it exists in Egypt, without inflicting a heavy blow upon all the prospects of the regeneration of that country? We owe something not only to the people of Egypt, but also to other Powers who have interests in Egypt. We owe something to our Ally, France, which has interests in Egypt. We owe something to our Mahommedan subjects. We also owe something to our Indian Empire. What would the Mahommedans of that Empire think if they beheld the spectacle of British civilization retiring before a barbarous form of Mahommedan fanaticism? Then, we owe something to every one of our own Colonies which are brought into contact with savage races; and we owe something to every Colony in the world to which the name, the credit, and the honour of England are dear. Then, Sir, if that would be, as I think it would be, a new departure, and a new step of a momentous and most disgraceful character, what was to be done? We came to the decision communicated by the Government to Lord Wolseley. I will not quarrel about words; but I maintain that it was only a political decision, in the sense that it was a decision between retreat and maintaining our position. Lord Wolseley required instructions; and we required information as to the resistance which he would meet. Lord Wolseley told us that if we abandoned all idea of going to Khartoum, and if we abandoned all intention of overthrowing the power of the Mahdi, he would take his measures accordingly. He said, on the other hand, that if we resolved not to retreat, but to prosecute the original object of his Expedition, as far as it could be prosecuted, he would also be prepared to take measures with that object. Well, Sir, we informed Lord Wolseley; and I doubt whether we had any alternative but to tell him that military measures were to be taken based on the necessity we recognized, that it would be necessary that the power of the Mahdi should be broken; that that object would probably involve an advance on Khartoum; and that his military measures were to be based upon that possibility. If the political circumstances change, the military measures must, of course, be changed also; but I cannot say that I see any probability of any such change, or that it will be possible for Lord Wolseley, and the Army at his disposal, either to maintain his position or to destroy the power of the Mahdi, which we told him was an essential condition, without making those preparations which are necessary to advance to and, if necessary, recapture Khartoum. As to the second issue before us, that is not a question of the immediate military policy of the country. I believe that the Opposition, if they accede to power, will carry it out. They will find that there are larger and wider issues involved than the issue which the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) has raised. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt) pointed out last night what some of these issues were, what tremendous responsibilities were involved, or might be involved, in a policy which is not distinctly stated, but shadowed out in the right hon. Gentleman's Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) has, to-night, spoken somewhat more definitely than his Predecessors in the debate of the policy of his Party in the Soudan. He has asked us to state, not the details, but the principles of our policy. He has taken exception to what was said by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to whom he attributed the statement that the sole object of this Expedition was the evacuation of the Soudan. What I understood my right hon. Friend to say was that the measures which we are taking would be necessary if that were the case. But the Prime Minister has already stated other objects which would be sacrificed if we arrived at any other decision—objects which we were not prepared to sacrifice, but which we were prepared to make reasonable sacrifices to obtain. But when the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) attempted to define a policy himself, he proceeded a certain distance; but, to my mind, he stopped short of giving the House a clear and definite idea of what that policy was, just as we have been accused of doing. The right hon. Gentleman, it is true, said we must retain the control of the Nile Valley, at least, as far as Khartoum, and the route from Suakin to the Nile. Well, Sir, as far as the objects of that policy are concerned, that is definite enough. But he stopped short then, and did not tell us how all this was to be done—whether the control over the Nile Valley was to be retained by British troops, or Indian troops, or a Fellaheen Egyptian Army. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman thinks that it will be possible permanently to retain a large British Army in the Nile Valley, or to keep open the communication between Suakin and Berber. I do not know whether he has consulted the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), or the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), whether, in their opinion, the employment of the Indian Army for such a service would conduce to the popularity or the efficiency of our Indian Army. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman supposes that the Fellaheen Army, which met the Arab Tribes at Teb, under Baker Pasha, can be trusted to retain for us the control of the Nile Valley and the communication between Suakin and Berber. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman contemplates the organization of Native levies. Is he certain that that policy can be carried out, and is he prepared to pledge himself as to the mode, and has he a distinct opinion how these objects, however desirable in themselves, can be accomplished? Is the House prepared to pledge itself to the policy described by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, of undertaking, in the heart of Africa, the government of a new India, in circumstances much more difficult than those which attend the present government of our Indian Empire? And, Sir, there is another question. Are right hon. Gentlemen opposite prepared, with a light heart, to undertake such a policy? Are they confident that the country will support them steadfastly and earnestly in their determination to carry it out? Why, Sir, what is the very first step, if they succeed in defeating us to-night? If they succeed in taking our places, of what will the majority which will produce that result be composed? Is it a majority which will be prepared to support them in carrying out that earnest and steadfast determination—that policy which has been indicated? Are you certain that a majority of this House, which may place you in power, will support you in that policy; and are you certain that the country—either the existing constituencies or those which are shortly to come into existence—will do so? Well, Sir, if right hon. Gentlemen opposite are so convinced, if the House is convinced, that the country is ready to support them in that policy, I have no more to say. I have only to say that they are the men, and not we, who ought to be entrusted with the execution of that policy. But that they have formed any such determination I greatly doubt. If they do not propose any great change in the policy which we set before them—if, in fact, it is only to be a change of men, and not of measures; if they are not prepared, any more than we are, to attempt to attain the object they aim at by all reasonable means, then, perhaps, I may be permitted for a short time to advert to some of the charges, retrospective, present, and prospective, which have been brought forward in this debate, as a reason why we should change the men and not the policy. It may be true that a Government must be judged by the results of its policy; but it is not to be always assumed that there is some way in which success could have been achieved, and that it is bound to be impossible that any combination of circumstances could ever occur in which the choice before the Government is anything but a choice of evils, and in which it was absolutely impossible that a satisfactory result could, in any case, have been obtained. Unless all assumptions are to be made against the Government, I maintain that now, with all the knowledge that has been acquired after the event, and not before, it is impossible to show that there has been any other course open to the Government, at any period of these transactions, which would have insured success, or which might not have led to as great or greater misfortunes than those which have occurred. It cannot certainly be shown that it was any inevitable consequence of our policy that has prevented the relief of Khartoum. It has been pointed out that what has prevented the relief of Khartoum was an act of treachery—an accident, which no foresight could possibly have averted—an event which might have happened a week or a month after General Gordon reached Khartoum. It is quite true, as the right hon. Gentleman has said, that time was of the essence of this matter, and that it was probable that the time which elapsed before General Gordon was relieved greatly increased the chances of treachery; but we know, as a matter of fact, that treachery existed in General Gordon's camp from the time of his arrival. We know the severe measures he had to take in order to punish it; and I altogether dissent from the contention of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) that treachery could not be successful unless it was supported by a powerful enemy at the gates of Khartoum. Sir, as it happened in the present case, it appears to have taken the form of opening the gates to the enemy; but there were other forms which it might have taken. General Gordon might, without difficulty, have been assassinated in his Palace, and the defence of Khartoum would then have collapsed as effectually as by the opening of the gates. But for this act of treachery there is every reason to believe that the Force under General Stewart would have reached Khartoum, and would have raised the siege of the city, and that he would have enabled General Gordon to defeat the scattered Forces by which he had been so long beleaguered. The main object of the Expedition of Lord Wolseley would then have been accomplished; and this Resolution which is now before the House would never have been made, although I have not the smallest doubt that the ingenuity of right hon. Gentlemen opposite would have found some other equally satisfactory ground for moving a Vote of Censure on Her Majesty's Government. But, Sir, I have to ask whether the judgment of the British House of Commons is to be reversed; and whether that which is now made the subject of a Vote of Censure would not rather have been the subject of a Vote of Approval and of Confidence in the Government but for an act of treachery? Sir, what are the alternatives which are so lightly spoken of, and which, we are told, were within the reach of Her Majesty's Government throughout these transactions? We are told that we might have utilized General Graham's successes at an earlier period. As to that, I, for one, shall never cease to rejoice that we did not yield to the advice given us, as I think, on imperfect knowledge of the circumstances, that we should send a couple of squadrons at the time from Suakin to Berber. I do not deny that those squadrons might possibly have reached Berber; but we know that within a very short time of the date at which they could have reached it, Berber was beleaguered and surrounded; the tribes on all sides of it were in revolt; and there is no reason whatever to suppose that that little Force would not have been surrounded and beleaguered in Berber during the summer months; and that, in addition to the anxiety undergone on account of General Gordon and his gallant companions, in addition to sending an Expedition for his rescue, we should have had to send an Expedition to rescue the garrison at Berber, surrounded by hostile tribes, without any means of communication, and without any means of obtaining supplies. Then, Sir, we were told we might have sent General Graham's Force; but those who speak of the employment of General Graham's Force at the time overlook altogether the fact that this was absolutely impossible. General Graham's Force was not provided with transport. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheer that statement; but perhaps they do not remember that General Graham's Force was organized very rapidly, and for a special object. It was approved by the majority in this House that it should attempt the rescue of the Egyptian garrisons in the immediate neighbourhood of the Red Sea. It was not possible, in a short time, to bring together General Graham's Force with the amount of transport that would have enabled him to move any great distance into the interior; and when hon. Gentlemen speak so lightly of moving a large Force to Berber, in my opinion very few of them have considered what the difficulty of transport is. An hon. Gentleman asked me, the other day, whether I was aware that the whole of General Hicks's Army moved into the Soudan? Sir, I am perfectly aware that, in totally different circumstances, when the country was comparatively tranquil, that it was possible to move bodies of men along that route in very small detachments, and in a short space of time. But the circumstances at the time we have to consider were altered, and the country was not tranquil; and there is the strong probability, and even an absolute certainty, that a large Force would have to be encountered at the end of the march. Everyone knows that an Army on its march through a barren country must be accompanied by an enormous number of transport animals; that, in addition to the ordinary wants of the Army, water for that Army, water for the followers, and water for the transport animals themselves has to be carried on the backs of camels and other animals. It will, therefore, be seen that the number of animals required is almost past calculation; and I have not heard any competent authority put the number of camels necessary for sending any respectable Force across the Desert to Berber at less than between 40,000 and 70,000. Then, Sir, I am asked why were not earlier measures taken between April, or May and August, for the purpose of preparing an advance from Suakin, either by means of a railway, or by the Nile route? It is quite true that there were many and great difficulties to be considered and weighed very carefully. There were differences of opinion between the Military Authorities as to the best route to be taken. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford asked me a question to-night with reference to the advice given by Lord Wolseley on this subject. Sir, I not entitled—indeed, I think I am bound —not to give my right hon. Friend any information as to the advice given on this subject by Lord Wolseley to the Government. Lord Wolseley is one of the confidential Military Advisers of Her Majesty's Government; he was consulted at the very earliest period of these transactions by me, and I was throughout in confidential communication with him. There would be an end of confidential communication between a Government and its Military Advisers, if, on the demand of any Member of this House, a Minister of the Crown, who is alone responsible, were compelled to tell the House what was the advice given him from this quarter or from that with reference to operations. Although I say that the military difficulties were great, and although there was a difference of opinion between the Military Authorities, I have no hesitation in saying that the justification, or excuse, or whatever term you prefer, of the Government has rested mainly on the fact—which we have never attempted to conceal—that the Government were not, until a comparatively late period, convinced of the absolute necessity of sending a Military Expedition to Khartoum. The grounds of that opinion were fully stated by my right hon. Friend and myself in the debate in this House in the middle of last May, and they were still more carefully and fully stated on the 5th of August last. My right hon. Friend reviewed at that time the evidence in our possession, and frankly and openly communicated to the House —and it was made the ground of Parliamentary action—that the Government were not satisfied, from the evidence in their possession, of the proved necessity of the relief of General Gordon by a Military Expedition. That opinion of the Government was never concealed. At that very time, when we came to the House to ask for a Vote of Credit, it was stated to the House that it was not a Vote for the despatch of an Expedition, of the military necessity of which we were not satisfied; but that it was a Vote to enable the Government to make certain preparations for the contingencies of such an Expedition, if the necessity of it were proved. With the experience we have since obtained of the difficulties and dangers attending any operation of that character, I think that the Government had a right to hesitate, and was bound to hesitate, before it involved the British Army in all those dangers and difficulties, unless and until it was beyond the possibility of doubt that the relief of General Gordon could not be effected in any other manner. It is very easy to talk about the possibility and expediency of making preparations which would have enabled us to move when the necessity was proved; but, Sir, it is not so easy in practice to draw a distinction between the preparation for, and the initiation of, an Expedition. Take, for instance, the Berber-Suakin route, recommended by hon. Gentlemen opposite; nothing more could have been done than was done short of the absolute despatch of the Expedition to make preparations for an advance by that route. Not a step could be taken further than was taken for the preparation of a railway from Suakin without sending forward another Expedition and again attacking Osman Digna; and, in my opinion, the House of Commons and the country would not have supported the Government in sending another Expedition, unless it was adequately and conclusively proved that it was necessary for the rescue of General Gordon. Well, Sir, the circumstances were somewhat different as regards the Nile route; and, as regards that route, we did endeavour to draw a distinction between operation and preparation. But the moment preparation was made that distinction entirely vanished. We had not only to make preparations here—to order supplies, and so on—but we had to make preparations in Egypt, and beyond it. We had to secure the co-operation of the Mudir of Dongola, and of the tribes under his direction—the tribes on the Nile and in the Korosko and Bayuda Deserts, and beyond the Frontiers of Egypt Proper, whatever might have taken place at Khartoum; but once these measures had been taken with regard to those tribes, it was almost unavoidable that the movement should take place. I say, therefore, it was not so easy as hon. Members opposite probably suppose to make preparations in advance for an Expedition. It seems to be supposed that, because we have not succeeded in relieving General Gordon, no result has been accomplished. In my opinion, a very considerable result has been accomplished. The Province of Dongola has been secured; the movement of the Mahdi, which was rapidly extending towards the Frontier of Egypt, has been altogether checked; the Frontiers of Egypt itself have been made absolutely secure; the British troops have been successful in every encounter that has taken place; and no one can suppose that, in the prosecution of future operations, the successful conduct of those operations I have referred to will not be of great advantage, and tend to the success of whatever movement may hereafter be made. The Government have been asked to give further pledges with regard to the object of their policy in the Soudan. I can very well understand that that demand should be made by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and by the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), who are altogether opposed to our policy; and I can understand that such demands should be made by hon. Gentlemen opposite, who, although they approve of the immediate steps which we are taking, have no confidence in our general policy, and distrust our ability to carry to a successful issue those measures to which we are absolutely pledged. But what I find more difficult to understand is that, with such pledges, such an additional assurance as this should be demanded of us by those who say that they desire to support Her Majesty's Government. I cannot understand how they can wish to support us, and, at the same time, to fetter us by pledges and engagements which would be made in ignorance of the circumstances under which those pledges were given, and which could not but hamper us greatly in future operations. Sir, in my opinion, we have already had not too little, but too much of declarations, which have been extracted from us, I must admit, with tolerable impartiality from all quarters of the House. Such pledges are, in my opinion, simply mischievous, and injurious to the public welfare in whichever direction they go. They are pledges which, to the best of my knowledge, were never before asked for from a Government about to enter upon such an undertaking as that which we are entering upon; and, in my opinion, they ought not to be given by any Government. I read the other day that the great Duke of Wellington made it a rule always to strive to ascertain what was on the other side of a hill. But I should be very much surprised to hear that the Duke of Wellington ever based his policy, or announced his plans beforehand, upon the forecast which he so made. It is all very well to endeavour to learn what is on the other side of a hill; but I think no wise man would base his policy beforehand upon a guess as to what lay on the other side—pledge himself to a policy which must necessarily be a forecast on circumstances which he cannot fully know. I have been asked personally to-night to give additional pledges, and to add something to the declarations which have been made by the Government. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) has stated that he would have confidence in the honesty of my intentions, but that he would doubt my power to carry into effect any pledges which I might give. I will set my right hon. Friend's mind at rest by assuring him that I have no desire or intention of giving him pledges in addition, or at all contrary, to those already given by other Members of the Government. I must ask the House to take the policy of the Government from the declarations of Ministers who have already spoken—from the declarations before the House—and more especially from the declarations of the Prime Minister himself. My right hon. Friend at the head of the Government yesterday week, in a very careful statement, told the House what were the objects which we had in view, and which were reasonable objects, and objects we were prepared to make reasonable efforts to execute. Among these objects he enumerated the security of Egypt, the protection of the tribes who had been friendly to us, the suppression of the slave traffic, and the establishment of an orderly Government at Khartoum. Well, as to the security of Egypt, my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) seems to think that it is our interference in Egypt that has brought us into all these troubles. We are told that it is very unfair to be continually telling the Opposition that it is in consequence of their policy that we are in Egypt. I do not know that we have said that it is the policy of the Opposition that has led us into Egypt; but I can say who contributed to the state of things which led us to Egypt, and that is the hon. Member for Northampton himself. In 1882 the hon. Member said, in the discussion on the Vote of Credit for the Expedition to Egypt, that—

> "He did not know that there was anyone more strongly opposed to intervention than he was, speaking of the general term; but he really believed this intervention was absolutely necessary."—(3 *Hansard*, [272] 2052.)

I do not know whether additional pledges were asked for as to our intention to maintain the security of Egypt. I do not suppose any hon. Member in the House believes that we are more indifferent to the security of Egypt on account of the great sacrifices we have had of late to make. It is true that we have always professed, and that we still profess, that we have no intention of permanently occupying Egypt, and that we intend to maintain those pledges which we have given to Egypt and to the European Powers. But we have always said that we did not intend to retire from Egypt until the main objects of our intervention in that country were secured; and nothing, so far as I know, has been said by any Member of the Government during that debate that could in the slightest degree weaken that assurance. The protection of the tribes who have assisted us is one of our objects, as the Prime Minister has stated; and I do not think that if the policy of Her Majesty's Government is carried out, there need be any fear that that object will not be secured. Do hon. Members suppose—for what reason should they?—that there will be any great difficulty in defending the tribes who have befriended us after the overshadowing military power of the Mahdi has been broken—as the Government intend to break it, by the military operations under Lord Wolseley? It is difficult to say at this moment what measures will be taken by the Government; but there is no reason to believe that it would be a work of any special difficulty, or one that the Government would not be likely to undertake, to give adequate protection to the tribes when the military power of the Mahdi was broken. As to the suppression of the Slave Trade and the establishment of an orderly Government, my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford seems to think there are insuperable difficulties in the way; and unless we are prepared to explain to him exactly the mode in which an orderly Government is to be established he refuses to give us his support. But what did General Gordon go to do? He went out with the intention of establishing an orderly Government at Khartoum; and what was it that prevented the accomplishment of that object? Why, the military insurrection of the Mahdi, by which he was confronted almost from the first moment of his arrival in Khartoum. Is there any reason to suppose that this end will be difficult or impossible of attainment after the military power of the Mahdi has been broken? At all events, what advantage would be gained by our attempting to describe the exact measures that may have to be taken? As to the railway from Suakin to Berber, it seems to be supposed that we alone, of all the Members of this House, are indifferent to the civilizing influences that can be served by a railway—such as the establishment and development of sound trading principles, as opposed to the fanatical, predatory, and plundering habits of the Arabs. I know of no reason why we should be supposed to be more indifferent than anyone else to these advantages. The House may rest assured that we shall use every reasonable effort to make the railway valuable not only—as it is absolutely necessary it should be—for the military purposes for which it is now being constructed, but for the civilization and permanent benefit of that part of the world. Sir, these are the objects which my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has described, and which every Member of the Government, to the best of my belief, has in view. These are our objects, and all of them are similar to those General Gordon went to the Soudan to endeavour to accomplish. These are the objects which General Gordon failed to accomplish, though he was supported by such authority as the Egyptian Government could give him. We shall attempt to accomplish his objects with the assistance and the support of better, and I hope purer, means than were at his disposal. Though these are our objects, and though we hope earnestly that we may succeed in their accomplishment, I do not think we are called on, and I do not think we should be justified, on necessarily imperfect knowledge, in making absolute declarations of policy which it may be beyond the power even of this country to carry out without entailing sacrifices upon the people of this country greater than we have a right to demand. I regret that it should have been necessary for me to detain the House so long. I thank the House for the indulgence it has given to me; and, in conclusion, I have only to express a hope that the decision about to be taken will be clear, definite, and fixed in character, so that no doubt may remain as to what is the opinion of the House of Commons at a crisis so important as the present.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Mr. Speaker—Sir, at this hour of the morning I shall not presume to address the House for more than a few minutes. I congratulate the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) on the frank, manly, and open speech that he has just made; and if I am obliged to add that I do not think that the speech of the noble Marquess has carried the case of the Government much farther than those speeches which, in the course of the evening, we have heard from his Colleagues, I am convinced that it is due to no lack of ability on his part, but to the weakness of the case of the Government. He has told us, with reference to the past, how, in his opinion, the lamentable death of General Gordon was brought about. The noble Marquess asks how and why was General Gordon sent out; and goes on to say that General Gordon was sent out in deference to public opinion. I must say that I think that such a man should not have been made a mere sacrifice to public opinion. The noble Marquess told us how that public opinion had risen. The noble Marquess has told us how, because Her Majesty's Government had ordered the Egyptian Government to abandon the Soudan, the question arose as to how the garrisons were to be extricated from those fortresses in which, but for that announcement, they might have remained safely. Therefore, the Government hit upon the expedient of sending General Gordon upon that mission. But why, I ask, was it that the Government, in a moment of hasty panic, gave that fatal order for the Egyptian Government to abandon the Soudan? Why, because against the advice of Lord Dufferin and of General Hicks, against the opinion of everybody who knew the relations of the question of the Soudan to Egypt, the Government determined to take no note of what happened in the former country. Why, because turning a deaf ear and a blind eye to all that was passing in the Soudan, they permitted the only Army Egypt then possessed to be destroyed, after having first destroyed her best Army at Tel-el-Kebir because they permitted it to go to certain destruction under the leadership of the gallant but unfortunate Hicks Pasha. Following, then, the train of reasoning of the noble Marquess, I say that he has conclusively proved that the death of General Gordon, the capture of Khartoum, and the wider dangers and probable misery that are in store for us, are the direct product of that fatal act of folly on the part of the Government in refusing to listen to the advice tendered to them in regard to Hicks Pasha's ill-omened advance. Then the noble Marquess says—repeating what the Prime Minister, on a former occasion, said—that, after all, General Gordon's life would have been spared if it had not been for an unexpected act of treachery on the part of some of his garrison. I entirely dispute the right of the Government to set up that excuse for their *laches* and delays. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) pointed out—and pointed out with truth and accuracy—that this act of treachery could not, in all human probability, have been consummated previous to the fall of Omdurman, and its capture by the Mahdi. How long before the capture of Khartoum had Omdurman fallen? A very few weeks, at the outside. What does Lord Wolseley tell us in the last despatch with which we have been favoured from him? Why, he tells us how deeply he regrets being unable to leave England a month earlier than he did. That fatal month was lost by the apathy, by the indifference, or, if the noble Marquess pleases, by the over-caution of the Government, which, in all human probability, would have prevented the fall of Khartoum and the death of General Gordon. The noble Marquess said that time was taken in considering the military problems connected with the advance of an Army to Khartoum. But the noble Marquess did not shrink, with the frankness which characterizes him, from saying that one of the principal reasons that rendered the Expedition too late was the indecision of the Government as to the necessity of the Expedition itself. I maintain that at the end of February, when Her Majesty's Government rejected all the suggestions and proposals of General Gordon, it then became their primary duty to devise means of rescuing him from Khartoum. Instead of adopting that course, on the showing of the noble Marquess himself, they wasted month after month until, according to the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) last night, it was the middle of July, or, according to the noble Marquess, the middle of August, before they took any practical steps to rescue the brave man whom they had so long left unaided to his own resources. Those are the grounds on which we say the Government are culpable in the eyes of this House, of the country, and of the civilized world for the terrible catastrophe which we all deplore. And now, Sir, one word only as to the future. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War has told us that he cannot—that he will not—add anything to the assurances for the future which have been given to the House by his Colleagues in their speeches. Well, Sir, we have listened to this debate, and we have heard men connected with every Party in this House say that the statements of the Prime Minister and his Colleagues are not satisfactory, and not such as would justify the vast expenditure of blood and money the policy of the Government calls on the House to maintain. The noble Marquess has not said anything which would beget confidence as to the course which the Government intend to pursue after their military operations are successful. There are three distinct policies before the House. There is the policy of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley); that is intelligible; it is clear; I think it is a mistake. There is the policy of the Government, explained as it has been by four or five Cabinet Ministers. What is it? What continuity do we find in the speeches of Ministers? There is nothing to give the House the slightest confidence that any one of the four objects quoted by the noble Marquess will be in existence six months after the military operations in the Soudan have terminated. Then there is the policy which my right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) had indicated in his Resolution. That is a policy, I venture to say, which clearly defines the permanent character of the good influences which we hope to derive from the military successes of the Expedition sent out by Her Majesty's Government—that is a policy which I trust the House will adopt. The noble Marquess has endeavoured to frighten the House by considerations extraneous to the question at issue. He asked us if we are certain that we shall have the support of the people—if we are certain that we shall have the subsequent support of the House, even if to-night we gain a majority? I am certain of neither of these things; but of this I am certain —that it is our duty to endeavour to carry this Resolution; and I am certain it is the duty of the House of Commons to carry it. Sir, I know not what the division may be—I know not whether the numbers in our Lobby may be great or small; but this I do know—that behind those numbers, be they great or small, there will be ranged the generous aspirations, the fixed resolve, and the firm determination of an indignant and sorrowing, but a courageous and an indomitable people.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 288; Noes 302: Majority 14.

AYES.

Alexander, Maj.-Gen. C.
Allsopp, C.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Archdale, W. H.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Bailey, Sir J. R
Balfour, A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barry, J.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Bective, Earl of
Bellingham, A. H.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Beresford, G. De la P.
Biddell, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Birkbeck, E.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Boord, T. W.
Bourke, right hon. R.
Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooke, Lord
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Bruce, hon. T.
Brymer, W. E.
Bulwer, J. R.
Burghley, Lord
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Callan, P.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
Chaine, J.
Chaplin, H.
Christie, W. L.
Clarke, E.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Close, M. C.
Coddington, W.
Cole, Viscount
Commins, A.
Compton, F.
Coope, O. E.
Corbet, W. J.
Corry, J. P.
Cotton, W. J. R.
Courtauld, G.
Cowen, J.
Creyke, R.
Crichton, Viscount
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Major hon. M.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
Dawnay, Col. hon. L. P.
Dawson, C.
Deasy, J.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dundas, hon. J. C.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Eckersley, N.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Egerton, hon. A. F.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, G. W.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Emlyn, Viscount
Estcourt, G. S.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, A. O.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Finch, G. H.
Finch-Hatton, hon. M. E. G.
Fitzwilliam, hon. C. W.
Fitzwilliam, hon. H. W.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J.
Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Floyer, J.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forester, C. T. W.
Forster, rt. hn. W. E.
Foster, W. H.
Fowler, R. N.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
French-Brewster, R. A. B.
Freshfield, C. K.
Galway, Viscount
Gardner, R. Richardson
Gibson, right hon. E.
Giffard, Sir H. S.
Giles, A.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gooch, Sir D.
Gorst, J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Grantham, W.
Gray, E. D.
Greene, E.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Grey, A. H. G.
Gunter, R.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Harrington, T.
Harris, W. J.
Harvey, Sir R. B.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Healy, T. M.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hicks, E.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Hubbard, right hon. J. G.
Jackson, W. L.
Johnstone, Sir F.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennard, C. J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenny, M. J.
Ker, R. W. B.
Knight, F. W.
Knightley, Sir R.
Laing, S.
Lalor, R.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Leahy, J.
Leamy, E.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, W. J.
Leigh, R.
Leighton, Sir B.
Leighton, S.
Lennox, right hn. Lord H. G. C. G.
Lever, J. O.
Levett, T. J.
Lewis, C. E.
Lewisham, Viscount
Lindsay, Sir R. L.
Lloyd, S. S.
Loder, R.
Long, W. H.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, rt. hon. J.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lynch, N.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Mac Iver, D.
Macnaghten, E.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Mahon, E.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
March, Earl of
Marriott, W. T.
Martin, P.
Marum, E. M.
Master, T. W. C.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, T.
Meagher, W.
Miles, Sir P. J. W.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Milner, Sir F.
Molloy, B. C.
Monckton, F.

Moore, A.
Morgan, hon. F.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, J.
Muntz, P. A.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W.
Nicholson, W. N.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
North, Colonel J. S.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
Northcote, H. S.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Donnell, F. H.
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Kelly, J.
Onslow, D. R.
O'Shea, W. H.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Paget, R. H.
Parnell, C. S.
Patrick, R. W. Cochran-
Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Percy, rt. hon. Earl
Percy, Lord A. M.
Phipps, C. N. P.
Phipps, P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Read, C. S.
Redmond, J. E.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Rendlesham, Lord
Repton, G. W.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Ross, C. C.
Round, J.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Salt, T.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Scott, M. D.
Selwin - Ibbetson, Sir H. J.
Severne, J. E.
Sexton, T.
Sheil, E.
Small, J. F.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smithwick, J. F.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hon. Col. F.
Stanley, E. J.
Storer, G.
Strutt, hon. C. H.
Sullivan, T. D.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Thomson, H.
Thornhill, A. J.
Thynne, Lord H. F.
Tollemache, hon. W. F.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Tremayne, J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Wallace, Sir R.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Warburton, P. E.
Warton, C. N.
Watney, J.
Whitley, E.
Williams, General O.
Wilmot, Sir H.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Wolff, Sir H. D.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Wyndham, hon. P.
Wynn, Sir W. W.
Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.

Thornhill, T.
Winn, R.

NOES

Acland, rt. hn. Sir T. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Agnew, W.
Ainsworth, D.
Allen, H. G.
Allman, R. L.
Amory, Sir J. H.
Anderson, G.
Armitage, B.
Armitstead, G.
Arnold, A.
Asher, A.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Baldwin, E.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, J. S.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bass, Sir A.
Bass, H.
Baxter, rt. hon. W. E.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biddulph, M.
Blennerhassett, Sir R.
Blennerhassett, R. P.
Bolton, J. C.
Borlase, W. C.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brassey, H. A.
Brett, R. B.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, right hon. J.
Bright, J.
Brinton, J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brogden, A.
Brooks, M.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buxton, F. W.
Buxton, S. C.
Caine, W. S.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Carington, hon. R.
Cartwright, W. C.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chambers, Sir T.
Cheetham, J. F.
Childers, rt. hn. H. C. E.
Clark, S.
Clarke, J. C.
Clifford, C. C.
Cohen, A.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Collings, J.
Collins, E.
Colman, J. J.
Colthurst, Col. D. la Z.
Corbett, J.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Craig, W. Y.
Cropper, J.
Cross, J. K.
Crum, A.
Cunliffe, Sir R. A.
Davey, H.
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Davies, W.
De Ferrières, Baron
Dickson, J.
Dickson, T. A.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Earp, T.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards, H.
Edwards, P.
Egerton, Admiral hon. F.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Errington, G.
Evans, T. W.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fay, C. J.
Ferguson, R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Ffolkes, Sir W. H. B.
Findlater, W.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Foljambe, F. J. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gabbett, D. F.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Gordon, Lord D.
Gordon, Sir A.
Gourley, E. T.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Grant, A.
Grant, D.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Henderson, F.
Heneage, E.
Henry, M.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hill, T. R.
Holden, I.
Holland, S.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, E. S.
Howard, G. J.
Howard, J.
Illingworth, A.
Ince, H. B.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, Sir H.
James, C.
James, W. H.
Jardine, R.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jerningham, H. E. H.
Johnson, E.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kinnear, J.
Labouchere, H.
Lambton, hon. F. W.
Lawrence, Sir J. C.
Lawrence, W.
Lea, T.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Leatham, W. H.
Lee, H.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Lloyd, M.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lusk, Sir A.
Lyons, R. D.
Macfarlane, D. H.

Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Macliver, P. S.
M'Arthur, Sir W.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Clure, Sir T.
M'Coan, J. C.
M'Intyre, Æneas J.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
M'Minnies, J. G.
Magniac, C.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, hon. E.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Mason, H.
Maxwell-Heron, Capt. J. M.
Meldon, C. H.
Mellor, J. W.
Milbank, Sir F. A.
Monk, C. J.
Moreton, Lord
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morley, J.
Morley, S.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Noel, E.
Norwood, C. M.
O'Beirne, Colonel F.
O'Brien, Sir P.
O'Donoghue, The
Otway, Sir A. J.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, C. M.
Palmer, G.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pease, A.
Peddie, J. D.
Pender, J.
Pennington, F.
Picton, J. A.
Playfair, rt. hn. Sir L.
Portman, hon. W. H. B.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, J. O'C.
Price, Sir R. G.
Pulley, J.
Ramsay, J.
Ramsden, Sir J.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, H.
Roe, T.
Rogers, C. C.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Rothschild, Sir N. M. de
Roundell, C. S.
Russell, Lord A.
Russell, C.
Russell, G. W. E.
Ruston, J.
Rylands, P.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.
Samuelson, B.
Samuelson, H.
Seely, C. (Lincoln)
Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Sellar, A. C.
Shaw, T.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Sinclair, Sir J. G. T.
Slagg, J.
Smith, Lieut-Col. G.
Smith, E.
Smith, S.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stanton, W. J.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stuart, J.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, T.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Tavistock, Marquess of
Tennant, C.
Thomasson, J. P.
Thompson, T. C.
Tillett, J. H.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Verney, Sir H.
Villiers, rt. hon. C. P.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Vivian, A. P.
Waddy, S. D.
Walker, S.
Waterlow, Sir S.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
West, H. W.
Whitbread, S.
Whitworth, B.
Wiggin, H.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Willyams, E. W. B.
Wilson, Sir M.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, I.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Woolf, S.

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, right hon. Lord R.
Kensington, rt. hn. Lord

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question is, that there be added to the word "That," in the Original Question, the following words:—

"This House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi."

The Question I have to propose is, "That those words be there added."

Question proposed,

"That the words 'while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi' be there added."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I have an Amendment to move, in the following words:—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'this' in the first line of the Motion, to the end, in order to insert the words 'Government has failed to indicate any policy in reference to Egypt and the Soudan which justifies the confidence of this House or the Country."

The words of the Amendment speak for themselves. As was stated in the early part of the Sitting, the Government propose to vote against every proposal. Therefore, I assume that, in the first division that will take place on these words, the Government will vote in support of my Amendment. I trust that I may be allowed to make it quite clear. They will vote for my Amendment for the purpose of getting rid of the Motion of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley); and, that Motion having been disposed of, they would then vote directly against my words.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment,

To leave out from the word "this" to the end thereof, in order to add the words "Government has failed to indicate any policy in reference to Egypt and the Soudan which justifies the confidence of this House or the Country."—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

Mr. GLADSTONE: What I stated early in the evening was, that I was not prepared to vote for the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. I voted against the words of the right. hon. Gentleman, and they have been rejected. I now propose to vote against the words proposed by the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley); but I by no means intend to support the Amendment of the noble Lord.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I only desire to say one word. It ought to be quite clear what the position is. It is a very unusual one. Generally speaking, when the policy of a Government is challenged by a Resolution, and an Amendment is put down which is not in favour of the Government, but which is also hostile to them, the practice has been hitherto for the Government to vote for the retention of the words of the Motion in order that they may afterwards vote against them. On the present occasion Her Majesty's Government have taken a different course, and they have found it better to vote against everything that is proposed, without coming to a direct issue on any one point, so that, if they obtain a majority in each division, the result will be that nothing will be left on the Journals but the word "that." I am bound to say that a more appropriate description of the policy of Her Majesty's Government I cannot imagine.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) has stated that in cases of this kind, where a Resolution hostile to the Government has been proposed, and an Amendment is also submitted which the Government cannot accept, it has been the practice to go through the form, or farce, or whatever you like to call it, of voting for a Resolution of which we disapprove in the first instance. I believe that that has taken place in certain cases; but it is not the rule. It is quite as often the practice to vote against each Resolution of which we disapprove; and the result in this case will be that there will be no misunderstanding in the matter, as we shall vote straight, against the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet, against the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and against the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton).

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 112; Noes 455: Majority 343.—(Div. List, No. 34.)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'Government has failed to indicate any policy in reference to Egypt and the Soudan which justifies the confidence of this House or the Country' be there added."

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, before this Question is put I should like to say one word. If the proposition of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) were put in its entirety I should feel the greatest difficulty in giving a negative to it; but the proposition is, "That these words be here added," and to that I have no difficulty in giving a negative vote.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 277; Noes 299: Majority 22.—(Div. List, No. 35).

MR. BRYCE: At this late hour (2.25), Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to press my Amendment.

MOTION.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND).

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That there be laid before this House, 'a Return of all Piers and Harbours built under the Board of Works in Ireland since the passing of the Act 9 Vic. c. 3:

(1.) Date of completion;

(2.) Whether built by contract or by the Board themselves, and giving the names of the contractors;

(3.) The estimated and the actual cost, distinguishing the several separate works at the same places;

(4.) The sources from which the funds were supplied;

(5.) Description of any deviation since 1870 from the original design, as regards the distance the work was to be carried out into the sea, or otherwise;

(6.) Statement of all works executed under the provisions of s. 11 of 16 and 17 Vic. c. 136;

(7.) In cases since 1870 of deviations from original design, the estimated cost of deviation, and the purpose to which the said cost was applied.'"—(*Mr. Thomas Lea.*)

MR. HEALY said, he had some reason to complain that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Donegal (Mr. Lea) should put down a Motion to obtain a Return which he (Mr. Healy), after great trouble, was promised by the Treasury last November. After he (Mr. Healy) had gone to the trouble of worry-ing the Treasury for weeks, in order to get the Return, the hon. Member coolly put down the Return in his own name. He (Mr. Healy) did not know how the Treasury communicated with the hon. Gentleman; perhaps they thought that, as he did not do a great deal in the House, it was as well he should have any little credit which attached to the making of such a Motion as the present. That the Government should have allowed any hon. Member to purloin his (Mr. Healy's) Motion was, to say the least, extraordinary. Only last autumn, Mr. Spring Rice told him in the Lobby that if he would make certain changes in his Return the Treasury would be happy to give it to him. He thereupon communicated with the gentleman in Ireland who was instructing him, to know whether he would accept Mr. Spring Rice's alterations. The hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) was then Secretary to the Treasury. He (Mr. Healy) was unable to attend Parliament on the day it re-assembled; indeed, not for a week after. When, however, he did return, he found the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Lea) was moving for a Return which he, to all intents and purposes, had obtained. He could not help thinking that the hon. Member had made this Motion at the instance of the Treasury.

Mr. LEA said, that if the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) would refer to the Records of the House, he would see that two or three years ago he put a Question respecting Bunnatroohan Pier, and the other piers to which the Return referred. The gentleman who, he believed, communicated with the hon. Member, also communicated with him last autumn, and desired him to urge on the Government the desirability of giving a Return similar to the one he had put on the Paper. He wrote to the Secretary to the Treasury, desiring that some such Return should be given. When the House resumed after the Winter Recess, he was informed the Return was ready if he would move for it; and consequently he gave Notice of it soon after receiving this intimation.

Mr. KENNY said, he asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) the other day whether he could give him a Return something in the nature of the one now under consideration, but more inclusive of the piers which had been constructed according to the designs of the Board of Works, but which had given way, or fallen into disuse, owing to their defective construction. The report he obtained from the hon. Gentleman was that the Return of which Notice had been given by the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Lea) would cover what he (Mr. Kenny) wished. He was not in a position at the time to say whether it would or not, as he had not read the terms of the Return. He had, however, read them since, and he found that the Return would not cover the case of piers which had fallen into disuse, owing to faulty construction. He now desired to know whether the hon. Gentleman was prepared to give him a Return showing what piers—he believed there were a considerable number of them—had given way, owing to the manner in which the Board of Works had designed them?

Mr. HIBBERT said, he should be very glad to consider any proposal the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Kenny) made, either with a view of including the piers he spoke of in this Return, or in a separate Return. Of course, he could not promise off-hand that the Return should be given exactly in the way the hon. Member asked for it; but he should be very glad to consider the question. As to the point raised by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), he believed that what happened was this. Mr. Spring Rice, whom the hon. Gentleman named, was his (Mr. Hibbert's) Private Secretary; and he was so anxious to serve the hon. Member in regard to this Return that he applied to the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Lea) to move for it.

Mr. HEALY: Why did he not apply to me?

Mr. HIBBERT: Because the hon. Member for Monaghan was not at that time in the House.

Mr. HEALY: I was only away a week.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he was sure that, had the hon. Gentleman been in attendance, he would have been applied to. In the absence of the hon. Member, the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Lea), who had taken an interest in the question, was told that if he chose to move for the Return it would be given. There was certainly no desire to take away from the hon. Member for Monaghan any credit which attached to the moving for the Return.

MR. CALLAN said, he would suggest that the Return should be postponed for the purpose of amendment. He was interested in the piers in his county, and yet this Return would not include the information he required concerning them. He was told that two piers in County Louth had been constructed by the Board of Works in such an imperfect and unworkmanlike manner that the Surveyor of the county had refused, on behalf of the Grand Jury, to take them over. He was told that another pier had been built with such a total want of scientific skill that the barony in which it was situated had been required to spend a large additional sum upon it. Under the circumstances—especially now that the gilt had been taken off his gingerbread by the facts disclosed by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy)—the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Lea) would do well to postpone his Motion. It was well that they should have a thorough and complete Return, and, therefore, if the hon. Gentleman persisted in his Motion, he (Mr. Callan) would certainly take a division.

MR. HIBBERT said, he would also suggest that the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Lea) should postpone his Motion for a few days, in order to afford the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) an opportunity for introducing in the Return the amendments he thought proper.

MR. SPEAKER: The more regular course would be to withdraw the Motion.

MR. HEALY asked the indulgence of the House to say that, when a Government Department entered into an arrangement with a Member, it was not right, because that Member happened to be opposed to the Government, and voted against them constantly, and hoped to do so in the future, or because he happened to be away from the House for a single week, that a Motion of which he had charge should be transferred to another hon. Member. He happened to be obliged, during the first week of the Session, to attend to private business; and therefore the Government went to one of their own supporters and suggested that he should move for the Return, and have the credit of it. In a letter to him, Mr. Spring Rice said—

> "Mr. Courtney thinks such a Return would be useful and interesting; but some few modifications are desirable in the terms of your Motion, in order that it may be complied with;"

and then Mr. Spring Rice made a series of suggestions. He (Mr. Healy) was not sorry the Government had given a leg-up to one of their own supporters; but he thought the least thing they could have done was to tell him what they were doing. He did not think that such treatment should be dealt out to him, simply because he happened to be a Parnellite; it was not the kind of treatment that ought to be dealt out by a Member of the Government to a Member of the House. He quite agreed that it would be well to withdraw the Motion. After the suggestions of Mr. Spring Rice, he communicated with his friends in Ireland; and, as a result of his communications, he had a series of proposals to make with regard to the piers. This was a matter in which hundreds and thousands of people were interested, and, therefore, it was desirable that a Return complete in every particular should be granted.

MR. LEA said, he would postpone the Motion; or if the Speaker thought it would be more regular he would withdraw it. He thought, however, he was entitled to say that the gentleman who communicated with him held an official position in the county he represented, and that this Return related more especially to Donegal than to any other portion of Ireland. [MR. CALLAN: No, no!]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has already spoken. Does the hon. Gentleman withdraw the Motion?

MR. LEA: Yes, Sir; I withdraw the Motion, but as a matter of Privilege I desired the right to explain.

MR. HEALY: Have it by all means.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

WATERWORKS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. DODDS, Bill to amend the Law relating to the rating of Waterworks Undertakings belonging to Local Authorities, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. DODDS, Mr. BARRAN, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. CODDINGTON, and Mr. SLAGG.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 75.]

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT (IMPROVEMENT EXPENSES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. DODDS, Bill to amend the Public Health Acts in relation to Private Improvement Expenses, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. DODDS, Sir EDWARD REED, and Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 76.]

House adjourned at a quarter before
Three o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 2nd *March*, 1885.

MINUTES.] — *Second Report* — Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod. (No. 25).

PUBLIC BILLS — *First Reading* — Women's Suffrage * (27).

Second Reading—Marriages Legalization * (19).

ARMY RESERVE FORCE—THE MILITIA.

MESSAGES FROM THE QUEEN.

Order of the Day for the consideration of, read.

Messages *considered* accordingly.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to direct by Proclamation that certain persons who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in army service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient.

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to order by Proclamation the embodiment of Militia."—(*The Earl Granville.*)

THE EARL OF LONGFORD said, he thought the recommendations contained in Her Majesty's Messages were in the right direction; but, in his opinion, the Government had taken an inadequate view of the situation. Even in the ordinary course for the wants of the Empire, our Military Establishments were not in a condition to enable us to discharge our responsibilities, and those responsibilities were continually increasing. He repeated, what had been stated on a former occasion, that even if the 140,000 men noted were all efficient soldiers in the ranks, the numbers would be below what was required for the Military Force of the Empire. There appeared to be great inconsistency in the expressions of politicians of the day. There were demands to prevent Islands or Settlements from being taken up by Germany or France, to prevent Russia advancing towards India, each of these Powers having Armies of 500,000 men, or more. The same persons who made these demands, declared in the same breath that they would not add another company to the Army, nor another gunboat to the Navy. How could they reconcile these statements? This was not a time to enter into the details of the operations in which they were now engaged; but at the present moment, where were the reinforcements for Egypt, and, probably, for the Cape of Good Hope, to come from? Where were the reliefs for the Establishments in India? He pressed these matters most earnestly on the attention of Her Majesty's Advisers.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE wished to ask his noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for War (the Earl of Morley) how the men were to be raised to the number now proposed for the battalions and depôts—whether by ordinary recruiting, or the calling out of a certain proportion of the Reserves? In his opinion, the best plan would be to call out a certain proportion of the Reserves. What had been done by the Proclamation? All that was proposed was that men now serving in the active Army should be prevented from going into the Reserves. He understood that when the General Order came out it would give permission to all Reserve men who chose to volunteer to come back to the Colours. He thought that a most excellent provision, because he knew that many Reserve men would be glad to come back to the Colours, not being able to find anything to do in the country. No doubt, the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting would describe the recruiting as very satisfactory. This was true, inasmuch as 36,000 men had been raised. But how about their physique? Let anyone go into the garrisons and judge for themselves, by seeing the number of boys in red coats walking about the streets. But these arrangements were not sufficient. As to the embodiment of the Militia, he was sorry to see that out of 84 regiments only six were to be embodied. Fifteen regiments of the Line now had two battalions abroad; and, according to the recommendations of Colonel Stanley's Committee, in time of war, when this occurred, then both Militia battalions were to be embodied. The least they ought now to embody was 15 regiments of Militia. It was well known that the more Militia they embodied, the more men joined the Line; 40,000 men had been given to the Line during the Crimean War, and 10,000 men were annually given to the Line from the disembodied Militia. Then the want of subalterns would be readily supplied if more Militia Regiments were embodied. He might be told that the regiments to be embodied in the spring might, if necessary, be kept out; but then three months would be lost, and in three months a good deal might be done with a Militia regiment. If the Military Authorities thought these arrangements sufficient, then he had nothing to say. He could not help thinking that the unfortunate war in which this country was engaged would be, more or less, a protracted one, and no doubt there would be great losses from fever and sickness, as well as in killed and wounded. Of 1,500 men in General Buller's Force, 400 were already lost by sickness or killed or wounded in action; therefore, he wished to ask again that hisnoble Friend would give some information to the House as to how the new troops were to be raised, and he hoped more would be done than had been sketched out in the Proclamation.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH said, that the Constitutional Force of the Militia had been neglected in every particular during recent years, and that it was unfortunate that a few battalions of Militia had not been embodied at an earlier date. It was apparent the Government were toadying to other and newer Forces. He urged the desirability of enlisting the territorial regiments in the counties after which they were named.

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in reply, said, he was glad of the opportunity of making a few observations on the subject introduced by the noble and gallant Earl. The question of the general inadequacy of our Military Establishments was, however, one upon which he was sure the House would not expect him to enter. Reference had been made to the Establishment fixed by next year's Army Estimates, and it would, therefore, be desirable that he should explain the principle upon which they had been framed. They were understood to be normal Estimates allowing for a garrison of five and a-half battalions in Egypt. It was calculated that the usual distribution of troops would involve the absence from this country of both battalions of three territorial regiments only. Now, however, a much larger number of battalions had left this country for service either with Lord Wolseley or under General Graham; and it would, therefore, be necessary to supplement the Estimates to be placed before Parliament by increasing the establishments of the battalions at home, and also for largely increasing the establishments of those regiments having both battalions abroad. That course would be entirely in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee to which the noble Viscount had alluded, as well as those of the Localization Committee of 1872. The Estimates had been framed on the assumption that no large Expedition was to be allowed for, except the garrison in Egypt. No one could deny that there was great force in the observation of the noble and gallant Lord opposite, that they must be prepared to supply deficiencies from casualties that might occur to our Forces in Egypt and the Soudan. In the first place, he might mention that recruiting was going on very rapidly at the present time. In the absence of the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, he would postpone entering into any discussion on recruiting, and would only say that at the present moment, owing partly, no doubt, to the depression of trade, they got a large number of recruits. He had not the exact numbers; but he believed that in the last month 3,300 had enlisted, and they continued to get from 800 to 900 recruits a-week. These young men would make good soldiers, and in the meantime they had asked the Reserve men who desired to do so to come back. He agreed that it was impossible immediately to fill up vacancies caused by casualties in the field, or in regiments serving abroad with recruits. Recourse must be had to the Army Reserve, and he would tell the House exactly what had been done in that respect. In August last a Circular was issued giving permission to some First Class Army Reserve men to return to the Colours. That permission was limited to men who had been transferred to the Reserve before the previous 10 days; they were allowed to re-enlist to complete the full term of their Army service provided that every man taken must have three years' service to complete. The object of those conditions was to obtain men available for drafts abroad. Under that Circular 1,700 had been transferred from the Reserve to the Colours. After the fall of Khartoum, it was decided that this arrangement was not sufficient to meet the case, and accordingly, on the 25th of last month, a second Circular was issued. By that Circular all First Class Army Reserve men were permitted to rejoin the Colours without any limitation being placed upon them as to their having less than three years' service to complete. Certain options were given to them; any man rejoining the Colours from the Reserve had the option of rejoining for the term of his original engagement — that was, such term as was required to make up 12 years' service, or he could join simply during the continuance of the Expedition. Arrangements with regard to deferred pay of considerable importance had been made. Men who joined, and who had received the full amount of deferred pay due to them, would not be called upon to refund it; and on their second discharge would be entitled to deferred pay, not reckoned merely on the number of years they had served the second time, but calculated from the period when they were transferred to the Reserve. A man who rejoined the Colours for a very short time might, therefore, in some cases receive as much as £18 deferred pay. Looking at the present state of trade, and the undesirability of interfering with the Civil life of Reserve men, the Secretary of State for War had, for the present at least, decided not to resort to compulsion, more particularly as he believed that a sufficient number of men to meet the present emergency would come forward voluntarily. The noble Lord who spoke last with respect to the Militia, seemed to think that the Force had been slighted in some way. Nothing could be further from the desire of the Authorities than to cast any slur upon the Militia; on the contrary, they had done everything they could to add *prestige* to that branch of the Service. It had been brought more closely in connection with the Line battalions, and was now in a satisfactory condition. It had been asked why only six Militia battalions had been embodied, while 15 territorial regiments had both Line battalions abroad. The reason for selecting the battalions which had been embodied was that in every case these territorial regiments had both battalions abroad. In that matter they were acting entirely in accordance with the recommendations of the Localization Committee. It was true that there were still some nine territorial regiments in the position of having both their Line battalions abroad; but the Secretary of State, having regard to the actual requirements of home service and garrison duties, had come to the conclusion that such duties could be adequately performed by calling out six Militia battalions only. In a month's time the annual training of the Militia would commence, and if it were necessary to increase the number of Militia battalions it would be more convenient to do so at that time. Meanwhile, the principle would be to select those regiments which had two Line battalions abroad. With regard to General Buller's Force, and the large loss which it had sustained, he thought that the strength of that Force had been understated, and the comparison of the losses to the actual number was not correct. The strength of the Force was nearer 2,500 than 1,500, and when they came to distribute the number of losses they would see that the proportion was not so enormous as had been stated by the noble Lord. With regard to the effective force of the Army, it was considerably higher than it had been at the corresponding period last year. He found that between January 1, 1884, and February 1, 1885, they had gained nearly 9,000 men additional for the Army. That, it must be mentioned, included about 1,700 men who had returned to the ranks from the Reserve. That, he thought, would be very satisfactory to the House. The Establishment in India was always at this period of the year below its strength, it now amounted to 2,500; but taking India and Great Britain together the deficiency was under 1,000. This, however, was not the proper occasion for lengthened discussion, which it would a be more convenient to defer until their Lordships had the figures before them, which he hoped would be in a few days.

LORD DORCHESTER asked for some information as to what Lord Wolseley intended to do as regarded the friendly Black troops who had served under General Gordon at Khartoum? He could not but wish to see the English shilling distributed a little more freely among these Black troops, who were of great value on account of their being inured to the heat of the sun. It was most desirable to retain the friendly tribes, and to conciliate the temper of the nation. The young soldiers, of whom the British Forces were so largely composed, dropped like flies under the excessive temperature to which they would be subjected, and no one knew that better than the illustrious Duke at the head of the British Army. He therefore recommended that the services of the friendly tribes should be taken advantage of as much as possible. He also desired to know whether it was not a fact that Lord Wolseley—with his wonderful sagacity—had selected old soldiers for the present campaign, and thus given a contradiction to words which he had utterred with regard to young troops? [*Cheers and laughter.*]

EARL GRANVILLE: Noble Lords cannot, I think, expect me to go in detail into the considerations mentioned; but as to the employment of Black troops with our Forces, I may say that the matter has not escaped the notice of Lord Wolseley. But this is hardly the moment to make one-sided and small attacks on Lord Wolseley, who is now in a responsible situation, nor do I think that those attacks should be received with cheers and laughter on the other side of the House.

VISCOUNT BURY maintained that no attack had been made from that side of the House upon Lord Wolseley. The noble Lord who had just spoken was a supporter of the noble Earl. He maintained that the House was justified in making some remarks and inquiries upon the Resolution which had been put before them. In the face of the grave military difficulties which existed, their desire on that side of the House was to do all they could to strengthen the hands of the Government and of Lord Wolseley, and there was certainly no spirit of carping criticism on that side of the House. He thought, however, that in one part of his speech the noble Earl the Under Secretary of State for War had not been quite clear. As the noble and gallant Viscount had pointed out, a considerable depletion was now taking place in the ranks of the Army. It was true that there was a flow of recruits, but these could not be sent to fill up the ranks abroad, for which purpose seasoned troops were necessary. Where were these seasoned troops to come from? For what reason had so few Militia regiments been embodied? It was in the Militia regiments that they would find seasoned men, and he hardly thought that the reason given by the noble Lord for embodying only six regiments was a very good or sufficient one. Another point on which he would like to ask a question was, what was going to be done with the large number of Militia regiments which had offered their services? Under present circumstances, whether from the depression of trade or other circumstances, a great number of recruits might now be coming on, but the standard of height and of chest measurement had been diminished. He asked, therefore, what was the standard of height and of chest measurement at the present moment? Because they might now be getting a large number of recruits who were not likely to add to the real strength of the Army for a considerable time. He had the other day put a Question to the Secretary of State for the Colonies with regard to the offers lately made of the service of Colonial levies. He understood his noble Friend to say that the services of those Colonial troops were all accepted, but that, under the circumstances of the case, many of them would not be required until a later period, and, therefore, the immediate acceptance of their services was deferred. His noble Friend also promised that there should be laid on the Table the terms of the proposals and also those of the acceptance. He had been extremely pleased to hear the terms in which that announcement was made. But immediately afterwards they heard from the ordinary channels of information that what had actually occurred was something very different from what the noble Earl had led them to believe. It was that there was only one of those Colonies whose offers had been accepted, and that the rest were informed that their services were declined with thanks at present; but that if the war continued, and they remained of the same mind, and were still willing to give their services, they would be accepted. He should be glad to learn that the noble Earl had been either misreported or misunderstood. He understood from the illustrious Duke at the head of the Army, that the Military Authorities had welcomed those proposals, and would throw no difficulties in the way of their acceptance. He should have thought, therefore, that it would have been better for the Colonial Office to have accepted all the offers made by the Colonies, and then to have said that it depended on military considerations when their services were wanted. That would be a totally different thing from refusing the offers at present, and saying that if the war continued the Colonies would be asked whether they still remained of the same mind. He desired further to know from the noble Earl when he would lay on the Table copies of the Papers which he had promised?

THE EARL OF DERBY: There is no misunderstanding, my Lords, in what I said the other night. I am at the present moment in consultation with the War Office as to the details of the Colonial Forces that will be accepted, and I am not able to say just now when we can lay Papers on the Table. Before, however, the House is called upon to form its judgment, your Lordships may depend upon it that the whole matter will be before you. With regard to the difference between my statement as reported in the newspapers and what the noble Viscount has said, it may be my want of comprehension, but it appears to me that it is really one of words rather than one of substance. The immediate question to be determined was as to the assistance which the Colonies proposed to offer for the Expedition to Suakin. We accepted the offer of New South Wales on the ground that they undertook to place troops on a certain spot by a particular day. There was not an equal certainty about the offers of the other Colonies. When the noble Lord says we have not accepted the offers of the others, and that we have, in fact, refused them unless the military operations should go on, it is quite clear that he has failed to grasp the point or to realize the meaning of our words. It is clear that if by any happy chance the military operations at Suakin should be shortly ended, there will be no necessity for sending the Colonial troops when those operations have ceased. It is not proposed that the Colonial contingents shall be a permanent addition to the Army. The offers were made in view of certain circumstances that were likely to arise. If those circumstances occur we shall accept them. The Government could only make the acceptance conditional under those circumstances, otherwise there would be nothing for the troops to do.

VISCOUNT BURY observed, that in that case the Colonial troops would have no time to get ready. They would be in the position of Her Majesty's Government — namely, they were always too late. If they accepted the services of the Colonial troops now, and told them that in certain contingencies they would be called out, they would be ready in time; but to say that in three or four months their services might be accepted would be too late, and would give them no time to make their preparations.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, they had never stated that their services might be accepted three or four months hence. He would remind the noble Lord that there was such a thing as the electric telegraph, and Australia could be reached in a few hours. At the present moment they were in communication with the War Office on the whole question, to see to what extent they required to avail themselves of those offers of assistance.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE said, that his view of the matter was that which the noble Earl had just stated. What he had said was that all the offers from the Colonies would be accepted if they were required, but that in one case they were absolutely accepted at once. That one particular Colony offered to furnish men to be sent to Suakin at a certain period. The acceptance of the other offers was only delayed until the arrangements were fully considered between the Colonial Office, the War Office, and the Colonies themselves. Therefore, as to the acceptance being delayed for four months, there was no such idea ever entertained. The arrangements were now being considered, and, in the meanwhile, the acceptance of the services of the Colonial troops was absolute in case they should be required. Turning to another point, he felt, from a military point of view, just as strongly as Her Majesty's Government felt the necessity of being prepared with Reserves to fill up vacancies. There was no doubt that amongst the many serious subjects which would have to engage the attention of Her Majesty's Government—and he was speaking now entirely for himself and the Military Authorities—there was none more serious than that of keeping up the Army and the efficiency of the troops actually engaged in the war, and he could not for one moment suppose that this subject would not continue to receive from day to day their serious consideration. How that could best be done was a matter which would require much thought. He quite concurred that, under the reorganization system, it was arranged that whenever the two battalions of a Line regiment were abroad a Militia battalion would be called out. He should like that to be absolutely settled. It had not been settled; but he thought it should be a corollary of the system, and that it would have to be accepted now or at a future period. The necessity of a certain number of Militia battalions being now embodied had arisen in order to do ordinary garrison duty, which pressed rather severely on the regular troops, because so many of them were abroad. The Under Secretary for War had rightly stated that we had very good recruiting; but the House would agree with him that recruits were not the men to send out upon such operations as those on which we were now engaged. With regard to the Reserves, the calling out of a large number of the Reserve must seriously affect, not only the men themselves, but the employers of labour, and therefore it must be done with great delicacy. Under these circumstances, as long as it was possible to get the men of the Reserve to come forward voluntarily, it was infinitely better to invite them to do so than to call them out in large numbers. They must, however, be prepared, when the season opened for the troops again to take the field, with men to join the Colours of the regiments in the Soudan. And if they had not a sufficient number of men well qualified for service, then it would be necessary to call out the Reserves. Her Majesty's Government, he believed, were perfectly alive to the necessity of being prepared with Reserves.

The Earl of LIMERICK said, he was glad that the Government had decided, in the first instance, to see whether a sufficient number of the Reserve would join voluntarily before calling them out. Their Lordships must remember that it was a very serious thing to call men away from their employment to make up the Reserve, and he therefore hoped that a sufficient number would join voluntarily, in order to prevent the necessity of interference with trade and employment which would ensue from calling out a large number of men. He regretted that the Government had not found it possible to look in the face the question of increasing the Establishment of the Army, instead of on every occasion having recourse to the Reserve. It was satisfactory that 30,000 or 40,000 recruits could be secured during the course of the year; but what was the meaning of that? It meant that we should probably have, roughly speaking, 50,000 men on our Home Establishment under two years' service, and that under an Establishment which if complete and composed of seasoned soldiers would hardly be considered as sufficient for the needs of the Empire. They ought to look on recruits of one year's standing as simply boys at school, and as not being on the Establishment of the Army at all. Until they faced that question, and endeavoured to keep in the regiments a sufficient body of seasoned soldiers, he felt confident that the Army would never be in that position in which he was sure the Military Authorities desired to see it.

The Earl of MORLEY said, he had been asked what was the number of battalions of Militia to be called out. The Authorities had had an enormous number of applications, not only from Militia regiments, but from other corps in this country volunteering their service. Those offers evinced great zeal and a spirit of great self-sacrifice; but they were so numerous that it was absolutely necessary to make a selection, and the selection was in the first place made by calling out the Militia battalions of those territorial regiments which had their lines abroad. He had also been asked as to the source from which they proposed to draw in leaving men in Egypt and elsewhere. The illustrious Duke the Commander-in-Chief had indicated the source; and he hoped the men required would be largely obtained from men who had volunteered from the Army Reserve. He admitted that it would be wrong to send out on active service to the Soudan extremely young men; but a large number of men who enlisted last year would in the course of the autumn be growing up into soldiers, and it was hoped that many of them would be capable of taking their places in the ranks. The noble Lord who spoke last referred to the recommendations of the Committee, and said there were certain alternative plans to be brought into operations when two Line battalions of a regiment left this country. He would not refer to the subject in detail; but he would inform the noble Lord that it was in contemplation, and that Supplementary Estimates would be presented to Parliament to make provision for increasing very considerably the size of the other depôts from what they were at present.

Resolutions *agreed to, nemine dissentiente.*

Ordered, That the said Addresses be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

NAVY (SHIPS)—THE RETURN.

QUESTION.

Viscount SIDMOUTH asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Why the return relative to the Navy (Ships), laid upon the Table in dummy on December 6 last and ordered to be printed, has not yet been circulated?

The Earl of NORTHBROOK, in reply, said, that the Return contained nothing new, but was merely a description of the ships laid down in the last four years. It was in print, and would be circulated almost immediately.

FRANCE AND BURMAH—THE TREATY.

QUESTION.

Viscount SIDMOUTH said, he rose to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether authentic intelligence has reached them of a Treaty having been formed between France and Burmah, in consequence of which considerable concessions of territory will be made to the former Power? and to move for Papers. He reminded their Lordships that there was a very important trade formerly carried on and passed through Upper Burmah by the mouths of the river Irrawaddy and the other rivers of the British Possessions. In consequence, however, of the disturbances which had taken place, this trade had much decreased of late years, and at the present moment had almost disappeared. The absence of this trade had greatly affected the prosperity of the British Provinces, inhabited by a most hardy body of men, possessing great physical power, and capable of making excellent soldiers. About nine years ago, in consequence of the conduct of the present King of Burmah, we were forced to declare war against him, and since that time he had been guilty of further atrocities, which had rendered it impossible for us to resume political relations with him. His misgovernment had also given rise to intervention by other Powers, and at the present moment large bodies of Chinese were occupying the frontier town of Bhamo, which was situated on the Irrawaddy. If the present misgovernment of Burmah were to continue, it might be possible that France would consider it necessary to occupy a portion of the Burmese territory. Our relations with Burmah had been for many years past of a friendly character, and the natural protector of the peaceful population of that country was Great Britain, and not France. It was necessary for the *prestige* of India that we should exercise our influence over Burmah.

Earl GRANVILLE: Authentic information has reached Her Majesty's Government of the signature of a Convention between France and Burmah supplementary to one concluded in 1873, but up to this time not put in force. The recent Convention appears to be of a purely commercial character. Reports have reached Her Majesty's Government to the effect that concessions of territory have been made by Burmah to France; but they are entirely inconsistent with positive assurances which have been given by the French Government to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris, and are therefore not credited by Her Majesty's Government. A Copy of the

Convention will be laid on the Table as soon as its ratification shall have been reported.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked if there was any intention to resume diplomatic relations with Burmah?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY asked for Notice of the Question.

NAVY—NAVAL DISCIPLINE—SENTENCES OF PENAL SERVITUDE.

QUESTION.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If he will inform the House of the course he has taken with regard to seamen who have incurred sentences of penal servitude for breaches of naval discipline, and also to prevent association with criminals in civil gaols of sailors sent there for breaches of discipline?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK, in reply, said, that arrangements had been made by the Board of Admiralty with the Home Secretary that sailors who had been sentenced to penal servitude for breaches of discipline should, on release, be released absolutely as the supervision necessary in ordinary cases was not required in the case of naval prisoners. He entirely agreed with the noble Lord that it was most undesirable that sailors who had been convicted of offences against discipline should be mixed up with ordinary criminals, and he was able to state that the Home Office had offered to hand over to the Admiralty a portion of the gaol accommodation, and naval prisoners would, therefore, be imprisoned separately. He was happy to say that there had been a marked diminution of late in the number of cases of sailors striking their officers, and, in consequence of this, there would be less penal servitude.

INDIA—THE WATER ASSESSMENT.

QUESTION.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he has any objection to lay on the Table the despatch of the Governor of Bombay on the assessment of subsoil water, and the reply to it of the Secretary of State?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that there would be no objection to the production of the documents referred to.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill intituled "An Act for extending the right of voting at parliamentary elections to women" — Was *presented* by The Lord DENMAN; read 1ª. (No. 27.)

House adjourned at Six o'clock, till
To-morrow, a quarter past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, *2nd March*, 1885.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—County Courts (Divorce) * [77].

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Shannon Navigation [54].

Committee—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-comm.*) [49] [*First Night*], *debate adjourned.*

Committee — Report — Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) [19].

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) — REPORT OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS.

OBSERVATIONS.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have to announce to the House a few corrections which have to be made of slight errors in the maps published with the Report of the Boundary Commissioners. In the map of South-West Lancashire the petty sessional division of Kirkham should be Kirkdale. In the map of Suffolk the red boundary of Woodbridge division should include Aldeburgh. In the map of the southern division of West Riding, West Bretton parish should have been shown as part of Lower Agbrigg petty sessional division.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—TRIAL OF CROFTERS AT STORNOWAY.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the trial before Sheriff Substitute Black at Stornoway, on the 20th inst., of three crofters and an apprentice baker for mobbing a tacksman named Martin in that town on the 29th December; whether it is the case, as stated by the sheriff, that Martin had recently mutilated some sheep belonging to crofters which he had found on his land, and had himself wantonly provoked the demonstration against him by denouncing the crofters of the island as "thieves and robbers;" whether the sheriff discharged the principal accused on the ground that Martin had "metaphorically speaking flown at his throat;" whether he sentenced the other crofters to 30 days, and the apprentice baker to 14 days' imprisonment, without option of a fine, on the ground that there was no evidence that they had heard the provocative language used; and, whether, taking into consideration the fact that the crowd which hooted Martin consisted of 200 persons, that he was not physically assaulted, and that there was no evidence to show that the men imprisoned were ringleaders or exceptionally active members of the mob, he will consider the propriety of revising the severe sentences passed upon them?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in reply, said, he would ask that the Question might be postponed until the official Report was received.

DR. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, What sentence was passed upon Roderick Martin for mutilating the crofters' sheep in the manner described by Sheriff Black; and whether it is intended to take proceedings against him for having, according to the statement of the same Judge, so conducted himself as to provoke a breach of the peace?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): The matter referred to in the first part of this Question has been made the subject of a civil, but not of a criminal trial. The case was fully investigated by the criminal authorities, and, briefly stated, the following appear to be the facts:—Martin had a stock of high-bred ewes which he had put into a place specially adapted for securing that there should be no interference with the purity of the breed. He found two tups of inferior breed amongst them, which, from the nature of the place, there was strong reason to believe must have been put there on purpose, and he castrated the tups which he so found. In so doing, he was going beyond his legal right; but it appeared, upon the evidence, that there exists in the Island a cruel custom of so treating tups which are found amongst the ewes belonging to other persons, and the question came to be whether, under these circumstances, there was ground for a criminal charge of what is known in law as malicious mischief. If it had appeared that what Martin did was done merely for the sake of injuring the owners of the tups, and not for the purpose of protecting his own stock by means which he believed to be legitimate, such a charge would have been preferred against him. But upon the evidence there seemed to be no doubt that Martin in *bonâ fide*, although mistakenly, believed that it was within his right in adopting this step, in accordance with the local custom already referred to; and this being so, the facts would not have sustained a criminal charge of malicious mischief. The case was, however, tried in the Civil Court, where, on the one hand, the owner of the tups claimed their value from Martin, and he, on the other hand, made a counter-claim for the damage which the tups had done to his ewes; and the Sheriff found that equal amounts were due by the litigant parties to each other on these heads. The Sheriff quite rightly, in my judgment, held that this custom, although apparently universal in the Island, was not a good defence to a civil action, and I hope that now that it has been authoritatively declared to be illegal it will not again be acted upon. After the warning thus given, it cannot be assumed that an assertion of a *bonâ fide*, though mistaken, idea of right will again protect anyone adopting so cruel a course from criminal proceedings. Before answering the second part of the Question, I should desire to have an opportunity of obtaining an official Report on the case to which it relates.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the manner in which the trial at Stornoway of certain crofters charged with deforcing a messenger-at-arms is reported to have been conducted by Sheriff Substitute Black, and the speech made by him in pronouncing judgment; whether it is true, as stated by the solicitor for the accused, the procurator fiscal in charge of the case is also estate agent to the proprietor at whose instance the deforced messenger was serving summonses; and, whether, taking into account the importance in the present excited state of the Highlands of securing the administration of justice in a manner calculated to command public confidence in its impartiality, he will consider the propriety of reviewing the sentences passed in the case in question, and direct that in future persons accused of agrarian offences in the island of Lewis should be tried before some other court?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour), who replied, said: Attention has been called to this trial. The position of the Procurator Fiscal has been repeatedly explained in this House. He is not estate agent to the proprietor at whose instance the deforced messenger was serving summonses. The summons, in the course of serving which the deforcement occurred, was at the instance of James Mackenzie, a tacksman, with concurrence of Lady Matheson. It was prepared by Edinburgh agents, under whose direction the whole proceedings were carried out. The partner of the Procurator Fiscal occasionally acts in local Court matters for Lady Matheson, as well as for other clients, including crofters; but for some time past the Procurator Fiscal has not himself engaged in any civil law business; and communications are in progress which, it is hoped, will result in an arrangement being made for his devoting himself exclusively to the business of his public office, and his ceasing to be connected, even as a partner, with anyone engaged in private practice. The sentences do not seem to have been excessive, and there does not appear to be any sufficient reason for reviewing them on this ground.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a letter from the Rev. Donald M'Callum, published in *The Oban Times* of the 7th February, reflecting on legal proceedings at Glendale; and, if he will cause an inquiry to be made into the truth of the allegations made by the reverend gentleman above named? In putting the Question, the hon. Member added: I wish to explain that I put it upon the action of a legal functionary—namely, Sheriff Ivory; and I would ask, Mr. Speaker, whether, in putting a Question about a public official, it is not permitted to state the name of the public official? The name has been struck out of my Question as it appears in the Papers.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman asks me a Question on a point of Order. The Question could not be received in that form, because it impugned the conduct of a Judge, and that would not be the proper form to impugn the conduct of such an official.

Mr. MACFARLANE: If I impugned the conduct of the Judge in question, no doubt you were quite right, but——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I have given my ruling on the point of Order in reply to your Question, and it is scarcely for the hon. Member to question that ruling.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour), who replied, said: I quite understand the matter, and I have seen the statement in the letter to which attention has been called. The statements of the Sheriff on the subject to which it relates will be found in his Report, with respect to which a Question is on the Paper for to-morrow. No further inquiry seems to be necessary.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—PROCLAMATIONS—MURRINTOWN MEETING.

Mr. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the county Wexford is a most peaceable district, in which no disturbances of any kind have occurred for a very considerable time; and, whether he can state what reasons the Lord Lieutenant had for proclaiming the meeting announced to be held at Murrintown, at which the Members for the county of Wexford had intended to address their constituents?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I must refer the hon. Member to my reply already given to a similar Question asked by the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. William Redmond) on the 26th instant.

Mr. SMALL asked whether any disturbances had occurred in Wexford before this meeting?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; there was no actual disturbance.

ARMY—ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—110-TON GUNS.

Mr. CARBUTT asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, How many 110-

ton guns have the Government ordered; when are they to be delivered; what is the price per gun; what is the weight of the projectile; what is the weight of powder charge, and what description of gunpowder is to be used; what is the estimated muzzle velocity; and, what is the expected maximum powder pressure with the above charge and projectile?

Mr. BRAND: Three 110-ton guns have been ordered. One is to be delivered in October next, another in January, and the third in April, 1886. The price per gun is £19,500; the weight of the projectile is 1,800 lbs.; the charge is 900 lbs. of cocoa powder; the muzzle velocity is 2,020 feet per second; the maximum powder pressure is 17 tons per square inch. It must be understood that the velocity and pressure are only estimated, although they are based on the experience gained with the Italian guns.

NAVY—H.M.S. "ACTIVE"—BURSTING OF A 6-INCH GUN.

Mr. CARBUTT asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, If the Select Committee has reported on the bursting of the 6-inch gun on board H.M.S. *Active;* and, if so, could he lay a Copy of that Report upon the Table?

Mr. BRAND: The Report in question has not yet been received by me.

Mr. CARBUTT asked, were the Government continuing to make these 6-inch guns exactly on the same principle as the one that had burst?

Mr. BRAND, in reply, said, that it had been decided to strengthen the guns.

GRAND JURY ACT (IRELAND)—FEES TO THE SECRETARY OF THE GRAND JURY, CO. CAVAN.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the secretary of the grand jury for the county of Cavan, or his deputy, charges a one shilling fee for each cheque paid to a contractor; and, whether such charge is justifiable; and, if not, will he take means to have it discontinued?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The secretary of a Grand Jury is appointed by that body, and I have no control over him. I am, however, informed that the secretary of the Grand Jury of the county of Cavan does charge a fee of 1*s*. for providing and preparing forms of application to Presentment Sessions necessary to obtain orders for payment of contracts, as prescribed by the Grand Jury Act. It is no part of his duty, as such secretary, to provide and prepare these forms, and any contractor may himself prepare his own form, in which case no fee is paid; but if he chooses to avail himself of the services of the secretary, there is no objection to the secretary requiring to be paid a fee. I understand that the practice is similar in other counties.

NAVY (DESIGNS)—UNARMOURED SHIPS—VOTE OF CENSURE.

Sir EDWARD J. REED asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the experiments which the Committee on Designs considered it necessary to make before determining to build citadel ships, with unarmoured ends containing cork or some other buoyant substance, have been carried out; and, if not, whether the Board of Admiralty proposes to carry out any such experiments as further recommended by the Director of Naval Construction in 1877; also, whether the Board of Admiralty has yet decided to apply additional armour to any of Her Majesty's ships of recent design for the purpose of protecting them against the fire of machine-guns?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: The Committee on Designs of 1871 recommended experiments to be made as to the effects of firing on cellular structures containing cork or some other buoyant substance, and experiments on a small scale were carried out from the *Excellent*. At a later period, in December, 1876, the Director of Naval Construction recommended similar experiments on a large scale, involving an expenditure of £20,000. In making that recommendation the Director of Naval Construction had in view the possibility of the entire removal of vertical armour from the water-line. As this proposal was not entertained, it was not considered desirable by the Board of Admiralty to carry out those experiments. The recommendation of the Director of Naval Construction has not been renewed since the present Board was appointed; but, in consequence of the Question of which my hon. Friend has given Notice, we have thought it was due to him that the necessity for the experiments should be again considered. The Board have decided that it is not necessary to undertake such experiments at the present time. With regard to the second part of the Question, the Board, having considered the question of the application of additional armour to any of Her Majesty's ships of recent design for the purpose of protecting them against the fire of machine guns, have decided that the addition is not necessary.

Sir EDWARD J. REED: In view of the serious nature of the answer to these Questions, which involves the lives of thousands of Her Majesty's seamen and the security of the country, I beg to give Notice that on going into Committee of Supply on the Navy Estimates I will move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the state of the Navy is unsatisfactory, and that its condition is largely due to recent defective administration and to the improper and extravagant expenditure of the sums voted by Parliament for its maintenance."

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE BARROW DRAINAGE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state how matters now stand with regard to the Barrow Drainage?

Mr. HIBBERT: This question has passed out of the hands of the Treasury. The Lord Lieutenant has decided to appoint a Commission to deal with it. The Commission will consist of Lord Castletown, Sir John M'Kerlie, Colonel Carden, and Messrs. Cassidy, Humphrey Smith, and Richard Hassard; they will be appointed at once in order that they may inspect the river during the coming spring season.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (IRELAND)—SALARIES.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state or furnish a Return showing what are the salaries paid (without regard to distinctive title) to the senior or head clerks of Inland Revenue, and to the senior or head clerks of Customs, at the ports of Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Londonderry, Limerick, and Waterford; and, whether the duties of these officials are not similar in their nature; and, if so, why they are not put on an equality in the matter of salary?

Mr. HIBBERT: The salaries of the Inland Revenue officers referred to range from £245 to £300; those of the Customs officers from £220 to £500, two of the present holders, however, having personal salaries of £600. It is not admitted that the duties of the two sets of men are exactly analogous. I agree with the implication of the Question that officers performing similar duties should receive corresponding salaries; but it does not follow that the lower salary should be increased.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, GALWAY—PROFESSOR D'ARCY THOMPSON.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Professor D'Arcy Thompson, Professor of Greek in Queen's College, Galway, has performed the duties of Librarian in that College since the close of 1876; whether he is still described as "Acting Librarian," although two Professors who have occupied the position of Librarian in the Queen's College, Belfast, and a Professor who has held it in the Queen's College, Cork, have all been appointed full Librarians under Sign Manual; whether Professor Thompson has already several times applied for full installation in his office; and, whether immediate steps will be taken to comply with his claims?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts are as stated in the Question, and, pending possible changes in the Queen's Colleges, it is not thought desirable to make any alteration in the condition on which Professor Thompson holds the post. He receives the full emoluments of the office, and the only point affected is the right of pension which a permanent appointment would confer.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR asked whether it was right or just to deprive Professor Thompson of the right to what had been done for Professors in the other Colleges?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Member repeats his Question. I have stated that, pending probable changes in the Queen's Colleges, it is undesirable to make any change.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, his Question was, why the same policy was not pursued towards Professor Thompson as towards the other two acting Librarians?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is practically the same Question.

Mr. GIBSON said, that Professor Thompson was a most eminent scholar; and if he had discharged the duty of this office for years, why was he not placed in the same position as the other Librarians?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. and learned Gentleman, for the fourth time, has asked the same Question.

Mr. GIBSON: I have not.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes; you again ask why Professor Thompson's temporary office has not been made permanent?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: No, no; that was not my Question.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The reason I have already given why it has not been made permanent is that it is undesirable to do so, pending probable changes in the Queen's Colleges.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: For the fifth time the right hon. Gentleman has failed to answer my Question. My Question was not why Professor Thompson's appointment is not made permanent; but why the other appointments being made permanent, his appointment still remains temporary?

ARMY—THE 20th HUSSARS.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, If he has now ascertained that the 20th Hussars were delayed in their departure from Aldershot to Egypt by the non-arrival of their clothing on the 18th instant; whether it is the case that, in consequence of such non-arrival, they eventually marched in Infantry helmets, without chin straps, old stable jackets and trousers, high-low boots, leg bandages or putties over their trousers, and bandoliers over their ordinary cross-belts; whether there is any precedent for a Cavalry Regiment starting on a march in such a mixed costume; and, whether any Report on the subject has been received from the Military authorities?

Mr. BRAND: It has been ascertained that a slight delay took place in the departure of the squadron of the 20th Hussars from Aldershot on the 18th ultimo; but the commanding officer was informed by telegram on the 17th, at 4.52 p.m., that all clothing not received would be supplied at Portsmouth on the arrival of the squadron. Consequently, no delay should have taken place, owing to non-arrival of clothing. The men did not march in Infantry helmets, but in pith helmets specially provided. No chin straps can be fixed to this helmet; but on a representation from the commanding officer, cork helmets were supplied at Portsmouth, and these are worn by all branches of the Service, mounted and dismounted, on active service. The instructions provide that the men should proceed to the port of embarkation in cloth jackets, trousers, and high-low boots—the Foot Guards wore this dress—for it is evident that special clothing supplied for wear in the tropics is not suitable for this country in February, neither do I suppose the hon. Member would wish that they should have to wear such. The Inspector General of Cavalry has reported that the squadron embarked at Portsmouth in all respects properly equipped for the service upon which it was ordered.

ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS—APPOINTMENT OF "QUALIFIED AND MERITORIOUS WARRANT OFFICERS."

Mr. GORST asked the Secretary of State for War, What steps have been taken, in accordance with the promise given in the House of Commons on February 12th, 1884, towards promoting "qualified and meritorious Warrant Officers" of the Royal Engineers, serving as Military Foremen of Works, to the rank of Quartermaster, either in the corps or in the Army generally, to which they were then said to be eligible?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Provision is made in the Army Estimates for the ensuing year for six additional Quartermasters in the Royal Engineers, and it is proposed to select deserving military foremen of works for these commissions.

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY FUND.

Mr. ST. AUBYN asked, If attention has been called to the Annual Report and Accounts of the Governor of the Queen Anne's Bounty Fund for the year ending the 31st December 1883, especially to the charges of management at page 7; and, whether the funds may not be more liberally dealt with for the augmentation of poor livings, by curtailing the aforesaid charges of management, and expending the profits of each year on the objects for which the Society has its existence?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The gross charges of management are stated to be £9,217 12*s.* 11*d.* Taking the Governor's receipts and payments as a whole, the expense of management for the year 1883 has been approximately £1 1*s.* 8*d.* per cent. The affairs of the Corporation were inquired into by a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1868, and the recommendations made by that Committee have been carried into effect. The Committee of 1868 reported that the business of the Board appeared to be carefully and well conducted.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE CAMEROONS.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any communication has been received from the German Government on the subject of the Cameroon annexations since the despatch of Lord Granville's letter dated 21st February; whether Captain Campbell of the *Rapid* has applied for and received instructions as to the marks of respect to be paid to the German flag; and, what was the date of Captain Campbell's first communication on the subject, and the date of the instructions, if any, which he has received?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Communications are taking place of a confidential nature on the subject of the despatch alluded to, but are not of a nature to be made public as yet. Captain Campbell has not applied for instructions, and his despatch of December 29, which appears in the Blue Book, and is his only report, contains no allusion to any question of recognition of the German flag. Instructions have been sent to Her Majesty's Naval officers on the West Coast to recognize the German flag at the places mentioned in Baron Plessen's note of October 15, 1884, which also appears in the Blue Book.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: When were they sent?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: On February 20.

CYPRUS (FINANCE, &c.).

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he will lay upon the Table Copies of the recent Reports of the Cyprus Audit Officials entrusted with the inspection of revenue accounts in that island; whether Sir Robert Biddulph, the High Commissioner, has acted with the concurrence of the Secretary of State in censuring Mr. Vitalis, the official who made reports concerning alleged frauds on the Cyprus Exchequer; and, whether, having regard to the annual subsidy voted by this House in aid of the government of that island, Her Majesty's Government will cause a more searching inquiry than that of 1881 to be instituted into the financial administration of Cyprus?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The Reports in question will be laid on the Table. Any censure which Mr. Vitalis may have received has been sent independently of any action of the Secretary of State. It is not intended to direct any further inquiry from this country into the financial administration of Cyprus. The general results of that carried out in 1881 have been very satisfactory, and the measures taken by the local authorities have so improved the Revenue as to result in large diminutions of the grants in aid.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether at this time several officials were not in prison awaiting trial on charges of defalcation?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes, Sir.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES (IRELAND)—REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS—PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

MR. CORRY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state how *The Freeman's Journal* obtained a Copy of the Report of the Commissioners on the Queen's Colleges (Ireland) before it was laid upon the Table of the House, and what steps have been taken to prevent the recurrence of such a breach of the Orders of the House; and, when the Report will be delivered to Members?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am glad to be able to say that the premature publication of part of this Report was in no way due to any fault of the Queen's Printer. It appears that one of the Commissioners allowed his copy of the Report to be read by a member of the Press after the Report had been presented to the Lord Lieutenant, being under the impression that the obligation of secrecy, which up to that time he had carefully observed, was then no longer in force. He now greatly regrets his action in so doing. He had no intention whatever of doing anything improper or unusual, or of acting discourteously either to his Excellency, to whom the Report was addressed, or to the Members of the two Houses of Parliament, who certainly are the first entitled to be informed of the contents of such a document when it has been decided to publish it. The Report in question is rather voluminous, but I hope it will be distributed very shortly.

Mr. SEXTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say that the memory of this member of the Press was such that, after reading a Report extending over several columns, he could reproduce it word for word in his newspaper?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I did not imply anything of the sort.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—SANITARY CONDITION OF MARYBOROUGH GAOL.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state the result of the special inquiries which he promised, on the 10th November last, to institute into the sanitary condition of Maryborough Gaol?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A complete sanitary inspection of the Maryborough Prison has been made by the architect of the Prisons Board and the medical officer, with the result that the latter has been able to certify that none of the sickness or deaths which occurred in the prison last year can be attributed to any defect in the sanitary arrangements of the building. In the course of their examination a few improvements suggested themselves in these arrangements, and they are now being carried out.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—CATHOLIC OFFICIALS IN MARYBOROUGH GAOL.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the promise given by the late Chief Secretary on the 16th June last, Whether the Prisons Board have yet made arrangements for increasing the number of Catholic officials in Maryborough Gaol; and, whether the Board still keep seven local warders employed entirely over invalid convicts and withhold from them convict warders' pay?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Since my Predecessor gave the answer referred to, there have been added to the staff of Maryborough Prison a hospital warder, who is a Roman Catholic, and two second class warders also Roman Catholics. The internal permanent staff of the prison (including the Governor and the medical officer) now number 21, of whom two-thirds are Roman Catholics. The local warders are not employed over the invalid convicts.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) ACT—EXPENSES OF CANDIDATES.

Mr. ONSLOW asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether a candidate for any particular constituency for the next General Election will have to schedule, in his Election expenses, any sums of money expended by him between this time and said Election, for hire of rooms for addressing, of necessity somewhat frequently, different places in a populous constituency, and for any other incidental and necessary charges; and, whether he has considered the probability of a very large portion of the *bonâ fide* expenses allowed under the Corrupt Practices Bill, for the purposes of carrying out an Election, being absorbed before the actual Election takes place; and, if so, whether he can suggest any remedy?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, that the points raised in the Question were the subject of much discussion when the Bill was in Committee in that House; and, now, he could do more than repeat an answer he had endeavoured to make to a former Question. As he understood it, the effect of the Act would be this. It would be a consideration whether a meeting were of a general character, and held for the purpose of supporting the interests of a Party, or simply for a Member meeting his constituents and making an annual statement or address to his constituency generally, and the expenses of such a meeting need not be scheduled. But if a meeting were held for the purpose of advocating the claims of particular candidates in an approaching election, then the expenses of the meeting would be taken as part of the expenses connected with the election, and must be taken into account. With regard to the second part of the Question, he had not considered the probability therein stated. Experience showed that if there were an error in the Schedules, it was that the limits fixed were too high, instead of being too low. Lastly, his hon. Friend asked what remedy he would apply. The remedy was in the hon. Gentleman's own hands. If he would go to fewer meetings, and spend less money, he would arrive at the end contemplated by the Act, and attain the result he desired.

MR. ONSLOW said, they must bear in mind that difficulties were created by the fact that Members could not stand for the particular districts which they now represented. They might have to go and seek other constituencies; therefore, they might have to address large constituencies in different districts. In that case, the question arose whether expenses incurred in existing areas were to be scheduled in the election expenses as having been incurred in the new areas in which, where they were larger, more meetings would have to be held than were formerly necessary? He was one who wished to act strictly according to law, and therefore would press a Question which he thought of some importance. Supposing an association paid the expenses of a candidate going a tour of a constituency which he was about to contest, and the candidate contributed to the funds of that association, would those expenses paid by the association have to be scheduled?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, his answer applied to candidates equally as well as to Members. The areas of the new county constituencies were much less than those of the old ones, and he had had applications on that account to reduce the amounts fixed by the Schedules. With respect to the second part of the last Question of the hon. Gentleman, he had yet to know that an association ever paid the expenses of a candidate on a tour; but if any such association existed, he would advise the hon. Member not to subscribe to it.

MR. BRODRICK asked, whether the expenses of the recent meeting at Bury, which the hon. and learned Gentleman attended, would be scheduled amongst his election expenses?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Certainly not. We are not dealing with any particular election, or candidature of particular election. My hon. Friend the sitting Member was making his usual speech to his constituents, and I attended as his guest at the meeting.

MR. STAVELEY HILL said, he wished to know if the hon. and learned Gentleman intended, by the words "particular election," to include any particular meeting held before a vacancy or a Dissolution?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Certainly, if the meeting is in view of any particular election. There was no line drawn by a vacancy or Dissolution.

MR. GORST asked, whether, if any individual or association were to pay for the expenses of a meeting held for the promotion of the candidature of a particular candidate, that would not be an infringement of the Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he had some difficulty in following the Question; and as it was purely hypothetical, he would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to put it on the Paper.

MR. ONSLOW gave Notice that, in view of the importance of this subject, he would put further Questions to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General.

INLAND REVENUE—MR. R. BARNES, COLLECTOR AT WARRINGTON.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to certain letters published in *The Civilian* newspaper of 10th January, 1885, and of other dates, reflecting upon the official character and conduct of Mr. Robert Barnes, collector of Inland Revenue, Warrington; whether, at the recent inspection of books in the Warrington "collection," Mr. Barnes asked each officer (*inter alia*) the following questions:—(1.) Do you read *The Civilian;* (2.) Did you see the letters reflecting on my conduct; (3.) Did you write any of them; (4.) Do you know anyone who did; and another question intended to elicit whether the officers in question agreed with the tone of the letters; whether, in holding this inquisition, Mr. Barnes has exceeded the bounds of official duties; and, whether any, and, if so, what steps will be taken in the direction of admonishing Mr. Barnes as to his duty in the future?

Mr. HIBBERT: The Board of Inland Revenue, who are responsible for the discipline of their Department, inform me that it is not their practice to take any action upon anonymous newspaper attacks upon their officers, such as those referred to by the hon. Member. But they add that if any signed and specific charges are laid before them against Mr. Barnes, or any other officer of theirs, they will at once investigate the case.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—THE IRISH BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the President of the Local Government Board, If there is any objection to the publication in a Return of the provisional schemes advertised by the Boundary Commissioners for the counties and boroughs in Ireland, where changes have been adopted with comparative maps, to enable Members to judge of the advisability of the alterations so made; will he explain why no notes of the evidence taken locally are furnished, and no justification is attempted or reasons given for the changes proposed; and, as the maps issued in the Report are of a misleading character, would he have any objection to cause coloured maps to be printed of the counties where changes have been made, with the barony and parish lines clearly shown, in order that Members may better be able to judge the "compactness" of the divisions?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In reply to the first branch of the hon. Member's Question, I must say that the greatest possible objection exists, inasmuch as the publication suggested would hopelessly confuse the House. In reply to the second branch of the Question, the decisions have all been the unanimous decisions of the whole of the Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners, and the discussion among the Commissioners has been mainly conducted verbally, although with the assistance of a great mass of newspaper reports of the inquiries. The answer to the third branch of the hon. Member's Question is that the maps are, in my opinion, not of a misleading character.

Mr. HEALY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would furnish the Return to such Members as would not be misled by it? How could they consider the schemes if they were not given to them?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he should be happy to discuss any individual case with hon. Members. They were all published in the newspapers.

Mr. HEALY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman could explain the fact that the plan of division in the originally advertised schemes of the Boundary Commissioners had been altered in the case of seven Ulster constituences, and in only four of those for the entire of the rest of Ireland; was he aware that the changes had called for the most vehement public protests in Donegal, Tyrone, Derry, Armagh, and Dublin; and, whether he would have any objection to granting a Select Committee to examine the Commissioners and others as to the reason of the changes in Ulster and Dublin?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The numbers in the first part of the Question, instead of being seven and four, should be seven and nine. I am aware that the Party represented by the hon. Member now state that they are opposed to the changes made in the five counties named out of the 16 where alterations were made. He does not mention the case of Down, where the change made by the Commissioners consisted largely of the scheme of his Friends. [Mr. Healy: Half of it.] In reply to the second branch of the Question, I should have the greatest possible objection. Doubtless the Commissioners would readily admit that, in some cases, their preliminary schemes were bad; but, as to their final decisions, they were unanimous.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CASE OF THE CRAUGHWELL PRISONERS.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Is it the fact that the Craughwell prisoners, charged with the murder of Doherty in November 1881, have now been over two years in gaol without trial, that two men have already been convicted of the crime, and can he give any instance in England or Ireland where prisoners committed for trial for murder have been kept over two years in gaol untried?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Five persons, arrested for the murder of Doherty, were returned for trial for the Summer Assizes of 1883. There have been several trials in the case and several adjournments, which were rendered necessary by the nature of it. The first two adjournments took place at the Summer and Winter Assizes, 1883, for the purpose of procuring the attendance of a witness who had gone to America, and whom the prisoners' advisers, as well as the Crown, were desirous of having in attendance, but whom it was ultimately found impossible to get to return. The prisoners could only be tried separately; and Muldowney, the first of the prisoners, was put on his trial in the spring of 1884, when the jury disagreed, and the cases were then adjourned. At the ensuing Summer Assizes and an adjourned Assize in August, 1884, three trials took place, with the result that two of the prisoners were convicted, and the prisoners' advisers thereupon applied for postponement, which the Crown did not oppose. One of the remaining prisoners was placed on trial at the Winter Assizes last December, when the jury disagreed. It will thus be seen that there have been five trials in the case. I may add that the learned Attorney General is now considering whether, having regard to the number of trials, to the two convictions for murder which have taken place, and to the recent disagreement of the jury, the charge against the remaining prisoners should be further pressed.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE DUBLIN POST OFFICE—PAY FOR CHRISTMAS OVERWORK.

MR. SEXTON asked the Postmaster General, If he will state why the allowance for extra duty performed by the Dublin sorting clerks, during the Christmas pressure of work, has not yet been paid?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: There has been some unavoidable delay in passing the accounts, but it is now being done.

THE BEER DEALERS' RETAIL LICENCES ACT, 1882.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the consent of the Government to the passage through this House of "The Beer Dealers' Retail Licences Act, 1882," was or was not given in the belief that the provisions of that Act would apply to renewals as well as to original grants of licence; whether he is aware that, since the decision of the Queen's Bench Division in "Regina *v.* Kay" cases have occurred in which magistrates have refused, without giving any reasons, to renew licences granted recently before the passing of the Act by their own Bench; and, whether the Government intend to propose any alteration of the state of the Law which admits of such an exercise of magisterial discretion?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is not aware that the Government ever expressed any belief as to whether the provisions of the Act would apply to renewals as well as to original grants of licences. The Queen's Bench Division of the High Court has decided in the case of "Regina *v.* Kay" that the Act does apply to renewals. But since that decision it has been settled by the Queen's Bench in "Regina *v.* Schneider" that the discretion of the Justices is a judicial one, and must not be arbitrarily exercised. It is open to Quarter Sessions to overrule Justices who may have acted harshly towards applicants for renewals.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: I do not want the opinion the Government would express. I want the opinion they entertained. They must have had some opinion upon the matter when they consented to pass the Act.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he did not think the Government could be held responsible for an opinion which they did not express.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: Then am I to understand that the Government left the matter entirely to chance?

[No reply.]

EDUCATION (IRELAND)—ENDOWED BOROUGH SCHOOL OF SWORDS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the funds of the Endowed Borough School of Swords, county Dublin, What measure of reform the Government intend to apply to the condition of things in which the sum of £800 per annum, intended for the education of the children of Swords, without distinction of creed, is now ostensibly applied to the benefit of 40 Protestant children, collected from different parts of the country, while 400 Catholic children, belonging to Swords itself, receive no advantage from the fund?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It has already been stated more than once in this House that no step can be taken regarding the school referred to in this Question without legislation. It is the intention of the Government shortly to re-introduce the measure dealing with this and similar endowments which was brought in, but not passed, last Session.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — KILRUSH QUARTER SESSIONS.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the attention of the Irish Government has been called to an incident at the Kilrush, county Clare, Quarter Sessions, on the 2nd January last, as follows: In the case of The Queen *v.* Ryan (for larceny) the Defendant pleaded "not guilty." The long panel was called and a jury empanelled, case tried, and jury discharged on disagreement. Immediately after, the County Court Judge resumed the cases of action in Civil Bill Court, when a litigated case of O'Brien *v.* M'Grath was called on. One of the witnesses for Defendant was John Griffin, of Querrin, a farmer, and one of the jurors who served in the case of The Queen *v.* Ryan. Immediately after he gave his evidence in the civil case the County Court Judge, addressing him, said "Come now, tell me, were you not a juror in Ryan's case, just tried;" Answer: "I was, Sir;" Judge: "Were you for convicting or acquitting him;" Answer: "I was for letting him free;" if, in questioning a juror with regard to what transpired in the jury room, Mr. Kelly did not exceed his right; if it is not a fact that, upon at least one previous occasion, the Lords Justices have called upon Mr. Kelly for an explanation of his conduct as Judge; and, if in this instance similar inquiry will be made, in order to stop a dangerous and unconstitutional proceeding?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand the Lords Justices have communicated with the County Court Judge in reference to this Question, and that a letter has been received from him in reply, but I have not yet learned what view is taken of the matter. Perhaps the hon. Member will kindly repeat the Question on Thursday next.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—CAMELS FROM INDIA.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is a fact, as stated in *The Times* of Wednesday the 25th, that "orders have been received in India from England to send 3,000 additional camels to the Soudan;" and, if so, whether the cost of these and other camels purchased, and of their transport to the Soudan, will be paid for out of the Indian Exchequer?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: Two thousand additional camels, making in all 5,000 baggage camels, have been ordered from India for the War Office. None of the expense connected with their purchase, collection, or shipment, will ultimately fall on the Indian Exchequer.

INDIA—THE COVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE.

Mr. PICTON asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Secretary of State for India has lately had under consideration proposals for lessening the numbers of the Covenanted Civil Service now employed in Madras and in the North-western provinces and Oudh; whether, in the case of Madras, the proposals were accepted, while in the case of the North-western provinces and Oudh they were rejected; and whether he can state the reasons of these different decisions; whether proposals have been made by European members of the Covenanted Civil Service, of ten to twenty years' standing in the North-western provinces and Oudh, to retire upon special reduced pensions; and whether there is any objection to take advantage of such opportunities for the appointment of Native Indians of tried capacity and integrity; and, whether, by the substitution of Native Indians for Europeans retiring upon special reduced pensions, any saving in the cost of the Civil Service would be effected?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: I think my hon. Friend is under some misapprehension as to the reasons for the proposals made with respect to the Covenanted Civil Service in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and Madras. The facts are as follows:—In 1876, in consequence of a block in promotion, certain officers of the Covenanted Civil Service in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh were allowed to retire on special pensions, although they had not served long enough to be entitled to pension under the ordinary rules. And for the same reason the same privilege of retirement on special pension has since been extended to the Madras Service. But recent applications from officers in the North-West Provinces and Oudh for a further extension of the concession of 1876 have been negatived by the Secretary of State on financial and administrative grounds. The question, I must point out, is not one of permanently reducing the numbers of the Covenanted Civil Service or of substituting Natives of India for Europeans. It is simply a question whether certain concessions are to be made in favour of certain officers who entered the Service in particular years, and whose promotion, from unavoidable circumstances, has been perhaps somewhat slow.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE NILE ROUTE.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Lord Wolseley has ever intimated that, apart from the determination to overthrow the native leaders in the Soudan, he could not retire his troops by the Nile route to any point at which it might be desired to make a stand, and do so more easily, and with less expenditure of life and money, than by way of Berber; whether Lord Wolseley has since thrown any doubt on the accuracy of the following statement in his letter of January 12th 1885:—

> "To our boats movement by water is actually more feasible to-day than it was in November last; nor am I led to anticipate, by those who are best acquainted with the river, that any stage of water will be reached during the next three months which cannot be successfully passed by our English craft;"

and, whether, in fact, there is an unbroken stretch of the Nile of upwards of two hundred miles from the Fourth Cataract, considerably above Korti, to the Third, considerably below New Dongola, on which navigation is easy at all seasons; and, again, for some distance between the Third Cataract and the Second, on the way to Wady Halfa?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Lord Wolseley has not expressed any doubt of his ability to withdraw his troops, if necessary, by way of the Nile. Since the telegram referred to by the hon. Member, Lord Wolseley has not thrown any doubt on the accuracy of the statement referred to. The Nile is navigable for whalers, without break, from Abu Fatmeh to Owli, 226 miles, and for steamers from Abu Fatmeh to Belal, 218 miles, both places being above Korti. Between the Third and Second Cataracts there are unbroken stretches from Amara to Kaibar, 66 miles, and from Kaibar to Hannek, 30 miles.

FISHERY BOARD FOR ENGLAND.

MR. BIRKBECK asked the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the intention of the Government to recommend the formation of a Fishery Board for England similar to the Scotch and Irish Boards, and to which all questions relative to the great fishing industries will be referred?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The Question asked is a very important one; and, although it is under his consideration, the Secretary of State is unable to give a definite reply in regard to it until he has seen and considered the recommendations of the Report of the Royal Commission on Trawling, which is expected in a few days.

NEW ZEALAND—THE TREATY OF WAITANGI.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any reply has been received from the Government of New Zealand in answer to the Despatch which transmitted the Memorial of certain Maori chiefs alleging breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi; whether he has any reason to think that the Government of New Zealand declined to reply to this Despatch, and if he knows on what grounds they have adopted such a course; whether the Treaty of Waitangi is still regarded as binding upon the British Government; and, what steps will be taken to ascertain whether the Treaty is observed?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No reply has yet been received from the Government of New Zealand; but a telegram has recently gone to the Governor, requesting that it may be sent. We have no reason to think that the Government of New Zealand decline to send a reply to our despatch of August last, and are only waiting for its arrival in order to place the Papers on the Table. With regard to the last part of the Question, Her Majesty's Government have long ceased to superintend actively the Native affairs of New Zealand, and so grave a step as would be involved in any direct interference in the internal affairs of the Colony could only be justified by circumstances very different from those of the present case as at present understood.

Mr. GORST asked, whether the British Government considered the Treaty still binding upon them?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: No doubt, the Treaty of Waitangi is in force so far as lapse of time or change of circumstances may not have made any parts of it obsolete.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND).

Mr. MARUM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the observations of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, made upon the 15th day of July last, defining the province of the Executive Government as follows:—

> "In England the Executive Government is not the conservator of the peace. The conservation of the peace is intrusted to the magistrates in the different localities for which they have jurisdiction. They are the conservators of the peace, and the Executive Government and the Secretary of State have no authority to give any orders whatever to the magistrates in this matter;"

whether the Executive Government in Ireland are in the habit of issuing from time to time circulars to the local magistracy purporting to define their duties; whether such circulars are framed in the shape or form of orders or directions, and whether care is taken that they are shaped so as to be interpreted merely as containing information and advice by way of instruction and not as orders or directions; whether this is the case, especially in regard to resident magistrates, and whether such latter are clearly instructed that their judicial functions are distinct and separate from their executive or ministerial functions, if such there be, exerciseable by them; whether he is aware that the Home Secretary, speaking of the principle upon which the Home Office acted in 1867, and down to 1882, of giving advice to local authorities as to assemblies and processions, further said—

> "But unfortunately the doctrine on which it was based was challenged. In a particular case the magistrates ordered that a meeting should not be held, on the ground that information had been sworn that there was danger of a breach of the peace, and the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice declared that the magistrates had no authority to stop a meeting in these circumstances. . . . . Therefore, I say, since that decision (Beatty and others, Appellants, Gillbanks, Respondent, 13th June 1882), the power to stop processsions on these grounds seemed to be put an end to, and they could not be prohibited;"

whether the local authorities of Derry, upon the recent occasion, issued a prohibitory proclamation or notice purporting to suppress a public meeting or procession, grounded upon a sworn information, that a breach of the peace was likely to occur; whether such local magistracy, or the local executive of Derry, were instructed or advised by the Government that to issue a proclamation to suppress lawful assembly or lawful procession, or to stop the same, even if they knew, upon sworn information, that the same would be opposed, and had like good reason to suppose that a breach of the peace would be committed by those opposed to it, was not warranted by Law; but that the duty of the local magistrates in such case was to apply to the executive for such sufficient police force and military aid, if needs be, as would effectually protect such lawful assembly and such processionists in the exercise of that constitutional right of lawful assembly and procession; and, whether the Chief Secretary is prepared to qualify his statement—

> "But there was to be a procession, and the magistrates of Derry thought it to be their duty to prevent the procession,"

so as not to leave such expression possible to be misunderstood as an approval of the action of the Derry magistrates in so issuing a prohibitory proclamation against such lawful assembly and procession, especially when it is held in mind that the Lord Lieutenant possesses absolute power in his discretion to prohibit any public meeting whatever in Ireland, under s. 10, 45 and 46 Vic. c. 25?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Executive Government in Ireland are not in the habit of issuing to local magistrates Circulars purporting to define their duties. Circulars have, from time to time, been issued to Resident Magistrates in relation to their duties; but such have been issued for information, and not as orders or directions, and do not relate to any particular case. It is true that the local magistrates in Derry, upon the recent occasion referred to, issued a proclamation prohibiting the procession, and they were not instructed or advised by the Government in the terms suggested. Magistrates are conservators of the peace; and it would not, in our opinion, be desirable to fetter them in the discharge of their duties by laying down abstract rules as to the legality or necessity of stopping processions. The circumstances of each case must be considered, especially in the North of Ireland, and regard must be had to the consequences of a procession passing through such a town as Derry, with bands and banners, in a manner which the magistrates might fairly consider to be a challenge addressed to an opposite faction. The law in Ireland, as established by the highest Court in that country, upon full review of the English case referred to, is, that if magistrates have reasonable grounds for arriving at the belief that the only mode in which they can discharge their duty of preserving the public peace on a particular occasion is by the stopping of a procession, they are justified in doing so. The Government see no reason for thinking that in this instance the magistrates of Derry did not take the proper or legal measures for preserving the public peace.

MR. SEXTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how it is that the magistrates in Derry can do, under particular circumstances, that which the English Judges say they have not power to do under any circumstances?

[No reply.]

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I would ask the right right hon. Gentleman, whether the magistrates would have power, in England, to prevent a Salvation Army procession passing through a portion of the town with bands and banners because it might be objectionable to a certain portion of the inhabitants of the place?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) has any Question to put regarding the Salvation Army, he should address it to the Secretary of State for the Home Department. We must govern Ireland by Irish laws. ["Hear, hear!"] I was not aware, until I heard that cheer, that hon. Members opposite would prefer Ireland to be governed by English laws. The decision of the Court of Appeal in Ireland has been in the sense to which I have referred.

MR. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman cite the judgment?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the hon. Gentleman puts a Notice on the Paper, I will give him a reference.

MR. HEALY: If the right hon. Gentleman refers to the case of "O'Kelly *v.* Hervey," the circumstances are not at all parallel.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I would ask the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether a Salvation Army procession would be prevented by the magistrates from marching through a particular district with bands and banners because it might be obnoxious to a certain portion of the population?

MR. H. H. FOWLER was rising to answer the Question, when——

MR. SPEAKER called for the next Question on the Notice Paper.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—TREACHERY AT KHARTOUM.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (for Lord ELCHO) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What steps, if any, Her Majesty's Government intend to take towards finding out the names of, and bringing to justice, the two anonymous Colonels who, on their own confession, were accessories before the act to the treachery which led to the fall of Khartoum?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In the absence of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, who, I am sorry to say, is slightly indisposed, and not able to be present——

MR. WARTON: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I will, with the permission of the House, endeavour to answer the Question for him. It appears to be based upon the assumption that these two Colonels, whom Lord Wolseley quoted in the telegram read in the debate the other day as having expressed their opinion that it was by an act of treachery Khartoum fell, must have been accessories before the fact to that act of treachery. I have no reason to think that there is any foundation for that theory. In the first place, it does not appear to have presented itself to Lord Wolseley's mind that there was any ground for suspicion with respect to those two officers. In the next place, it is extremely probable that the possibility of treachery was known not only to General Gordon, but to others in Khartoum, and may have been matter of notoriety. A letter, which was published some days ago, addressed by General Gordon to Colonel Watson, at Cairo, said—"Good-bye," and stated that he expected a "catastrophe" would happen, and that the rebels would be in the town in a few days. There is also the evidence of a letter of much earlier date to show that Gordon was in possession of information to the effect that treachery was intended. On February 12 of last year, Mr. Power, in a letter to Sir Evelyn Baring, said that it was necessary to take energetic measures to keep order in the town, owing to the presence of rebels, and that certain persons were suspected. Early in March, General Gordon telegraphed that one of the most painful parts of the business was the constant spread of reports that treachery was intended on the part of this or that leading man. And on the 23rd of March, he sent Sir Evelyn Baring an account of the shooting of the two black Pashas who had connived with the rebels. Under these circumstances, it seems quite possible that the probability of treachery, and even some knowledge of its particulars, was a matter of more or less notoriety at Khartoum; but it does not follow that the Colonels referred to in the statement of Lord Wolseley were accessories to it.

Mr. BOURKE: Was the telegram the noble Marquess refers to in possession of the Government when they informed the House that General Gordon was in no personal danger?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I believe all these telegrams have been already published.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—KASSALA.

Sir HENRY TYLER said, that in the absence of the Prime Minister, which he was sure they would all regret, he desired to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any measures have been adopted for the relief of the garrison of Kassala? He also begged to ask whether the Government had received similar information to that which he had received from Suakin, in reply to a telegram sent there yesterday. It was to the effect—"All grain issued at Kassala. Garrison sortie defeated. The Italians only an embarrassment?"

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I gave a reply with regard to Kassala and the measures for its possible relief on Friday last. Since then, I regret to say, intelligence has reached Her Majesty's Government that the gallant garrison of that town has had a severe defeat at Kolcia. The battle took place on the 2nd of February, and the loss was 28 officers and 632 men. I may point out that the difficulty of relieving Kassala by any other means than through the medium of friendly tribes in the neighbourhood is very great, owing to the distance of the town from the sea coast, Suakin being 280 miles distant, and Massowah, *viâ* Senheit, being 293 miles from Kassala.

Sir HENRY TYLER gave Notice of his intention to ask whether Kassala was not one of the places referred to in the well-known communications written by General Gordon, nearly a year ago, when he said that to abandon the garrisons would brand the Government with indelible disgrace?

Lord JOHN MANNERS asked the noble Lord, whether the relief of the garrison of Kassala was not one of the objects contemplated in the Treaty of Abyssinia?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: All the Papers relating to the Abyssinian Treaty are before the House. I think the text of the Treaty shows that the relief of Kassala was not mentioned in any way except this—that after the withdrawal of the garrisons of Kassala and Assouan, then the King of Abyssinia was to have the right of occupying Senaar.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: I wish to ask the noble Lord, whether the

King was not to facilitate the evacuation of Kassala?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes; that is what I indicated just now. The King is under no obligation to march to the relief of Kassala; but he is to facilitate the retreat of the garrisons through his territory, and then he may take possession of Senheit.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked, how many Europeans were in Kassala?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE replied, that he could not say exactly. He hoped to be able to do so to-morrow.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—PROCLAMATION OF LORD WOLSELEY.

Mr. GORST said, he wished to ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War a Question of which he had given him private Notice, with reference to the policy announced by Lord Wolseley at Korti, Whether the contents of his Proclamation made at that place were either authorized by the Government or approved by them? The contents of the Proclamation were these—

> "That the English word once given was always kept; that the Soudan would be held by the English until the Mahdi was crushed and Khartoum taken, and that the English must stay in the Soudan 100 years, if necessary, until the Mahdi's power was broken."

He might ask, in addition, whether the Government would be prepared to remain 100 years in Office in order to carry that policy out?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I only received Notice of the Question as I entered the House; but my impression is that what the hon. and learned Member refers to is a part of what was spoken in the nature of a speech, said to have been made by Lord Wolseley, and not a Proclamation. The Government have no official knowledge of the words alleged to have been used by Lord Wolseley, and no instructions have been sent to him, excepting those which have been made public, or which were referred to in the course of the debate on Egypt last week.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY.

Mr. CARBUTT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he had seen the following telegram from Philadelphia, published in *The Times*:—

> "With regard to the Suakin-Berber railway, contracts have been recently made with Messrs. Worthington, of New York, for pumping engines, for pipe lines, to be laid alongside the railway to conduct the water supply for locomotives and troops across the desert. Two 4-inch pipes are to be laid underneath the sands for the entire route—260 miles. Pumping stations with tanks and engines are to be placed every 30 miles, two engines at each station, in case one breaks down. These will force water along at 2,000 lbs. pressure. This is the same system as is used in American pipe lines conducting petroleum from the interior to the seaboard. Water will be delivered at the end of the route at the rate of 150 gallons a-minute. One engine has already been shipped to England. Three will be shipped in the course of the week, and about 20 will be sent altogether. The work on them continues night and day, and will be completed in a month. American firms also expect to supply the pipes?"

The hon. Member further asked whether the contents of the telegram were true; whether Her Majesty's Government considered it patriotic to give their sanction to the inference that manufacturers in England could not make pumps; whether they were aware that the engineers of this country, if asked, could have produced any number of pumps, ready made, and fully capable of doing the work required; and, whether the Government would undertake that no contract for pipes should be sent to America?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The hon. Member has asked me more Questions than I can conveniently answer. I can, however, assure him that this country is in a position to make pumps. The facts are that a contract has been made in this country for the apparatus required for pumping water along the first 50 miles of the Suakin-Berber railway. The pipes are being made here; but the contractors, having had great experience with the American pumping engines, preferred that the six required for this portion of the line—and costing less than 1-10th of the whole sum for that portion—should be bought in New York. As these engines were ready, and time was of great importance, it was thought best to accede to their wishes. There is no present intention of buying other engines abroad.

Mr. CARBUTT: Did the Government ask the manufacturers in this country whether they had engines ready?

[No reply.]

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (for Mr. Chaplin) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the route for the projected Railway from Berber to Suakin has ever been surveyed; and, if so, by whom; and, whether he can state what will be the probable cost of the same, and the approximate time within which its completion may be expected?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I can only refer the hon. Member to my reply on Friday last to the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry De Worms), that the Suakin-Berber route has never been surveyed for the purposes of railway construction; that no estimate of cost can be formed beyond an approximation per mile for the cost of permanent way, material, and plant; and that the date of completion must depend on military contingencies which could not be foreseen.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, when the House would be asked to provide the means for the construction of the Suakin-Berber railway?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that the Supplementary Estimates would shortly be laid on the Table. These Supplementary Estimates would contain a Vote for a portion of the funds necessary for the construction of the railway, and a discussion upon the subject would, perhaps, most conveniently be raised when those Estimates were brought forward.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked, whether the noble Marquess would lay on the Table of the House a Copy of the contract entered into with Messrs. Lucas and Aird, having reference to the railway?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he must ask for Notice of the Question.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.).

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked, When the House might expect to be made acquainted with the financial arrangements for Egypt?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, he did not think that it would be safe to name a day on which they could be submitted to Parliament. He could say, however, that he had heard upon good authority—that of one of the Ambassadors—that, practically, the arrangements were now complete.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked, whether the results of the negotiations with regard to the financial arrangements of Egypt would be contained in the same document which would contain the political arrangement? His reasons for asking the Question were that he saw that instructions had been sent to Blum Pasha to sign the financial arrangements; but he supposed he would not be able to sign a political Treaty.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, that he knew nothing of the instructions to Blum Pasha beyond what he had just stated. The arrangements would be laid before Parliament together. He could not state the exact form which they would ultimately take.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked, whether these formed part of the same arrangement—whether they were to discuss them *en bloc*?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am afraid I cannot answer that Question beyond this—that the whole arrangements will be laid before Parliament at the same time, but the exact form they will ultimately take in separation I am not in a position to state.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I suppose this Convention being signed before the Papers are laid before Parliament, we shall not be able to separate one discussion from the other?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, he thought the hon. Member's best course would be to abstain from criticism until the documents should have been actually signed, and laid upon the Table.

MR. GORST said, he wished to know whether the Papers would at last contain Lord Northbrook's Financial Report?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, that he could not answer that Question without Notice, and it had better be addressed to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

MR. M'COAN asked, whether the House was clearly to understand that the International Convention on the Finances of Egypt would not be ratified by the Government till the assent of Parliament was obtained?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Certainly. The Agreement for the Loan, on which all turns, is made subject to that condition.

NAVY—LEADING STOKERS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty propose to improve the position of Leading Stokers in Her Majesty's Navy?

MR. CAINE: The position of the leading stokers of Her Majesty's Navy is under the consideration of the Admiralty, and the decision will be announced when the Navy Estimates are discussed.

NAVY—THE DOCKYARDS—ESTABLISHED SKILLED LABOURERS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he can state when an answer will be given by the Board of Admiralty to the statement made to him on the 7th of April 1883, at Portsmouth, by the Established Skilled Labourers of that Dockyard?

MR. CAINE: The case of the established skilled labourers cannot be dealt with apart from other classes of workmen in the Dockyards. The questions involved require great care and consideration, and possibly a serious addition to expenditure. I am not prepared at the present time to announce any decision.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — CASUALTIES IN THE SOUDAN.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he had seen a statement in *The Standard* of Feb. 28, from their Special Correspondent at Korti, which stated—

> "I have seen the medical return of the total loss of the Desert Force from the time it left here to its return to Gakdul in killed and disabled from sickness and wounds. This total amounts to 30 officers and 450 men —a heavy percentage indeed for a force which did not much exceed 2,000 men;"

would the noble Lord lay on the Table of the House a Return showing the casualties which took place in the entire Force under Lord Wolseley's command since it arrived in Egypt, the deaths in action, from climate, from wounds and drowning, and also those disabled from any other causes?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I should be glad to give the information if the hon. and gallant Baronet will give Notice of the Question. I believe some despatches have arrived to-day from Lord Wolseley which may throw some light on the subject.

THE ESTIMATES—VOTE OF CREDIT FOR THE SOUDAN EXPEDITION.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether a Vote of Credit would be asked for in respect of the Soudan Expedition; and, if so, whether it would be laid before the House within the next few days?

MR. PULESTON asked, whether the financial arrangements for the railway would be kept separate from the Estimate for war purposes?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Supplementary Estimates will be laid upon the Table to-night. They will, of course, refer to expenditure which is expected to take place within the present financial year. It is expected in the next financial year a Vote of Credit will be asked for; but I cannot, at present, say when. As to the Question of the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston), the Supplementary Estimates will be laid on the Table in the usual form, but the Vote for the railway will be distinct from the rest of the Estimates.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked, whether the Vote of Credit was to be submitted to the Select Committee to be appointed to inquire into the expenditure on account of the Army and Navy; and, if not, why not?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I have been unable until now, owing to its being blocked by the noble Lord, to bring forward the Motion for the appointment of the Select Committee, in fulfilment of the promise that I made to the Leader of the Opposition. It is not intended to refer the Vote of Credit to that Committee, but only the regular Estimates for the Army and Navy.

MR. PULESTON asked, whether the House was to understand that the expenditure incurred in connection with the Suakin-Berber railway had been merged altogether in the general expenditure, or whether a separate account would be kept?

THE MARQUESS OF **HARTINGTON**: A separate account will be kept. I will see whether any further information can be procured.

MR. **GORST** asked, whether the Estimates would be in such a form that the expenditure in connection with the railway would be distinguishable?

THE MARQUESS OF **HARTINGTON** said, he did not think it would be advisable to delay the Estimates; but he would see if any other arrangement could be made.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.

MR. **ALBERT GREY** asked the President of the Local Government Board after what hour the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill would not be taken?

SIR **CHARLES W. DILKE**, in reply, said, the Government would consult the general opinion of the House as to that. He did not think they ought to fix any hour, as he thought the general opinion of the House was that progress should be made with the Bill as quickly as possible.

MR. **COURTNEY** asked whether, in view of the Notice of Motion given by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) with reference to the conduct of the Speaker, the Government would take up the Bill to-morrow?

THE MARQUESS OF **HARTINGTON**: I did not hear the Notice of Motion put down by the hon. Member for Sligo; but I may say that it is the intention of the Government to deal with the Bill to-morrow.

IRELAND—EXTRA POLICE TAX, LIMERICK.

MR. **LEWIS** asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government propose to take any steps for the purpose of recovering from the Corporation of Limerick the sum due to the Government for extra police?

MR. **CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**, in reply, said, he thought he had answered the Question during the Autumn Session. He would, however, answer the hon. Gentleman again, if he would put the Question on the Paper.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

ARMY RESERVE FORCE.

MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY.

Her Majesty's Message *considered.*

Message again read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to direct, by Proclamation, that certain persons who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in Army Service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

MR. **LABOUCHERE** said, he proposed to move an Amendment to the Motion of the noble Lord similar to that which was moved in 1878 by his hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) when a Motion of the same sort was before the House. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade "told" for his hon. Friend, and he saw among those who voted in favour of the Amendment the Prime Minister and many other Gentlemen now sitting on the Treasury Bench. He was not going to recapitulate what had been said last week on the Soudan Question; but the House had been told over and over again by Her Majesty's Government, or at all events they had been allowed to infer it, that Lord Wolseley himself had said that it was impossible to retreat from the Soudan. But that was entirely inconsistent with the facts. Lord Wolseley himself sent home after the fall of Khartoum a telegram to know what he was to do under the circumstances, and the Government left the matter to him. He was not, however, prepared to accept the responsibility, and sent home again to know whether he was to retreat or go forward. Her Majesty's Government then said he was not to retreat, but was to take such a course as would lead to the overthrow of the Mahdi. These arrangements with respect to the Reserve and Militia were based upon the decision taken by Her Majesty's Government. He did not know the view taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite; but there were many who sat near him who really could not conscientiously vote for anything that was based upon the wild Expedition to overthrow the Mahdi. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had that day asked a Question with respect to a speech recently made by Lord Wolseley. That speech appeared in *The Standard*, which was generally a very correct paper, and there was no reason to doubt the accuracy of the version of the speech it published. In that speech Lord Wolseley said that if he had to remain 100 years in the Soudan he would overthrow the Mahdi. That was a more definite pledge than had been given by Her Majesty's Government. It was true during the recent debates they had several assurances given them that it was the intention of the Government to act aggressively against the Soudan until they had conquered and broke the power of the Mahdi, but they were not told who was to be set up to govern in his stead. Whoever his successor might be, it was perfectly clear that we would have to remain there to support his authority. If he and his hon. Friends did not oppose this policy, they perhaps might be told afterwards that they had assented to it. He thought it necessary on the part of those who agreed with him that they should on the very first occasion and on every occasion protest against the course which they believed would lead to our assuming in the Soudan very much the same position that we had assumed in Egypt, and to our saying that we intended to come away, while practically we stayed there year after year. The Correspondent of *The Daily Chronicle* with the Army in the Soudan said that the greatest discontent existed among the soldiers themselves as soon as they heard that they were to remain in that country, for they felt that they would die like flies. Why should not Lord Wolseley be told to withdraw to Wady Halfa or some such place, as it would be impossible until next autumn to make the advance to Khartoum? He had asked the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), who had been at Dongola for a considerable time, what his view of the military situation was, and his hon. Friend told him it was absurd to say that Lord Wolseley could not withdraw with the greatest ease by the Nile. There would not be any difficulty whatever in the operation, as there was alongside the Nile a path which would facilitate the retreat of our Forces. In conclusion the hon. Gentleman moved the Amendment of which he had given Notice.

MR. CARBUTT seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To add, at the end thereof, the words "but that this House regrets that Her Majesty's Ministers have thought it right to advise that certain persons, who otherwise would be entitled to be transferred to the Reserve, should continue in Army Service, in connection with a determination to interfere by force of arms in the internal Government of the Soudan, and to engage in military operations in that Country, beyond those required to enable the Troops under the command of Lord Wolseley to withdraw from it."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, the silence with which the hon. Member's speech was received in all quarters of the House showed that he would not get much support. He did not rise for the purpose of supporting the Amendment. His object was to draw the attention of the House to certain grave reflections which he thought were inseparable from the consideration of Her Majesty's Gracious Message. The fact that the Household troops had within a period of two and a-half years been twice sent out of this country was of itself a very serious and grave incident. In former days the departure of the Guards from Great Britain was an event of equal political and military significance, and it was a sign that we meant business. He wished to know whether we meant business now, and, if so, what business did we mean? Did they consider they had a greater business in hand now than they had, for instance, in 1857, when the Guards were not called out of England? They were sent out in 1862, he thought; but then we were threatened with a war with the United States, and their departure had an important political bearing on the question; but now why were they sending the Guards out? Why was it that since Waterloo they had only been out five times—twice within the last three years? Of course, the officers and all ranks of Household troops were ready, anxious, and happy to go out; and in asking this question why they were sent out now he was asking a question which no officer of the Household troops could ask. But he felt free to do so, never having been in the Army; and, speaking entirely as a civilian, he thought he was entitled to ask why there was this departure from what had hitherto been the precedent of the Service. Why were the Guards called upon to do double duty? He might ask whether they had a greater business now than in 1857, when the Guards were not sent? And if they had not, then they were driven to the possible conclusion that the Household troops were sent because they had no other troops to send. The Expedition which recently left these shores would shortly call for reinforcements; and it was not too much to suppose that before the troops were six weeks out, in every battalion which was now in Egypt perhaps 100 men would be disabled by wounds or sickness, and how were the reinforcements to be supplied? Were they ready at this moment? He was afraid the answer to the question could not be given by pointing to any battalion now on home service. The battalions at home just now were nothing but depleted skeletons, full of raw recruits or invalids, almost every available man having been sent out. Take the Guards now in London. They were very good stuff for soldiers, but they were not soldiers yet, and, what was more, they were not becoming soldiers, because they had to do garrison duty, and were not being instructed in musketry or signalling. Her Majesty's Ministers had taken power to call out the Reserves; but what were they going to do with them? Were they going to send them out beside their old comrades, and to serve under their old commanders, or were they to be sent to strange depôts to go through the weary round of garrison duty? If it was the latter, he thought a grave mistake was being made. He was told that the men in the Reserve were not coming out this time so well as they did last time. The reason was that instead of being sent to serve under their old officers they were to be sent to strange battalions to do monotonous home duty. The Government would be obliged to send out married men, although they were more costly to send out than young soldiers. But they dared not send out young soldiers. They had sent out a battalion of Rifles to Gibraltar; but the noble Lord when asked about it had declined to give an answer. The fact was that there were 254 men in that battalion who had received no instruction in musketry. They dared not reinforce fighting lines with troops of that character. Shortly after Rorke's Drift something happened which ought to convey a grave lesson to the country. A field officer had given him the narrative of the occurrence by an eye-witness. There was a battalion of old soldiers, Highlanders, on the return from India, and two battalions of young soldiers from England. They were bivouacked in line of columns on a hill-side, with pickets thrown out and batches of friendly Zulus in front. During the night the musket of one of the Zulus went off by mistake. A panic ensued. The pickets fired, and ran in. The Highlanders fell in as steadily as on a barrack parade. The young soldiers were in the wildest confusion. They fired at every moving object, and, incredible and discreditable as it may seem, no fewer than 10,000 rounds of ammunition were fired before order was restored. The result was that five of our own men and 15 or 16 friendly Zulus were killed. He felt it incumbent on every man who knew anything of the question to warn the public against what was being done in sending untrained troops out of the country. Let it be imagined for a moment what would have been the result if, instead of Lord Wolseley having been allowed to cull from the entire Service almost every seasoned soldier in it, he had been supplied with inexperienced and young battalions such as he had referred to; and if they had been exposed to such trials and such rigours as the gallant troops under General Earle, Sir Redvers Buller, and Sir Herbert Stewart, he was afraid the tale to be told on their return would be a sadder tale than they had listened to of late. Their loss would have been heavier—very probably they would have been annihilated. What were we doing to prepare for reinforcements? There was a general misapprehension in the mind respecting the Reserve Forces and the Auxiliary Forces. The Auxiliary

Forces consisted of the Militia and the Volunteers. To them should be committed garrison and Colonial duty. To commit to Army Reserve men the duty which ought to be be committed to the Auxiliary Forces was a great mistake. He wished, therefore, to know from the Secretary of State for War what was going to be done when the Reserves were called out, and what troops were to be sent to support those troops which had gone to the front already? He thought he saw in the present action of the Government another instance of a step being taken without consideration of what the next step was to be. He wished the Government to consider what what was to be the next step, and how the troops already sent out were to be supported. He was anxious that in what might be the last act of the present Administration they should not be "too late," but in time.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND suggested that instead of sending out Household troops they should send from Ireland some thousands of soldiers now quartered in that country with nothing to do. These soldiers had distinguished themselves in eviction operations. He would suggest, too, that the Royal Irish Constabulary, whose bravery and discipline had been greatly lauded by the Government, were also available for service. It was true that the Constabulary had never been tested in the battle field. But they had always been earnest in carrying out evictions in Ireland, and had shown themselves ready to stab people, irrespective of age or sex, in the performance of their duty. It would only be reasonable for the Government to give these gentlemen an opportunity to distinguish themselves against those who had arms in their hands. But as the people of Ireland regretted the war in the Soudan, they would not regret it so much if it brought about the removal of some of these Forces from the country. He defied the Government to withdraw their troops from Ireland for the Soudan. Such had been the result of the government of Ireland in the past, that now in the hour of England's difficulty they dare not withdraw their troops from Ireland to meet the enemies of England. The hon. Member for Wigtown had given a graphic description of the mismanagement of our troops, when friendly Zulus were killed, who, he must say, deserved to be killed for being friendly. What valiant and gallant deeds our gallant Army was capable of! That story had come fresh upon the House. How, then, could the people be expected to know what went on in the Soudan? No guarantee of the truthfulness of the reports of what went on at the seat of war could be obtained. There would be great demonstrations of loyalty in Ireland on the morning when some of the regiments in Ireland took their departure for the Soudan. The Constabulary were a highly-trained body, who would render equally good service, and the Irish people would gladly see them go, and hearty prayers would be offered up that none of them might come back. It had been announced that the Prince of Wales was about to visit Ireland, and he believed that if the Government determined upon withdrawing a large number of troops from that country it would go a long way towards insuring His Royal Highness a hearty welcome. He thought that if hon. Members and the people of England would but study the extraordinary position of the Government with regard to Ireland they could not but fail to see how detrimental it was to the true interests of the Empire at large. If, also, the Royal Irish Constabulary were sent to the Soudan it would go far to make both the noble Marquess and the Prime Minister popular, and do much to settle the Irish Question.

MR. CARBUTT said, he was one of those who objected to the Egyptian policy of the Government from the beginning, and on every possible occasion he would oppose their going on with the war in the Soudan. The result of the debate last week was that the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had got the substance, and the Radical Members who opposed the Government had only got the shadow. We had got into a war of which we could not see the end, and it might be the beginning of the downfall of England. It was to be feared that large numbers of the troops to be sent out would perish from disease and from the heat. Were we able to send out the reinforcements that would be required, and also the 30,000 men that it was said would be required to protect the railway from Suakin to Berber, if the House permitted the railway to be made? As to our setting up a good Government at Khartoum, could anyone prove that there was not a good Government there already? It was stated that on the fall of Khartoum not a single woman or child was killed; and if that was so, did it not prove, after such a siege, that there must be a good Government at Khartoum already? It would be the duty of the Members who disapproved the policy of the Government to do all they could to bring Lord Wolseley back to the frontier of Egypt, and with that object he should join with those Members in giving opposition to the Vote.

Mr. GORST said, he believed he was representing the feeling of a large number of persons in this country when he expressed deep regret at the manner in which Her Majesty's Government had treated the offers of military assistance from some of the Colonies. Everybody who was attached to the British Empire was delighted by the offers of assistance which were made to the Government from New South Wales, Canada, Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland; and if they had been received in the spirit in which they were made it was probable that New Zealand and other Colonies would have followed suit, and we might have assembled in Egypt a body of troops which would have represented not only the Mother Country and India, but almost all the self-governing Colonies. We could all judge what a good moral effect a spectacle of that kind would have produced upon the Powers of Europe at a time when even Members of the House where speaking of the decadence and downfall of the Empire. The Government having the singular good fortune to receive those offers ought to have accepted them with thanks and enthusiasm; but instead of doing that, they only allowed New South Wales to send a contingent, which it appeared to have ready, and which our military necessities almost obliged them to accept, and to the other Colonies they returned a cold and unsympathetic answer that the assistance proffered was not wanted, and that if it were needed further communications would be made. He should have thought also that Her Majesty's Government would have laid on the Table at once the precise terms of the offers, together with their replies. He supposed they did not do so because they were ashamed of what they had done, and feared the condemnation of the Opposition and the country. He did not think a Motion of the kind before the House should pass without a protest against the conduct of the Government in this matter.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, that he thought it was not a very patriotic suggestion that 14,000 men should be sent from Ireland to the Soudan in order to fight against the 1,000 Irishmen who, it was said, were going from America to join the Mahdi. If such a proposal were to be carried into effect, an encounter between men of the same nationality, which might take place under such circumstances, would not tend to foster Irish unity so frequently advocated by hon. Members opposite from Ireland. Such speeches as the last were made by Members to catch their constituents. He was not in the position of having to make speeches to catch his constituents; he did not come to the House with the intention of making his Parliamentary position a monetary transaction.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I rise to Order, and I ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. Baronet is in Order in imputing to hon. Members that they came into this House for the purpose of making their position a monetary transaction? Under ordinary circumstances I would not take any notice of anything the hon. Baronet said.

Mr. SPEAKER: The remarks of the hon. Baronet were not, in my opinion, relevant to the subject before the House.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, he was very sorry if he had said anything irrelevant, and he was delighted at the brightness of intellect displayed by the hon. Member for Wexford in repudiating the transaction he had described. He was also very glad to notice the contempt which the hon. Gentleman appeared to entertain for the opinions he (Sir Patrick O'Brien) had expressed. The House was discussing operations which the Government were about to undertake in the Soudan, which were of such grave importance that it was not until half-past 11 on Friday night that the hon. Gentleman was able to make up his mind how to vote. He certainly did not propose to imitate the conduct of the hon. Member and those who sat with him in endeavouring to ridicule and in sneering at 14,000 Irishmen, but would support the Motion of the Government.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was pleased to hear the observations of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, because, if there was one thing which struck the House on Thursday last, it was the fact that the Prime Minister, in the announcement which he made, made no reference to the action of the Colonies, said hardly a word as to the death of General Gordon, and did not speak of the bravery and gallantry of the troops. This was an occasion when, if Ministers were at one, and wished to put before the country what they really felt, the loyalty of our Colonies, in spite of the manner in which they had been treated, might have been fitly acknowledged. It was no use to do this after the event, when the public had begun to murmur, and the papers to point out the Ministers' omissions. It was no use, then, their trying to remedy the mistake. The Prime Minister had missed his opportunity on the first meeting of Parliament, and showed he had lost touch with, and was out of harmony with, the nation. He wished on this question to ask the noble Lord to state the number of men now serving with their regiments whom he was going to detain, not allowing them to go into the Reserve? That was the only question before the House at the moment. Volunteers were also to be invited from the Reserves; but the Reserves were not to be called out. Could the noble Lord state the number retained and the number that were calculated as likely to volunteer? At the present time we had war, or nearly war, in South Africa; a serious state of things, not quite war, existed also on the Afghan Frontier; and the very fact that the Guards had been called out showed the position in which the country was now placed. The noble Lord knew that he could not take a regiment from Ireland; and he should like to know what was the present condition of the Army and of those Forces which could be put into the Line in case of necessity? He was entitled to press for an answer to such a question. The noble Lord and those who sat with him on the Ministerial Bench had been the most strenuous advocates of the short-service system, but had signally failed to make that system efficient. Lord Wolseley, the Secretary of State for War knew, had asked for a picked body of men of the Cavalry, and his request was for all old soldiers. That General, it should be remembered, was an advocate and apostle of the short-service system; yet when he came to a difficulty and he was in command, Lord Wolseley advocated sending out old soldiers into the field. Would the noble Lord say whether taking from each Cavalry regiment in the Service one troop, and that composed of the best officers and men, was making of each of those regiments an efficient or an inefficient regiment? When called upon to send two regiments to the Soudan, he sent two squadrons from each of two regiments differently armed—from the Lancers and from the Hussars. He stated that the Lancers were the best to send. [The Marquess of HARTINGTON dissented.] Then he misunderstood the noble Lord.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I said it was desirable to send out two squadrons of each.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had asked the noble Lord whether the squadrons were to be made into one regiment; but at the time the Question was put the noble Lord could not give an answer. It was not out of place to repeat that Question now, because if the Government could not send out from the two regiments he had named more than two squadrons of efficient men, that would be a good answer why they were not sent. The hon. Member for Wigtonshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had referred to the number of men in one regiment who had never been through musketry instruction, and the noble Lord knew that such would be the state of every regiment now at home. Another cruel case was this. There was a regiment gone to the front, the second battalion of which ought to have been at home. But they were sent to the Mediterranean, and the moment they got there they were called upon to send large drafts to their other battalion, and did so. What a position in which to place a commanding officer! He denuded his regiment of all the best men, and when afterwards ordered to proceed to the front himself, he had to take undrilled, inefficient recruits. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), in making his remarks, seemed to have forgotten the division when 455 Members voted for the prosecution of the war, the hon. Member and his Friends numbering only 112 on the other side. But he only asked for an answer from the noble Lord, and would not say anything further. The Government had failed, and short service had failed, because they had copied foreign nations, forgetting, however, that foreign nations did not take men into the Army so young as we did at the present time. We took boys of 16 calling themselves 18, two or three years younger at the latter age than they were taken under the conscription by foreign nations. He thanked God we had not conscription; but we wanted more men and a larger Army to carry on the multifarious duties that fell upon this great country.

Colonel NOLAN said, the fault of the Army system for the last 10 or 12 years was that, owing to a too rigid economy, the regiments had been filled up with boys. He complained of the manner in which the Reserves were being called out, and observed that other countries did not call out their Reserves except for first-class wars. The way in which our Reserves were being treated would interfere with their getting employment. The Government were going to put 40 or 50 perfectly efficient officers in the Reserve, and were, at the same time, spending money in calling out Reserve men. That was spending money in two ways, and spending much more than would otherwise be required.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he did not think it was necessary, neither would the House allow him, to enter at any length into a reply to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who objected altogether to the Address that had been moved. He agreed with the hon. and gallant Baronet opposite (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), that if anything had been decided by the vote of the House on Friday night, on the Motion of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), it was that the House was prepared to continue the war, and not to adopt the policy advocated by his hon. Friend—that a policy of retreat should be immediately enjoined on Lord Wolseley. The only part of the hon. Member's speech as to which he need say a word was with reference to a statement made by the Correspondent of *The Daily Chronicle* that great discontent prevailed in Buller's Force, and that in the summer the men would die like flies. As for himself, he had not seen any such statement, neither did he apprehend that our men would suffer during the summer in that way. He understood the writer to say the announcement that the troops were to remain in the Soudan during the summer was not received with enthusiasm; but what the Correspondent said about the hardships which that decision would entail proceeded upon the assumption that the Army remained at Gakdul and other positions where there was very little accommodation. But in that case everything would be done to mitigate the hardships. The hon. Member for Northampton and the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) referred to the possibility of a retreat by the Nile, and of Lord Wolseley being able to take boats down the river. But if anything had been decided by the House, it was that Lord Wolseley should not retreat. The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Herbert Maxwell) asked why the Guards had been sent out, and said that it indicated a serious state of affairs; he also said that double duty had been thrown upon them. [Sir Herbert Maxwell: That it was not usual for the Guards.] He understood the hon. Baronet to say that double duty was thrown upon them. It should be remembered that the Guards did not take ordinary garrison duty abroad, and that the occasions on which they had been sent out were not very frequent; but still they were expected, and they expected themselves, to be employed whenever there was a prospect of active and serious service. The hon. Member asked what was the necessity for sending them out. Well, the hon. Gentleman knew that the organization of the Army had been for some years under a strain. Since the Egyptian occupation in 1881, there had been several Expeditions sent out. There had been Lord Wolseley's first Expedition, there had been General Graham's Suakin Expedition, there had been Lord Wolseley's Expedition up the Nile, and there had been a considerable Expedition to South Africa. That pre-supposed that our Army, of very moderate size, had been subjected to a very considerable strain, more especially when it was borne in mind that it was a short-service Army on a peace footing. Under those circumstances, the House need not be surprised if we had not at home a large Reserve of battalions of fully trained soldiers ready to set out at a moment's notice to reinforce an Army in the field. The hon. Gentleman said that our battalions at home were "depleted skeletons, full of young soldiers." He (the Marquess of Hartington) did not know that a depleted skeleton was full of anything. The hon. Member was wrong in saying that they had called out the Reserves. On former occasions the Reserves had been called out, and he was happy to say that they had promptly obeyed the call. But in the present case they had not called out the Reserves, but only requested them to volunteer. Volunteering in a certain limited condition had been in progress since September last, and already from 1,700 to 1,800 volunteers had offered and been accepted. The conditions were now very greatly extended; but, should volunteering fail to meet the necessities, the Government would not hesitate to call out the Reserves. In further reply to the hon. Member, he would point out that, as recruiting had been progressing very rapidly during the last two years, it was not surprising that there were in the Army a large number of men who had not completed their course of musketry. He did not think that there was any foundation for the statement that garrison duty was now so severe that insufficient time was left in which to train young soldiers in other respects. He regretted that the hon. Member should have thought it necessary to repeat a story, not authenticated, which he had heard about a discreditable panic among our soldiers in Zululand. On the occasion referred to, an alarm occurred in connection with a night attack, which, if true, was not, perhaps, altogether creditable to the officers and men concerned; but it did not assume grave proportions at all.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, that the occurrence had been described to him by an eye-witness. He had not related it in order to discredit either officers or men, but to show the danger of sending young and untried soldiers into the field.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he imagined, notwithstanding this disclaimer, that the great majority of the officers would consider this scare or panic, if true, was discreditable. At the same time, he thought it would have become the hon. Member to make sure that the story was not exaggerated. In regard to the manner of the reception given by the Government to the extremely satisfactory offers which had recently been made by our Colonies, the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) was labouring under a mistake. Only one of the offers in question—namely, that from New South Wales—was an offer to send an actually-organized Force at a moment's notice, for which the means of transport were provided, and that offer was accepted without any hesitation whatever. That contingent could leave Australia and reach Suakin as soon as the Expeditionary Force despatched from this country. The case of the other Colonies was different. While the Government did not want to make the slightest distinction between the patriotic spirit which animated every one of them, yet they were not offers of corps ready to be embarked on the instant, and they could not arrive at Suakin until after the attack on, and the dispersal of, Osman Digna's Force would have taken place. Those corps would, therefore, have had to remain at Suakin during the whole summer awaiting the autumn operations. The Government, however, had not declined any offer, and they were now in communication with the Representatives of the Colonies, with a view of ascertaining the exact amount of assistance which each Colony was in a position to supply, and the best way in which it could be utilized. He thought it would have been unbusiness-like and unwise if the Government, without making inquiry, had said to the Colonies—"Send us as many troops as you like to Suakin; we will do the best we can with them when they arrive." An hon. Member had observed that it was curious that Lord Wolseley, who was the great champion of the short-service system, should have asked that old soldiers should be sent out to form the Camel Corps. In answer to that he had to say that, to the best of his belief, Lord Wolseley had not stipulated that the men should be over a certain age. It was, of course, not usual to send men under 20 on active service.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he wished to ask a question with regard to the offers from the Colonies; but he must first remark that if the noble Marquess could always answer questions on behalf of the Government, the House would never have to complain of that levity and want of sympathy with patriotic proposals which were sometimes manifested by Members of the Ministry. It appeared to him Lord Derby was using in this Government the same invigorating influence that he employed in the late Ministry, and with the same result. He wanted to know why the offers of the Colonies were not accepted at once, the execution of them being delayed till the close of the summer? He understood that the offers were refused, but that the Colonies were told that they might renew them at a later date. This caused a great damp to the spirits of the Colonies, who believed, up to this very moment, that their offers of assistance had been refused, which was a fact greatly to be deplored. Why, he asked, had no Papers been presented to Parliament on the subject? Perhaps now the House might be given a specimen of the literary composition on this very important matter of the noble Lord at the head of the Colonial Office, who seemed to occupy a middle place between a wet blanket and a upas tree. He also wished to know what was the intention of the Government with regard to the remaining soldiers in the garrison of Kassala? They were entitled to know whether the splendid defence of Kassala would be thrown away, like that of Khartoum? The intelligence of the fall of Khartoum did not make any impression on Her Majesty's Government, and certainly not upon the Head of it. He wished to ask the Representatives of the Government present to inform the House distinctly whether they had any policy at all with regard to Kassala, or whether they intended to allow the remainder of that garrison to be sacrificed as ruthlessly as the other garrisons which had depended on the word of Her Majesty's Government?

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 19; Noes 149: Majority 130.—(Div. List, No. 36.)

Main Question again proposed.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that, as no answer had been given, he felt bound to repeat his question as to the intentions of the Government with regard to the Kassala garrison. Were Her Majesty's Government going to abandon Kassala, and allow its garrison to be massacred and slaughtered, as the garrisons of other places in the Soudan had been massacred and slaughtered? He did not desire in any way to interfere with the military preparations of the Government; but he desired an answer to this plain question—Did Her Majesty's Government intend to raise no finger to assist the Kassala garrison in its present great straits? He considered he was entitled to an answer to his question.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, he was sorry he was not in his place when the hon. Gentleman put this question before; but he did not think that he was able to add very much to what he stated on this subject at Question-time that day, and also on Friday. He then stated that Lieutenant Colonel Chermside, the Egyptian Governor of the Red Sea Littoral, had instructions to do all he could, through Native tribes, and also by means of communications with the King of Abyssinia, to carry provisions into the town, or facilitate the retreat of the Kassala garrison. This was quite irrespective of the recent Treaty with the King of Abyssinia, of which he had spoken. An idea had got abroad that by that Treaty the King of Abyssinia engaged to march to Kassala and relieve it. That was not so. He had merely undertaken to facilitate the retreat of the garrison through his territory. Colonel Chermside had been directed to enter into arrangements by which the assistance of the King of Abyssinia could be utilized. It was very easy to reproach the Government; but he would ask hon. Members not to confine themselves to attack, but to ask themselves what measures they would themselves suggest. Kassala was 290 miles inland. How did the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth propose that the Kassala garrison should be rescued? Nobody could sympathize more deeply than himself, and so did Her Majesty's Government, with the position of the Kassala garrison, or more admire its gallantry; but, so far as the circumstances of time and place permitted, they had done all that it was in their power to do.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, that that was not the first time on which the House had heard from the Government of their deep sympathy with these garrisons. He was quite willing to believe in the existence of that sympathy; but what was the good of it, since it did nothing whatever to help the garrisons? At the very time that the Government were sending messages of a very flattering and grateful nature to General Gordon, they had declined to take any action to rescue him. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) asked hon. Members to do what was essentially the duty of the Government. By the original mission of General Gordon, they undertook to do what they could to rescue the garrisons; and it was not for the Government to ask hon. Gentlemen to suggest what plan they would recommend. But that was not all. As had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), something had been recently sanctioned by the Government which materially interfered with the steps that might otherwise have been taken to rescue the garrisons. Massowah had been occupied by the Italian Government; and so far as could be gathered from the statement of the noble Lord, to which he had listened most attentively, it was Her Majesty's Government who first suggested that Massowah should be one of the places occupied by Italy. This, it was said, had materially hindered the Egyptian authorities on the coast from carrying out those measures of relief on which they had determined; nor was that unnatural, having regard to the fact that the Italians occupied Massowah without the assent of the Sultan. That occupation, for which Her Majesty's Government was responsible, had, therefore, thrown on them a still greater duty to provide for the relief of Kassala. He did not suggest that they should send an Expedition of British troops to relieve it; but since Her Majesty's Government had sanctioned the occupation of Massowah by Italian troops, and since that had interfered with the operations which Colonel Chermside was prepared to take for the relief of Kassala, they ought, in some way or other, to approach the Italian Government on the matter, and endeavour to get it to go to the assistance of Kassala. He threw that out as a suggestion, and would make a present of it to Her Majesty's Government; but, of course, he was ignorant of many of the circumstances of the case. The Government only were acquainted with all the circumstances. They had undertaken, by the original mission of General Gordon, and by repeated assurances, to do what was possible to relieve the garrisons, and the House of Commons should call on the Government to fulfil their obligations. Turning to another matter, the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had made some very apposite remarks on the way in which the advances so patriotically made by the Colonial Governments had been received by Her Majesty's Government. It was impossible to tell precisely what had happened in the matter until the Papers were presented; and he hoped that, with as much despatch as possible, they might be laid on the Table.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, it had always seemed to him that these garrisons had been rather hardly used. It seemed to him that they could have been relieved much more easily than the garrison of Khartoum. They had been encouraged to resist, and an immense amount of bloodshed had been the consequence. He could not help thinking that, if they had been left to themselves, they would have fared very much better, and would probably have made terms with the Mahdi. He feared it was possible that, in consequence of the action of the Government in connection with the occupation of Massowah by the Italians, they might have given offence to the King of Abyssinia, who could have given us more assistance in this matter than anybody else. He wished to explain his action in not opposing the Government in the division which had just been taken. He thought it his duty to oppose anything that led to what he considered the most intolerable insanity of this great Expedition to the Soudan, and he should do so at every stage and in every form. But he had also felt that, owing to our having this Egyptian millstone, as it were, around our necks, we were being kicked all over the world; and he thought that, under all the circumstances of the country, they would be wrong in attempting to deprive the country of the services of the Militia, or doing anything to weaken our defensive position at home.

Mr. ONSLOW said, his hon. Friend (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had brought forward a most painful subject; and it was not worthy of the noble Lord, as a Minister of the Crown, to make such an answer. The fact was, the noble Lord wished again to shirk responsibility, in the same way that the Government had done through all that affair. He had no business to ask a private Member of the Opposition—"What would your policy be?" He did not wish to use strong language in that House on this subject; but he should use it outside. It was this constant shirking of responsibility which had led the country to complain of the conduct of the Government. It was said that some general instructions had been given to Colonel Chermside; but would those instructions save the starving garrison of Kassala? His own belief was that the whole garrison would go like Khartoum. The noble Lord came forward to try to deceive the public by saying that the Opposition should have saved Khartoum. He could tell the noble Lord one thing—that, if the Conservatives had been in Office, they would not have allowed these garrisons to be sacrificed piecemeal as they had been. The Government had, in order to secure votes, run the Franchise Bill against Gordon, who had unfortunately been sacrificed.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to direct, by Proclamation, that certain persons, who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in Army Service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient.

To be presented by Privy Councillors.

MILITIA.

MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY.

Her Majesty's Message *considered.*

Message again read.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON moved—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to order, by Proclamation, the embodiment of Militia."

Lord EUSTACE CECIL said, he had no desire to prevent the House proceeding to other Business; but he wished to urge on the noble Marquess the desirability of making up the Militia to its full strength. It was high time that something should be done for this purpose. The Militia was now far below its proper standard. The noble Marquess said, on a previous occasion, that something had been done; but whereas the strength of the Militia was 99,000 last year, and was to be brought up to 105,000 men this year, yet the maximum establishment was 144,000 men. He was thankful for small mercies. Still, this was mere trifling with an important matter. If this was, as the Proclamation declared, "a great emergency," surely it was desirable the Militia should be brought up to its full strength. As an old Guardsman, he had thought it was a very strong measure to send the Guards out; but if that step was necessary, it showed the necessity also of dealing at once liberally with the Militia. He could not conceive that there could be any difficulty about the matter at the present time. There was a very depressed state of trade, and there could be no better opportunity for the Government than the present to bring up the Militia to its full strength. It seemed that there were only six regiments to be embodied; but he should like to know if, under this Proclamation, it was in the power of the noble Marquess to embody the whole of the Militia if the Government thought it necessary to do so, and if it was intended to provide any portion of the Militia for regular service abroad? Of course, in making these remarks, it was impossible for him to say what the Government might have in view as to the future—in the Campaign in the Soudan, or elsewhere; or as to the sending of White troops to India to take the place of Indian troops sent to the Soudan.

Mr. GOURLEY urged that it would be useless to call out the Infantry Militia alone. Two regiments of Artillery Militia ought also to be embodied and employed in preparation for coast defence.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, that the object of the embodiment of certain Militia regiments, as had been already stated, was to fill up the places of Line regiments now doing duty abroad. Six battalions of Militia Infantry and two brigades of Militia Artillery had been embodied to relieve the troops remaining in this country of a portion of the garrison duty, which would otherwise press heavily upon them. The noble Lord asked him if they had the power, under the present Proclamation, of calling out more battalions if they required them? Undoubtedly, they had power, without any further Proclamation, to call out the whole Militia Force of the country; but the power was, of course, limited by the money voted by Parliament. It would be necessary, on the Vote of Credit and Supplementary Estimates, to inform the House of the limit of their intentions with regard to the future embodiment of the Militia. He might say that at present no extension of the ordinary terms had been offered to the Militia. Recruiting from the Militia was, however, improving, and the numbers were increasing. No doubt, the Militia was below its establishment; but he really did not know how the numbers of the Militia Establishment had been arrived at. Certainly, the Militia had never been up to its full establishment; but he believed that it was now as full as it had ever been. The suggestions made should have his best consideration.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he thought that before the Vote was taken the House should have some explanation of a recent speech of Lord Wolseley. In his capacity of Commander-in-Chief in the Soudan he had addressed a number of friendlies, telling them that the Forces of Her Majesty intended to remain in the Soudan, if necessary, for 100 years, until the Mahdi had been crushed. He thought that Lord Wolseley should not be allowed to hold language of that character, and further compromise this country with the Natives of the Soudan. They might try to overturn the Mahdi, but probably they would before long give up that nonsense; but, in the meantime, Lord Wolseley ought to be informed that he was in the Soudan to carry out military operations, and not to compromise the honour and credit of the country.

Motion *agreed to.*

Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to order, by Proclamation, the embodiment of Militia.—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

To be presented by Privy Councillors.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed*) BILL.

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

[BILL 49.] COMMITTEE.

[FIRST NIGHT.]

Order for Committee read.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK, in rising to move—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power in all cases where an elector is entitled to one vote only, to enable the elector to nominate more than one candidate to whom under certain circumstances that vote might be transferred in the manner indicated by the elector,"

said, he regretted that several hon. Members who were interested in the subject were not present, because they had thought that it would not come up till to-morrow. He understood, however, that if he deferred this Motion it would not be competent for him to move it afterwards. With regard to the question of representation, he thought it was a curious illustration how entirely most nations ignored the experience of others; that the Liberal Party in England proposed to adopt the system of single-Member seats at the very time when the Liberals of France were going to abandon it, because they had found in practical experience that it had worked so badly. The saying of the Prince Consort, that Representative Institutions were on their trial, had been very often quoted. It would, indeed, seem that government of the people, for the people, and by the people, was so obviously wise and just that it must almost of necessity work well in any intelligent community. Yet this had certainly not been the general experience. Why had Democracy so often failed in the past? Why in State after State had power so often swung from one extreme to the other—from the tyrant to the demagogue, and back again from the demagogue to the tyrant? The true reason, he believed, was the faulty manner in which the principle had been applied; in fact, that there had never yet been true representation on a large scale; but the systems adopted had given undue power to extreme men, leaving those of moderate views, who generally constituted the great majority, almost unrepresented and practically powerless. As there was a general impression that the present Bill would represent the country, roughly perhaps, but with substantial fairness, he was anxious to show that this would certainly not be the case. Let them take a theoretical case. Suppose a country in which there were 1,200,000 Liberal voters, and 1,000,000 Conservatives. Now, if the two Parties were evenly distributed, it was clear that the weaker Party would be utterly swamped. To use a familiar illustration, wherever they dropped a bucket in the sea they would bring up salt water. In such a case, therefore, the 1,000,000 were practically unrepresented. But they must carry the matter a little further. In the House so represented the majority might bring forward some Bill of an advanced character and carry it by the votes of numbers representing 800,000 electors, and against those representing 400,000, carrying it, therefore, by 2 to 1. But the minority in the House would in such a case have with them also the 1,000,000 in the country who were left unrepresented, so that, in fact, the measure would represent the wishes of only 800,000 electors, and would be opposed to those of 1,400,000. Thus, though they were told that that was a just system, the result was to enable a minority of 800,000 to override a majority of 1,400,000. That was, he believed, the main reason why so-called Representative Institutions had often worked so badly. They saw a practical illustration of that in Switzerland. The Swiss had a liberal system of representation; but they had also what was called a "Referendum"—that was to say, Bills which had passed the Assembly were referred to the whole electorate, by whom they were often rejected. For instance, in one year alone—in 1882—a law on the re-organization of the Departments of Justice and Police was rejected by 214,000 to 150,000; a revised Penal Code by 202,050 to 159,000; one on Patents by 190,000 to 171,000; and an Education Bill by 317,000 to 170,000. That, then, was the manner in which a single-Member system worked in a country where the electors belonging to the two great Parties were uniformly distributed. But now, still adhering to the system proposed in the Bill, let them suppose that the electors belonging to the two great Parties were not uniformly distributed throughout the constituencies, but that those of the one were more concentrated in particular districts—the Liberals, for instance, in the great cities. In that case it was obvious that their electoral strength would, under the present system, be to a great extent wasted. There, again, he would take an actual illustration from Switzerland. The City of Geneva was divided into four wards. At the election of 1842 the Liberals had a large majority in the whole; but being concentrated mainly in one ward, though, of course, they carried that one by an overwhelming majority, they were defeated by small majorities in the other three, and the result was felt to be so intolerable that the system was altered. Now, his firm belief was that it would break down here also; and he begged the House, therefore, to allow the Committee to take those questions into consideration. He did not ask the House, however, in accepting that Instruction, necessarily to adopt the principle, but only to allow them the opportunity of discussing it in Committee. But even if the House were not disposed to accept the principle, he would still ask them to adopt that Instruction, which would, after all, but give them time for further reflection; because it would be the best mode of carrying out the object arrived at by the hon. Member for Penryn (Mr. Brett), and which was supported by the Presidents of the Board of Trade and of the Local Government Board. The cases which the hon. Member wished to guard against were, no doubt, those in which, when several Members of one Party stood, they might divide the votes, and thus let in an opponent, who might, nevertheless, be in a minority of the whole voters. The hon. Member for Penryn proposed to obviate that by a second ballot. He (Sir John Lubbock) suggested, on the contrary, a plan which would avoid all the turmoil, expense, and loss of time incident to a second election and yet come to the same result. Suppose, for instance, that two Liberals and one Conservative were contesting a seat; that one Liberal (A) received 6,000 votes, the second Liberal (B) 2,000, and the Conservative (C) 6,000. The hon. Member proposed to have a second ballot, when, no doubt, the less popular Liberal would withdraw, and his supporters would decide the contest. He (Sir John Lubbock) proposed, on the contrary, that each elector should be allowed to mark on his voting paper the order of his preference. In the case that he had supposed, the voting papers of B, who received the smallest number of votes, would be examined and transferred to A or C, in accordance with the instructions of the voters. That would give the same result, but would save the expenditure of time and money. Practically, in fact, the two elections would be carried on simultaneously. But while he would ask the House to adopt the proposed Instruction from that point of view, still, if he and those who agreed with him were permitted, they were anxious to bring forward some other Amendments in Committee. In the first place, they objected not so much to single seats as to the subdivision of populous communities. By cutting those communities up they weakened local life, and undermined the strength of local self-government. One great evil had been the multiplicity of areas. They had municipal areas, areas for Poor Law, for education, for water rates, and many other purposes, and now they were going to multiply them still further. In the debate on the second reading several hon. Members supported the adoption of single seats by pointing to the high character of the Representatives from Scotland and Wales. But Scotland and Wales were not cases in point. The constituencies there were natural communities; those to be formed under the Bill were unnatural and arbitrary fragments. Moreover, the boundaries would require continual re-arrangement if constituencies were to be maintained of equal size. Again, the system of mere majority voting failed in the very first requisite of a representative system—namely, that a majority of voters should secure a majority of Representatives. Suppose in the whole House the Liberals had a majority of 50 over Conservatives and Home Rulers combined; suppose that instead of voting as a whole the House was divided into three sections of 220 Members each. In the Northern section, comprising the Members from Scotland and our Northern counties, the Liberal majority would be, perhaps, 100; in the East and the Metropolitan counties the Conservatives might have a majority of, say, 10; in Ireland and the West the Home Rulers and Conservatives together might again have a majority of 40. Thus, although in the House, as a whole, the Liberals would have a majority of 50, still, in the divided House, the Conservatives and Home Rulers would carry two divisions out of three. That, in fact, was what actually happened in Geneva. There was, he knew, an impression that that might occur in a few constituencies, but that it could not happen in many. That idea, however, was a mistake. It had been shown over and over again that it had actually occurred on a large scale. In regard to the General Election of 1874, Mr. Roberts, the able agent of the Liberal Party, had stated that, in his judgment, the voting power of the Liberals was 200,000 more than that of the Conservatives. His right hon. Friend the Postmaster General questioned that; but, with all respect to his great abilities, he supposed no one on such a question was a higher authority than Mr. Roberts. But whatever the voting power in uncontested seats might have been, as regarded those which were contested there could be no question, and he was ready to accept the figures of his right hon. Friend. He made the Conservative vote 614,000, and the Liberal vote 644,000; while, on the other hand, the Conservatives secured 198 seats, and the Liberals only 168. Here, then, it was quite obvious that on a large scale, under the system of mere majority voting, a minority of electors secured a majority of Representatives. Would this Bill, he asked, fairly represent Scotland? He need not ask the few Conservative Members from Scotland. What they would say he knew well enough. He asked the Liberals. They could not, in honour and conscience, say that it would, because they knew that it would give them a much larger share of representation than on any principle of fairness could be justified. As regarded Wales the same might be said. Scotch and Welsh Liberals might support the provisions of the Bill on Party grounds; but to do so they must sacrifice principle to Party. In England, again, though he would not trouble the House with figures, it was admitted on all sides that the Liberals had too few seats in 1874, and too many in 1880. He turned next to Ireland. If they wished to increase as far as possible the power of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and to exclude both Liberals and Conservatives from the representation of that country, they could not do so more effectually than by this Bill. At any time, and in any country, there would, it seemed to him, be conclusive arguments against the single-Member system; but the present condition of Ireland rendered the question in their case one not only of important, but vital consequence. What, then, did they suggest? Suppose a constituency of 24,000 voters returning three Members. They proposed, firstly, that it should remain undivided; and, secondly, that each elector should have only one vote. But if that were all, it would be evident that, in some circumstances, the minority might secure two Members out of the three. Suppose, for instance, that the Liberals were 14,000, and the Conservatives 10,000; that each Party had two candidates, but that one of the two Liberals was pre-eminently able or popular—say, for instance, the present Prime Minister. Then it might very well happen that he might receive 10,000 votes out of the 14,000, leaving only 4,000 for the second Liberal candidate; and if the Conservatives divided their votes at all equally between their two candidates, they would, though in the minority, secure two seats out of the three. To avoid this, they proposed that though each elector should only have one operative vote, yet the vote should be transferable—that was to say, the elector should be permitted to indicate what he would wish to be done with it if it was not wanted by the candidate of his choice. In the case he had assumed 10,000 Liberals would have voted for the Prime Minister by placing 1 against his name; but they would be permitted, by placing 2 against the name of any other candidate, to indicate the order of their preference. In this case 6,001 votes would be sufficient to secure the election of any candidate, because there were 24,000 electors and three Representatives. Now, as three times 6,001 were 18,003, that sum, deducted from 24,000, left only 5,997. Consequently, of the 10,000 votes given to the first Liberal candidate, whom he would call A, he would only require 6,001, leaving 3,999 to be transferred; and of these, according to all electioneering experience, the vast majority would go to the second Liberal candidate. In this case, therefore, the two Liberal candidates, and the most popular of the two Conservatives would be elected. That was simple enough. Even if there were three or more Liberal candidates, there would be no difficulty in transferring the votes. Suppose, for instance, there were three Liberal candidates—A, B, and C. A had 10,000 votes, of which 4,000 had to be transferred. If the 10,000 votes were marked in the second place, half for B and half for C, then the 4,000 votes would obviously give 2,000 each for B and C. If in the whole 10,000 B had three-quarters and C one-quarter, the numbers would be 3,000 for B and 1,000 for C. This would be absolutely fair as between B and C. But they had thought that it would probably be scarcely worth while to take even the small trouble which this would involve. The present law provided that the voting papers should be well shuffled, and after this had been done, if the first 6,000 votes were put on one side, and the 4,000 surplus votes simply divided in accordance with the preference marked on them, the result would, in a constituency of 24,000, generally be true within 16, and the odds would be 44,000 to 1 against chance, making a difference of 100 from the true result. This had been calculated by Mr. Stokes, Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, and he was certain that no mathematician would deny it. He did not, however, wonder that the opponents of the proposal should have pressed this objection, because they were under a singular misapprehension. They had tried experiments on a small scale, and seemed to think that the element of chance would increase with the numbers. For instance, his right hon. Friend the Postmaster General, in an article in *The Fortnightly Review* for February, wrote—

> "In an experiment made to test the scheme with 70 voting papers where nine candidates were supposed to contest seven seats, the main parties being nearly evenly divided, and an independent candidate having nearly the *quota*, I found that 12 shuffles of the papers filled always in the same manner brought out five different results of the poll, and it is clear that with 70,000 voting papers the result would be equally the subject of chance. Generally, it may be said that the larger the district and the more numerous the Members the greater the element of chance."

This was an entire misapprehension. The element of chance would be considerable in a constituency of 70; but as the numbers increased the element of chance diminished rapidly. The Attorney General had fallen into the same error. At the same time, as he had already stated, the element of chance might be entirely eliminated, and that with very little extra trouble, by distributing the second votes proportionally. It could not fairly be said that this system was either difficult or complex, for illustrative elections had been held in many places, and actually during public meetings. Many thousand votes had been recorded; the spoilt papers had been remarkably few; and the consequence had been that resolutions in favour of the system had been passed by overwhelming majorities. During the Recess large public meetings had been held at Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Nottingham, Leicester, Oxford, Norwich, Newcastle, Greenwich, the Tower Hamlets, Lambeth, Islington, St. Pancras, and other places; and Greenwich was the only one which expressed a preference for the system of single seats. His right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) had also made a speech against the system during the Recess, in which he stated—

> "That every elector in either Party would be provided with a list, and would be told, with the most perfect truth, that if he did not mark it in exactly the same order as every other elector, the Party to which he belonged would go to the wall."

That, however, was evidently a misapprehension; and he understood that his right hon. Friend had not at the time mastered the system, and that he did not now maintain that statement.

MR. TREVELYAN: I do not withdraw the general remarks that I made on the subject.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: Does the right hon. Gentleman maintain that unless each voter marked his paper in exactly the same order his Party would go to the wall?

MR. TREVELYAN: I will tell my hon. Friend when I speak.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman might have stated whether he adhered to the statement or not; but, as a matter of fact, he was sure the Committee would see that, so long as the Liberals voted for all three Liberals, and the Conservatives for both Conservatives, it did not matter, as far as Party was concerned, in what order the votes were arranged. The number of Representatives carried by each Party would be determined by the number of their supporters; while the order would secure the election of the most able and popular candidate, or candidates, within each Party. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General made a statement very similar to that of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and gave what seemed to be a most extraordinary reason, and one very uncomplimentary to his fellow-countrymen—

> "If the Party organizers," he said, "give no such advice, but recommend their followers to vote in the order of their own preference, it may well be that large numbers of the Party would vote for the candidates in the alphabetical order in which they stand on the voting paper."

The "capable citizen" must, indeed, have fallen low before he could be capable of such stupidity. The last objection which had been urged was that it would prevent the formation of a strong Government. But, as he had shown, mere majority voting and single seats would not secure this. Sometimes, indeed, it might annihilate the minority, and at others it would reduce the majority; and sometimes, as in 1874, even give the minority of electors a majority of this House. Proportional representation was the only true system. It would fairly reproduce the views of the country. On the other hand, the system proposed in the Bill would leave a great deal to chance. There was only one other point to which he desired to allude; but, to his mind, it was the gravest part of the whole question. He alluded to the manner in which this Bill would affect the representation of Ireland. The hon. Member for the City of Cork and his followers could not consider it otherwise than desirable that they should desire to maintain the union with the Sister Island. Their strong opposition to their designs was a compliment. Under this Bill they allotted to Ireland 12 Members more than her population entitled her to; and then, having done that, they devised a system which would tend to silence and exclude the Loyalists of Ireland, and give the bitter enemies of the

Union more power than under any system of justice or equity they could fairly claim. He believed the Bill, in its present form, would tend to break up the Empire, and, perhaps, land them in all the horrors of civil war. They advocated this proposal because it would enable them to retain their great communities undivided; it would secure the election of their tried and trusted leaders; it would give a hearing to the minority; insure their just preponderance to the majority; and prevent loyal citizens in Ireland from being silenced and excluded by those whose main object it was to destroy and break up the British Empire.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power in all cases where an elector is entitled to one vote only, to enable the elector to nominate more than one candidate to whom under certain circumstances that vote might be transferred in the manner indicated by the elector."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, his hon. Friend had made something like an appeal to the Government to allow these Instructions to the Committee to be carried now, so that the whole question might be raised in Committee. But to do so would be to hold out false hopes. It would be far better to state their views now. One object he had in view was the saving of time, though, of course, they could not entirely avoid further reference to this matter in debate by his hon. Friends who might move the omission of Clause 8 from the Bill. His hon. Friend had put before the House those views which had been already expressed on an early stage of the Bill. The belief of the Government was that, by the single-seat system generally adopted in this Bill, the representation of minorities would be secured in the most practical form in which it could be secured by Parliamentary measures; but his hon. Friend told the House he thought minorities would be over-represented. [SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: In particular cases.] The result of the Bill would be to give a large and varied representation in that House to minorities. His hon. Friend had spoken of the great number of meetings held by him and those who thought with him in different parts of the country, and of the numerous resolutions carried in their favour; but his hon. Friend had not ventured to assert that the country generally had accepted his proposals. His own opinion was that the country generally had not approved those proposals. Machiavelli said that when two questions were argued before the people by persons of equal ability, if the people adopted one view that view would probably be the best. Judging the matter by this test, he thought his hon. Friend would hardly be prepared to contend that the people of this country had fallen in with his view. His hon. Friend said it was a curious thing that the Liberal Party in France were giving up the single-Member system at the very time when the Liberal Party in England were proposing it. The system embodied in the Bill was, however, proposed not by the Liberal Party only, but also by the other great Party in the State, as being a scheme worthy of being adopted by the country. During the Recess it had been accepted by the country with far more unanimity than he had anticipated. He thought at first that the great towns would object to the borough constituencies being broken up; but his doubts had been removed by the experience of the Recess, and he was amazed at the popularity of the single-Member system in the large towns, while in the counties it had been accepted with very little difference of opinion indeed. When speaking of France, his hon. Friend omitted to mention that the system which it was proposed to adopt there was far more opposed to his views than the system embodied in the present Bill. He spoke upon this matter with a good deal of feeling of sympathy with his hon. Friend. He had himself always supported the cumulative vote as applied to school board elections. If those elections were conducted by open voting he should have no hesitation in advocating the cumulative vote; but under the ballot there was a great waste of voting power in consequence of vast numbers of votes being piled upon particular candidates. Therefore, he had some sympathy with his hon. Friend; and if the transferring of votes could be easily accomplished, he would admit that his hon. Friend had met some of the difficulties of the cumulative vote. His hon. Friend had referred to the case of Switzerland, as showing that the whole population of the country frequently opposed proposals which had been carried through the Federal Council. But surely his hon. Friend would be the first to admit that this was rather an argument against *plébiscites* than one in favour of the plan he proposed to the House. He admitted, indeed, that he had not watched the voting of the people in *plébiscites* in Switzerland so closely as his hon. Friend had; but, looking to the *plébiscites* in France, and the confusing manner in which questions were presented to the people, he should be inclined to attach much greater weight to the vote of a Representative Assembly. There could be no doubt that in this country, governed as it was by Party, a very small percentage of the electorate changing from one side to the other would cause a large change in the representation of the House. But he was far from believing that this was a bad thing in itself. On the contrary, he thought it was desirable, for forming the opinion of the country, that the pendulum should swing, perhaps, a little further in each direction than the mere numbers would lead one to suppose it would swing. In his judgment, the effect of the single-Member system would be to give a fair representation to minorities in the country with very beneficial results. In regard to the second ballot, he should not be in Order in discussing that question at any length on the present occasion. Without going into the merits of the matter, and speaking for himself personally, he might say that he was strongly in favour of a second ballot at elections. In fact, he believed he was the first person to write in favour of it in this country. It existed in almost every other country. [Mr. GORST: Not in any of the English Colonies.] He believed, however, it would be something like a breach of faith to those who had framed this Bill on a certain principle if an attempt were made to introduce the system of second ballot into the Bill itself. At the same time, they were all quite able to express their opinions on the subject if it were separately raised, although he could not at this stage consent to its introduction into the Seats Bill. He thought his hon. Friend would have some difficulty in maintaining his assertion that areas would be multiplied by the Bill. No one could say that the present electoral areas were natural areas. The Scotch burghs, for instance, were not natural areas. No one who had paid attention to the subject would hesitate to say that there was a simplification of areas by this Bill. The borough of Wenlock, on a map, looked like a picture in a kaleidoscope. His hon. Friend had attacked the Postmaster General and the Attorney General for their statements with respect to the Election of 1874. He would leave them to speak for themselves. But he ought to say that the statement of the Postmaster General was that it was the unequal franchise which mainly affected the result of that Election. Then his hon. Friend complained that the Conservative minority in Scotland was virtually disfranchised at the present time. The Conservative minority in Scotland was not without representation, and very able representation, in that House at the present moment. He admitted the Conservative minority of Scotland was not so largely represented as it might be, even under the present Bill; and he believed some of the criticisms which had been made against the present Bill by Liberals in Scotland were caused by the fact that the Bill was likely to represent the Scottish Conservative minority somewhat more largely than at the present time. He hoped the hon. Member would join with the Government in resisting any attempt to alter the plan of the Scottish constituencies, so as to prevent that full and fair representation of the Scottish Conservative minority which, he believed, this Bill would secure. In Ireland also his hon. Friend assumed that the Bill would exclude Conservative representation. But the single-Member system in Ireland would give a fair representation to the Conservative minority, possibly a larger one than at present. His hon. Friend then spoke of the transferable votes, and which votes were to be transferred. He said that he proposed not to count the whole of the preferences expressed; but then there was the question which of them should be counted. He had been present on all the occasions when the votes were counted in his own borough, and also at Hackney. It was impossible so to shuffle them as to prevent their coming in large batches. His hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) had admitted that there was an element of chance, and that it was uncertain which votes would be used.

But his hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), in speaking of the transfer of votes, had stated that there was no chance at all in the matter. His hon. Friend said that the highest mathematical authorities denied that there was any chance worthy of account. A wrong result might be produced, it was said, once in 8,000 or 10,000 years. In Cambridge a prize had been offered for the best solution of the question; but with this singular result—that equal marks were awarded to two papers diametrically opposed to each other. Moreover, an Oxford mathematician, Mr. Dodgson, who was in favour of proportional representation, but had written against this particular scheme, attached a far higher value to the element of chance. Mr. Dodgson tried to prove that a wrong result had actually been produced in one of those test or sham elections which had been held throughout the country, which he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) wished to speak of with all respect, as his hon. Friend had frequently elected him. With regard to the difficulties of this matter, it was said that they need not be reckoned, because the Returning Officers were skilled and educated men. He did not know whether his hon. Friends were aware of the great waste of votes even at the present time. At the last election in Hackney several hundred votes were wasted, although the election was a single one, between two candidates only. Was it not probable that there would be a far more formidable waste of votes under the system proposed by his hon. Friend? The object of the proposal now before the House used to be stated in a different way from that now adopted. It was now said that the object aimed at was the representation of the majority; but formerly it was advocated as a means of representing minorities and shades of opinion. Formerly the hon. Member for South Northumberland advocated what was known as the Parker Smith scheme, upon which he would comment if it were to be put forward as an alternative scheme—[" No, no!"]—but if it was not to be he would say nothing about it. The anomalies that had been produced by former General Elections were due partly to the existence of small boroughs, and partly to the difference between the borough and the county franchise. In his belief, the system which the Government were placing before the House was likely in a higher degree than was proposed by his hon. Friend to lead to the existence of strong Governments, with strong majorities one way or the other. When it was said that the Bill would leave to Ireland 12 more Members than she was entitled to, he replied that the Government had proceeded upon equal lines, and had drawn no distinction between one part of the United Kingdom and another. But if it were said that Ireland was over-represented as compared with England and Scotland, it might be pointed out that a large part of England was over-represented as compared with the rest, and they could not remove these discrepancies without creating others. Wales was more represented than Ireland by this Bill. But there were other parts of England which were still more largely represented. Wiltshire and the inland part of Hampshire—that was excluding the Isle of Wight—and other portions of the South-West of England, were more represented than Wales. These were the consequences of drawing an even line, and they could not devise an even line which would not produce such results. But the discrepancies under this Bill were very small as compared with those at present existing; and it was the belief of the Government that the House of Commons, after full examination of the two schemes, would support that now placed before them.

MR. E. A. LEATHAM: Mr. Speaker, my hon. Friend who has moved this Instruction (Sir John Lubbock) has told us that his plan of proportional representation would insure real political justice, an accurate expression of the opinions of the country, and render such accidents as the return of a majority in this House by a minority in the country absolutely impossible. Now, I venture to dispute all these propositions. And as regards the controversy whether or not a minority in the country did actually return a majority of this House in 1874 or 1868, I cannot think that it has much to do with the question. We may grant everything which my hon. Friend demands, figures and all, and the question itself will remain very much where it is now. Under a system of unequal constituencies, and uneven representation, it is, no doubt, perfectly possible for a minority in the country to return a majority of this House. But, even if my hon. Friend's Amendment were carried, it would be still perfectly possible for a minority in the country to return a majority of this House, because my hon. Friend does not propose to apply his principle to every constituency. It is only when a constituency returns three or more Members that the plan is applicable at all. Nor does he propose to reduce his triumvirates to the condition of the Siamese twins—that if one of the three dies, the others should immediately die also. So that the scheme must break down at every bye-election. But even if the scheme did not break down at every bye-election, and even if it were applicable to every constituency in the Kingdom, it would be still perfectly possible for a minority in the country to return a majority of this House. For who is to classify the abstentionists? My hon. Friend is in favour of larger constituencies; but the larger the constituencies, the larger the proportion of abstentionists, until, at last, you arrive at nearly half the whole constituency. A thousand different motives keep these men from the poll; but they possess opinions, perhaps, quite as well worth knowing as the man who polls as the clock strikes 8. Again, even after the Franchise Act has come into operation, there will remain millions of men who have no votes, and whose opinions, whatever they may be, you must entirely ignore. Surely, then, it is most inaccurate to speak of mathematical precision, and real justice, and an absolute exclusion of accidents, when all the conditions of the problem are so variable, and the margin of uncertainty must always remain so enormous. But my hon. Friend's system must fail to secure absolute justice for another reason—I mean on account of the inherent defects of the system itself. For the system is based upon a series of preferences; and the bulk of those preferences would, in all probability, be dictated by motives which are not political. Why do people give their votes now? No one can conduct a personal canvass without becoming painfully conscious that a large proportion of votes are given without any reference to politics whatever, and that another large proportion are given from what I may term hybrid motives, motives which are partly political, and partly otherwise. Votes are often given because the right man asks for them, or because the wrong man to ask for them is kept carefully in the background; and all these subsidiary motives will come into play with ten-fold force when the issue raised is no longer a simple one; but you afford the voter the luxury of gratifying all his motives at once, when he can give one vote to his conscience, another to his trade, another to oblige Benson, a fourth to annoy Jones, and a fifth to show his own splendid independence. These inferior preferences are all good votes; the skilful canvasser will pick them up by thousands, and the Returning Officer, if he pleases, will run riot among them. I once knew an important appointment won by a gentleman who was supposed to be absolutely out of the running. He beat all the favourites solely by second votes. And my hon. Friend, at the close of a General Election, when he is exulting over the idea that, at last, we have arrived at absolute justice, will thus have arrived only at an absolute *fiasco*. And this *fiasco* will have been purchased, at what cost? You have admitted to the franchise some millions of persons of, perhaps, imperfect education. Surely it is essential that your mode of voting should be simplicity itself. And if there be one thing more important still, it is that the voters shall have absolute confidence in the secrecy of the votes, and in those who count them. There is a widespread distrust of the ballot even now among the humblest class of voters. To what dimensions will that distrust grow, when the voters discover that their ballot papers are to be fingered, and fingered, and fingered again in the presence of the agent whom they dread, and how will they regard the final result when they know that, with another shuffling of the papers, it might have been entirely different? The demand for absolute simplicity is met by my hon. Friend with his "wonderful puzzle fifteen." But my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard, who has made many clever speeches on this subject in the country, tells us that this plan of proportional representation will greatly improve the *personnel* of this House. I wish that it had not been necessary to my hon. Friend's argument to take away the character of this House. He goes about the country drawing a fancy portrait of your Member of Parliament. Your Member of Parliament, it seems, is a very irresolute creature. He trembles at every vote he gives, and looks warily around before he ventures to give a vote at all. "Members of Parliament," says my hon. Friend, "occasionally speak the truth to one another in the Lobby;" and then, it appears, we confess that we do not vote from any high sense of duty, or even of political allegiance, but because we are the slaves of certain sections of our constituents. Sir, I repudiate this fancy portrait altogether. I have sat in this House as long, if not longer, than my hon. Friend, and I have never yet met with the original. [*Laughter.*] My hon. Friend laughs; but I appeal to hon. Gentlemen, especially to those of long Parliamentary experience, whether again and again, in the course of their lives, grave differences of opinion have not arisen between important sections of their constituents and themselves, to be again and again bridged over, not by the ignominious surrender of the Representative, but by the generous forbearance of the constituents? It is not necessary, then, to be so very firm in one's seat in order to give an independent vote; nor is it by furnishing us, as my hon. Friend proposes, with a devoted body-guard of supporters who will never desert us, and who will insure our election, whatever we may do, that you will teach independence. You teach independence, not by making defeat impossible, but by inuring us to look defeat in the face. Now, there is nothing which so narrows the conceptions of your public man as to send him to the House as the delegate of a section, or the spokesman of an 'ism. If a fad-monger gains access to the House now, he must be a politician first, and a fad-monger afterwards; but if the plan of my hon. Friend were to prevail, there is no fad-monger or hobby-rider in the Kingdom who might not aspire to a seat. My hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard says that it would result in the return of strong men to this House. He says that a strong Government can only be made out of strong materials. He infers that the existing materials are weak, and the existing Government the reverse of strong. A little while ago we were told that it was a trifle too strong for British freedom. But what does he mean by strong men? There are two kinds of strong men—headstrong men, and men who are strong in the head. If by strong men my hon. Friend means dogged, uncompromising, impracticable men, I have no doubt that he will get them in abundance under his system; but, then, these are just the men whom you ought not to get in an Assembly where so much depends upon our arriving at a *modus vivendi*. If, on the other hand, by strong men he means men who are strong in the head—men who could grasp critical occasions and take broad views of policy—he would not get them under his system; for these are the very last men to serve a clique or cringe before an 'ism. If this House has suffered of late in public estimation, it is not because it contains too few strong men, but because it contains too many. But my hon. Friend wants us to be all strong men. Imagine this House filled with strong men all riding hobbies, like my hon. Friend! What collisions we should have among all these high-minded, high-principled, and possibly high-tempered people! Would this shorten our debates, or simplify their issues? Would it accelerate legislation? Would it tend to preserve intact that individual liberty of Englishmen, which is, perhaps, a grander thing than Empire, and which your crotcheteers and fad-mongers assail on every side? But one reason why we are all to be strong men is in order that we may teach the nation through the debates. How can reports of the debates, such as they have become, teach anybody? The only people who are really reported are those upon the two Front Benches. I do not blame the Press for this. If there were any demand for full reports, we should have them. But nobody wants them, except the strong men themselves; and if there be one sign of the times more cheering than another, it is the determination of this House to allow itself to be "counted out" again and again rather than become, what my hon. Friend wants it to become, a second-rate Debating Society. But my hon. Friend lays great stress on the beneficial effect which his system is to have upon the constituencies. Now, I think that there is too much tendency already in the great Party to which we both belong to forget that we are living, and must live, under a system of Party Government. This is a lesson which every politician has to learn, whether he be a simple voter or a Member of this House. It involves some sacrifice of private judgment, a good measure of faith and obedience, and an indiscriminate denunciation of fads. But the lesson which my hon. Friend teaches is the reverse of all this. He resolves the Party into its elements. Disintegration and decomposition are to be the order of the day. He wants to see how many differences of opinion he can bring to the surface, not how many he can bury. And as to the assertion that when men find themselves in a minority at elections, they will, therefore, throw up the sponge in despair, I do not believe it for a moment. I have now had a seat in this House for many years. I have always sat for the same constituency, and the Liberal majority has long been perfectly overwhelming. But does that prevent my Friends the Conservatives from fighting us on every possible occasion? No, Sir. There is always some good man ready with his eloquence, and, what is, perhaps, more valuable, with his purse. No sooner is a Dissolution announced than there is always some ram caught in the thicket. And so it will always be in English, and especially in Irish, politics. We shall never know when we are beaten. We shall fight against all odds; and the very last thing which we shall do is what my hon. Friend says that we shall do—fling down our arms and run away. But my hon. Friend thinks that the existing system has broken down, because, as he says, under it only one mechanic and one working man have been returned to this House. I should have accepted this circumstance as a triumphant proof of its success. The working classes have shown a rare discretion. With the power, if they had wished it, of deluging this House with mechanics and working men, they have deliberately preferred to be represented by men many points above them, it may be, in the social scale, yet sympathizing with those of their demands which are just, and able to clothe those demands in language and to sustain them by arguments which must command the respect, and possibly the acquiescence, of statesmen. It is by this process that we have arrived at the vigour of Democracy, without experiencing what I may term the shock of its brute force. But what is the teaching of my hon. Friend? Why, that all this is a mistake, and that to be adequately represented in Parliament you must be represented by men of your own class, your own trade, and, possibly, your own clique. I contend that by this teaching—though nothing is farther from his intention—he is simply poisoning the minds of the new electors, even before they come upon the Register, undermining the noble confidence which one class reposes in another, and substituting sordid interests and selfish sympathies for the paramount obligations of Party and of patriotism. And what has been the history of the triumph of Democracy in this country? Has it not been the history of the triumph of the principles which he repudiates, and of the repudiation of the principles which he is endeavouring to put in their place? For the working classes would never have won, as they have won, the confidence of those above them, if they had not begun by placing confidence in us. Sir, I fear that some who are advocating this scheme are attempting to get a good deal more out of the Franchise Act than this House intended. In the course of one of the clever speeches which my hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard made in the country, he quoted the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), and said that they were advocating proportional representation because it gave "the widest possible realization of Democracy." Now, I very much doubt whether that was the intention of this House in passing that Bill. I very much question whether we should have passed that Bill at all, if we had understood that it was to be twisted into a means of arriving, if not at the *plébiscite* itself, at its nearest possible equivalent. Surely it is a mistake to contend that this House should be made a mere photograph—I use my hon. Friend's own phrase—an abject epitome of the thoughts, good, bad, and indifferent, of the nation. Surely it should reflect its highest thoughts, its noblest aspirations, its broadest sympathies. This is the very meaning of election. We elect, not the random elements, which in their infinite variety are to be found scattered everywhere upon the surface, but what is best and soundest; and it is only on this grand hypothesis that this House is honourable, or that it is any honour to sit in it.

Mr. ALBERT GREY said, so far the progress of debate had only strengthened his conviction that they were not far off the day when the principle of proportional representation would be embodied in the electoral system of the country. In the debate upon the subject last Session the Prime Minister had no other argument but that of ridicule to bring against the position taken up by his hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney). That night the President of the Local Government Board appeared as the champion of the single-district plan. He was an old supporter of proportional representation, and knew where its weak points were, if it had any. The chief peculiarity of his right hon. Friend's speech that night was that he carefully evaded attacking the real arguments in favour of their plan, and spoke for half an hour on small points, not one of which wounded fatally the position they had taken up. He therefore claimed the speech of his right hon. Friend as an admission on his part that they were in the right. The right hon. Gentleman said that the single-Member-district plan would secure the representation of minorities in the most practicable way that could be secured by any Parliamentary measure. ["Hear, hear!"] The Attorney General cheered that statement. Would the hon. and learned Member, if he should speak in the debate, show how it would do so in Scotland or Ireland? He was in Glasgow a little time ago—a town which it was proposed to cut up into seven districts—and he was informed by Members of both Parties there that the chance of a Conservative being returned for any ward in the town was comparatively *nil.*

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: They have the minority vote there now, and they cannot return a Conservative.

Mr. ALBERT GREY said, it was no reason, because the Conservatives had been unable under the limited vote to get one seat out of three, that we should adopt a system which would give them no seat out of seven. He favoured political equality, and desired that equal numbers of persons should be equally represented. If the Conservatives of Glasgow were equal to a seventh of the constituency, they were entitled to one Member. It was because the single-district plan did not secure them their just share, and the proportional principle did, that the House should support the Instruction. How many Members would the single-district plan give the Conservatives in Scotland? The right hon. Gentleman championed that plan, because it would give them representation. Scotland was to have about 70 Members; and they were told that the Conservative Party were at least a sixth part of the population. If they were they ought to have from 10 to 12 Members. Did his right hon. Friend contend that, under this single-district plan, they would have that number? He (Mr. Grey) did not believe they would have more than three or four Members. That seemed to him to be an argument against, instead of in favour of, the single-seat system. His right hon. Friend said that the country did not concur in the views of those who advocated proportional representation. But he (Mr. Grey) declared that the country had concurred in their views wherever they had had the chance of hearing them explained. In his own county, not only in the pit districts, but in other districts, they had carried their resolutions by overwhelming majorities; and he had heard that morning, from a working miner who was now busily engaged in advocating the system, that he had addressed several pit meetings, and that they were all, by a unanimous vote, in favour of proportional representation. Their experience at Glasgow, Liverpool, and other large towns was the same as it was in Northumberland; and they only needed time to place their views before the people, in order to gain for them an overwhelming and enthusiastic acceptance. In every country where a uniform suffrage prevailed, they were dissatisfied with the system of majority representation. In France they were trying to change the single-district plan for *scrutin de liste,* and in America they gave up *scrutin de liste* in 1842. His right hon. Friend was one of the first who not only wrote in favour of the double ballot, but spoke in favour of the principle of proportional representation. In 1872, when the question was discussed in the House of Commons, his right hon. Friend said—

> "Some think—and I among them—that it is almost impossible to over-rate the advantages

which might flow from proportional representation, if proportional representation could be worked. I think it most desirable that the experiment should be tried."—(3 *Hansard*, [212] 909.)

And he added—

> "There can be no place so fit for trying the experiment, from the great concentration of wealth and population, from the machinery at hand, and from the variety of opinion held within the compass of a single town as London; and it would be most natural to suggest that the experiment should be tried within this city . . . If you were to try your experiment upon London, it is probable that the metropolis would under your new system elect as its 22 representatives men of great fame and of the highest attainments—men whose services would be of splendid value to the State."—[*Ibid.*]

Now, he thought that the House ought to pass this Instruction for two reasons —first, because it would enable the Committee to insert Amendments applying a principle the absolute justice of which no one could deny; and, secondly, because even if the Committee might decide against a proposal which would be fatal to the single-district plan, it was only right that they should have the power of applying to the election of a single Representative that method of voting which would give each individual elector the largest possible freedom of choice. Unless they had the single transferable vote, there would be little freedom of choice to a large number of electors in the election of a single Representative. Take Newcastle, for example. His hon. Friend (Mr. John Morley) stood for the borough at a bye-election, and a working man was brought forward, but was withdrawn before the day of the poll, because if he persevered he might divide the Liberal vote and let in the Tory. The result was a contest between one Liberal and one Conservative candidate. But would it not be of great advantage if the electors could choose the candidate for whom they might wish to vote? At present, a large proportion of the body was bound to give their votes to the candidate who was chosen for them, and as to whom they had very little choice themselves. What he said was that the electors should have the opportunity of selecting for themselves the candidate most in sympathy with them, without risking the chances of their Party. Supposing that there were in a borough a number of men favouring Mr. Henry George's views on the nationalization of the land, and that they brought him forward as a candidate, although they knew he had no chance of election, all they could do would be to mark 1 against his name, and 2 against the name of some more popular candidate. They would thus make sure that if the first vote should not be wanted for the candidate of their choice, in consequence of his having no chance, their vote would be utilized for the candidate against whose name the number 2 had been placed, and so on. Such a system would enable a voter to give his vote to the candidate most in sympathy with himself, and yet prevent his vote from being thrown away. Proof would thus be afforded of the strength of the Party holding his opinions in the constituency. But it was because this Instruction, if passed, would enable the Committee to group together single districts, and to arrange for the election of their Members by Mr. Hare's plan of the single transferable vote, that he asked the House to support it. This plan would, if adopted and applied to constituencies returning from 3 to 7 or 9 Members, result in a true representation of the electors, the freedom of the electorate, and the return of a good House of Commons. By the single district plan, which would give to one set of electors the representation which properly belonged to another set, they would create a privileged class on the one hand, and a discontented and irritated class on the other. They were told, for example, that in Ireland, South of Ulster, the Party of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) would, under the single-district system, win every seat, although the Party opposed to him numbered one-third of the population. But a system which secured a true representation would give to the opponents of the policy of the hon. Member one-third of the seats in question. To take another example. Supposing that the population of Glasgow were to increase by 150,000 in the next 10 years, two-thirds of them being Liberal and one-third Conservative, and supposing that three additional Members were, in consequence, to be given to the city, one of these would clearly be given to it in respect of the 50,000 Conservatives in the borough; yet it was quite possible that under the single-district plan the three extra seats would be won by candidates holding Liberal opinions. They were told Mr. Hare's plan could not be accepted, because it introduced the element of chance. They were prepared to eliminate the chance element altogether. This could easily be done at the cost of a little extra trouble in the count. It was true they had not originally proposed this, because, after having carefully considered the element of chance, it appeared to be so infinitesimally small. They claimed that their plan should not be judged by an impossible standard of ideal perfection, but by its relative perfection. All they asked was that that system should be accepted which gave the best guarantee of a representation in accordance with the wishes of the electors as declared at the poll. Under the single-district system totally different electoral results might be obtained by an alteration of boundaries. This was well-known in America, where it was admitted that the shape of the boundary line determined the character of the representation. If the line was drawn from North to South one result was obtained; but if it was drawn from East to West the result was of a totally different character. One set of boundary lines might bring about the scandal of a minority rule, while another set of boundary lines might bring about the political extinction of a minority entitled by its numbers to considerable representation. The advocates of their system had received a great deal of encouragement. In the little time at their disposal they had made much greater way than they had anticipated. Their experience justified their conviction that they had only to go on explaining and expounding the principle to secure for it a universal and an enthusiastic reception in the country. They were sometimes met by the argument that Mr. Bagehot and Mr. Cobden were opposed to the principle; but Mr. Bagehot's objection was to the proposal to make the country one huge constituency. That was plainly an impossibility. The difficulty of asking the electors to choose between 600 or 700 candidates was obvious. The objections urged by Mr. Bagehot against Mr. Hare's original proposal could not be brought forward against this modified scheme. Their object was to obtain constituencies of such a size as would assure to each individual elector the widest possible freedom of choice, consistent with the avoidance of those evils which Mr. Bagehot pointed out to be consequent upon making the whole of the United Kingdom into one constituency. As yet no serious argument, that would stand five minutes' investigation, had been brought forward against proportional representation as they propounded it. He trusted the debate would go on for another night. ["Oh!"] The debate had come upon them unexpectedly. The general belief had been that they were not to have a discussion on proportional representation that evening, but that they were to have it later on in the week; and he hoped they would have another discussion when the Bill was in Committee. They believed they would be successful in the end, although they could not be successful now. They had been fighting with their eyes on the future; and they knew they had already created a sufficient feeling in the country to secure a new and strong agitation rising up upon the settlement of the present Bill.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was quite sure that the House had listened with great interest to the two very lucid speeches which had been delivered in favour of proportional representation by his hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey) and the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). For his own part, he thought they might also admire the energy, public spirit, and courage with which his hon. Friends had come forward and carried on their agitation for proportional representation during the past autumn. He could not, however, congratulate them upon the result of that agitation, because he believed that the more the country heard of the scheme the less they liked it. His hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey) appeared, nevertheless, to be of opinion that he would be able, at some future time, to convert the country. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) believed the House would be well content to relegate the discussion of the question to the public platform. For his own part, he was quite willing to leave the question in the hands of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and his hon. Friend the Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham). He believed that those hon.

Members had exhausted all the facts of the case. But as he had been expressly alluded to, he thought there were a few points of which he must take notice. In the first place, what was the objection entertained by his hon. Friend against the present system of majority voting? His hon. Friend said that, under the present system, it might happen that the minority would be able to return a majority of Members; and reference had been made to the case of the General Election of 1874. Now, he had had, some time ago, a controversy with his hon. Friend on that subject; and he still maintained that when the question was fairly looked at, the Tories on that occasion obtained a majority of votes, and that the majority of Members was not returned by a minority of the electors. His hon. Friend attempted now to exclude the uncontested elections; but he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) did not think it was fair to leave them out of the calculation. If the contested elections only were taken into account, it was, undoubtedly, the fact that the majority returned a minority of Members. He would admit that; but was it due to the system of voting, or to other causes? He thought that anyone who looked fairly into the question would come to the conclusion that it was due, not to the system of voting, but to the unequal franchise in the counties and boroughs. Before 1874 the Liberals had obtained representation in a considerable number of counties, although at that time the Conservatives were successful in a large portion of those counties; whereas in the boroughs the Liberals had a majority, although not a large one. The voters in the boroughs, under the present franchise, were five times more numerous, in proportion to the population, than the voters in the counties; and in order to make a proper comparison it would be necessary to reduce the counties and the towns to a common denomination by multiplying the voters of the counties by five; and if they did that, it would be found that the result of the comparison was exactly to reverse the actual state of things. He was surprised that his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), with his mathematical and philosophical mind, should not have perceived this. For his (Mr. Shaw Lefevre's) own part, the present system of voting, instead of leading to the return of minority Members, had exactly the contrary effect. Indeed, he believed that the general result of the present system was that it did secure for the majority of voters a rather larger proportion of Members than they were numerically entitled to. Was that an advantage or not? He believed that, on the whole, it was an advantage, because it strengthened the Government of the day, and enabled it to carry out its policy. All the systems of minority voting which had yet been presented to the House and the country would have a directly opposite effect, as they would tend to over-represent the minority, and to prevent the majority from having a fair and full representation, and because it would give an advantage to small sections of persons, and would enable crotchet-mongers and persons representing immature opinions to be returned. The system had already been tried in the School Board elections; and everybody admitted that, in that case, the cumulative vote had failed, inasmuch as it prevented the majority from returning representatives in proportion to their true strength, while it gave an unfair advantage to cliques and sections of voters. The more this proposal was examined the greater, he ventured to say, would be even its defects. In the first place, it was complicated and difficult to understand, and it would never be comprehended by the bulk of the ordinary labourers who were to enjoy the vote. In the second place, it was defective because it introduced for the first time the element of chance; thirdly, it was defective because it gave to the minority, and to cliques and sections, an undoubted advantage. These were his three main objections to it. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had dealt with the element of chance. The element of chance came in when they had appropriated voting papers for a candidate's first votes, and counted the surplus for another candidate's second votes, everything depending upon the voting papers taken and left. Necessarily, in counting the second and third votes, a large number of second and third votes, which had been disposed of and set aside in the first heap, must be left out of the calculation. He, therefore, thought he was justified in saying that the element of chance entered into the calculation. He had himself made an experiment on the supposition that he was dealing with a constituency of 70 electors, and that there were seven candidates, the votes for whom were very evenly divided. He had found that in 12 shuffles of the actual voting papers the result came out in five different ways, showing conclusively that the element of chance was introduced.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK remarked, that his right hon. Friend had been dealing with a very small number of electors.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, his contention was that the same element of chance applied to the case of 7,000 as to 70 or 700. The same discrepancies would only be magnified, in like circumstances, by making the number of voting papers 700 or 7,000. He had consulted authorities of the highest order, who had come to the same conclusion as himself. [An hon. Member: Who were they?] Well, he had consulted authorities, at any rate, if not the highest; and he made the assertion on his own authority as well. He did not profess to be as good a mathematician as his hon. Friend; but he did profess to understand a logical deduction, and if he took 7,000 voting papers, and those voting papers were evenly divided between two Parties, and the second and third votes were also evenly divided between second and third candidates, it would be found that the same element of chance was introduced in reference to these candidates in the case of 7,000 voters as in that of 70. He ventured to maintain that this was the case, in spite of the objection of his hon. Friend. That was his first and main objection to the scheme—namely, that it introduced an element of chance to a very serious degree. He would now put another case. Suppose there was cross-voting; suppose the two principal political Parties were nearly evenly divided, and five or six cross-votes occurred on either side. It would depend entirely upon the fact whether those cross-votes were counted in the first batch of voting papers, or the second—whether this or that candidate was returned. That afforded another proof that chance was a potent element in the return; and it might become a most serious matter, and a grave objection to the whole scheme. The other objection to the scheme was that, in every case, it gave an undue advantage to the minority, and to cliques and sections. He would detain the House too long if he were to endeavour to explain this matter thoroughly; but it was a somewhat important subject, and he would point out shortly one or two points connected with it. A scheme of this kind must be tested, not merely by experiments such as the hon. Member had tried in the country, but on the supposition of a closely contested election with the two political Parties evenly divided, and also with the probability of an independent candidate being started. If the hon. Member tried his plan under those conditions, he would find that an independent candidate would be returned by very much fewer votes than his real *quota*, and in that way he would destroy the chance of the candidate put forward on the other side. In point of fact, an unfair advantage would be given to the independent candidate in consequence of the two other candidates receiving their fair *quota* of Party votes. His own opinion, seeing that in a closely-contested election the accidental counting of five or six votes might determine the result, was that the two political Parties would, in the event of the proposal of his hon. Friend being adopted, do much better to abandon the scheme of voting for their own candidates, and to distribute their votes equally between their candidates. He believed it would be very easy to prove that the general result of the scheme would be to over-represent minorities, and to give to cliques and sections an undue advantage. There were now two systems of voting proposed, which were opposed to one another. The present system was no doubt favourable, to some extent, to majorities. All schemes of minority voting gave an undue advantage to the minority. But which of the two systems was best? His own opinion was that a system which favoured the majority was far better than one which would favour the minority. It was highly important that the House of Commons should be returned with a majority even somewhat in excess of the proportion it was fairly entitled to. It was not desirable that the House should exactly measure the balance of political opinion. A large majority tended to strengthen the Government. It should be remembered that the House of Commons was not merely a machine for legislation; but it was, in point of fact, the Executive of the country. The Government was practically elected by the House of Commons, and in the Members of the Government were vested all the powers of the State. That being so, it appeared to him that the majority might with propriety even be somewhat in excess of the actual number of these voters in the country, so that they would be able to give stability to the Government of the day. This was no Party question, but it was of equal importance to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite as it was to the Liberal Party. It was not desirable that political Parties should be too evenly divided, but that the Government in power, whichever Party it should represent, should come into power with such a majority as would enable it to be strong, and able to take a decisive line of policy of its own. For these reasons he objected most strongly to the scheme of his hon. Friend. He believed that the House would simply hold out delusive hopes if they allowed this Instruction to be carried, and permitted the subject to be discussed in Committee. He should, therefore, vote against it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the speech of his hon. Friend opposite (Sir John Lubbock) had lent unexpected force to one of his own arguments—the waste principle argument. It showed how difficult it was to understand the scheme he proposed to lay before the House; and now one of the most energetic and practical statesmen upon the Treasury Bench, after devoting great attention to the question, was compelled to admit that he did not understand it. He had no desire to enter into the mathematical problem which the right hon. Gentleman had laid before the House; but the few words which he desired to say upon the subject which had been so unexpectedly pressed forward had rather reference to his own personal position in the matter. In some of the very voluminous literature which the Society for securing Proportional Representation had laid before the public, his name would probably have been noticed among the list of members. He was a member of the Society, and as he did not mean to vote with his hon. Friend opposite (Sir John Lubbock), if the Motion were pressed to a division, he felt bound to explain why it was that he took that course. The reason which induced him to take it was by no means the reason which appeared to influence the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think that the scheme of representation which the House ought to adopt was one that did not accurately represent public opinion, but which gave an undue advantage to the majority of the day. It was natural that the Postmaster General should wish that the majority should be over-represented, as he was a Member of a majority which he expected would long continue in power, and he had spent the greater part of his life in connection with a majority in power; but, for himself, as he (Mr. Balfour) expected, for the greater part of his life, to belong to the minority, it was hardly to be expected that he would take the same view, and give his approval to a system of single-Member constituencies which would over-represent the majority. He believed that a system of proportional representation, in some such form as that which had been advocated that night, was the best form of representation, and possibly the one the country would be ultimately led to adopt. As a Scotchman, he felt keenly upon this subject. Nobody acquainted with Scotland, whatever his political opinions might be, would deny that the Conservative Party in that country was considerable, having regard to its numbers, intelligence, and wealth, yet it was, practically, unrepresented, except in regard to the University seats. He belonged to that minority in Scotland, and, as one of the unrepresented minority, he naturally felt that he should like to see some system adopted which would give to the Conservative Party their just weight in the House of Commons. It was perfectly superfluous to prove what his hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey), in his clear, earnest, and able speech, had spent so much time in proving—namely, that the single-Member system was an imperfect one. At the same time it was much more perfect than any other which had as yet been devised. It was probable that the House would never represent in its constitution the exact proportion which would obtain in the country between different sections of public opinion. His hon. Friend was perfectly fair when he said that the system of the single transferable vote was imperfect in some respects, though more perfect than the existing system, and that perfection was not to be expected in any system. But when they were trying to impose upon the country an entirely new system—a system, which the people did not understand, and which was alien to their habits and modes of thought, it was most essential that that system should be perfect. It would be found far more difficult to make a people accept a new system which had some imperfections, than to retain an old system which had more imperfections. That was the real difficulty which arose in regard to the scheme of his hon. Friend — namely, the imperfections which he left untouched, and which he admitted to exist in the scheme. But the real reason why he did not support his hon. Friend that night was this—that he believed his hon. Friend was engaged in a perfectly hopeless crusade. It was not so much the case that the question was dead, as that it had never been alive. It had received the support of some 200 or 300 people, of whom he was proud to be one, and perhaps of a few persons who might be regarded as theoretical politicians; but the question had never been brought home to the minds of the country at large. He had never been more clearly convinced of that than by certain observations he had had it in his power to make when he went down to Manchester in September last, after the general principles of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill had been laid before the country. Manchester afforded a very crucial test. In the first place Manchester objected strongly to be cut into six divisions. The feeling in favour of Corporate Bodies had always been strong there, and central organized bodies had always been powerful; therefore, the feeling of both Parties, Conservative as well as Liberal, and even of those who were neither Conservative nor Liberal, was deeply to resent the single-Member system, by virtue of which it was proposed to cut up Manchester into six sections. Although the system of minority representation had for a long time been advocated in Manchester by the Press, and by the most intelligent and powerful politicians on both sides, and although the Press had always supported with great ability the views of his hon. Friend in regard to this question, yet, in spite of that, when he (Mr. Balfour) went down to Manchester, and had some opportunity of gauging popular feeling on the question, it was made perfectly clear to him that it was absolutely impossible to get the mass of the community to accept with the slightest degree of enthusiasm, or, indeed, to accept at all the scheme which his hon. Friend advocated with such great ability. Therefore, the conclusion he drew was, that the Proportional Representation Society had begun their agitation too late—they had begun it, at all events, too late for this Bill. They might stump the country from one end to the other, and visit every town in the Kingdom, testing imaginary elections with imaginary names; but they would not be able to get up, for many years to come, the slightest amount of enthusiasm in favour of the scheme. After all, the English people prided themselves on being a practical people. He did not know how far they deserved the compliment; but they thought they were practical, and their practicalness always took the form of sticking to any system to which they were accustomed and to which they had always been used, especially when it was an intelligible plan, and when, however imperfect it might be, it gave a general result which was acceptable to the community. Well, the single-Member system would fulfil all these conditions, and it would be difficult to induce the people to give up that system for another system, the discussion of which required real mathematical knowledge. That being so, he could not vote for the Motion of his hon. Friend, because, if he did, and a sufficient number of hon. Members of the House were induced to do so, the whole of the present scheme of redistribution would be upset, and all the trouble they had gone through in the last six months they would have to go through over again. As a practical politician, he could not follow such a course. He did not believe that if the Bill were upset or dropped the scheme of his hon. Friend would be adopted; but he felt it was possible that a very much worse scheme might be adopted. Entertaining that view, he considered himself bound, as a practical politician, to abstain from supporting the scheme of his hon. Friend, to which he always had, and still would give a theoretical adherence.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM said, that he was somewhat in the same position as the hon. Member who had just addressed the House. He had listened carefully to the speeches which had been delivered, and he was quite prepared to admit the excellence of the principle of proportional representation and also the simplicity of the scheme proposed, yet he was unable to vote for the present proposal. He was bound to confess that he had been somewhat disappointed with the speech of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey), because he did not think the hon. Member had made the case quite as simple as it really was. Among other things, the hon. Member had referred to the case of Glasgow. He had pointed out that under the existing state of things no Conservative could obtain representation in that city. He had also pointed out that if the proposals contained in the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill were carried out, and the city were divided into seven wards, the result would be the same, and no Conservative would obtain representation in Glasgow. The hon. Member further showed that by the adoption of the scheme of proportional representation one or more Conservatives might obtain a seat as Representatives of Glasgow. Then, having made that statement, he appealed to hon. Gentlemen sitting opposite him to support the Motion of the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). But what support was he likely to obtain from his own side of the House? It was only natural that hon. Members on the Liberal Benches would refuse to support a proposal which would have that effect. The hon. Gentleman had made a mistake; because this was no question of Party whatever, and ought not to be treated upon that basis. But he (Viscount Lewisham) had risen, on the present occasion, because, being a member of the Proportional Representation Society, he wished to explain the reason that prevented him from supporting the Motion. In the first place, personally, he had a grievance against the Society. Having a little scheme of his own, which he believed to have many advantages over the proposed scheme, he had endeavoured to explain it to the Society in certain letters, but had never yet received an answer. That, however, was not the main reason why he did not propose to support the present Motion. He had another reason altogether. Not long ago, while travelling in a train with some hon. Friends of his, including the hon. Member for Nottingham (Mr. Arnold Morley) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster), they had tried two or three test elections, and as every single election came out in a different form it was perfectly clear that there would be a decided element of chance introduced if the present proposal were adopted. On one occasion three Liberals were returned; on two occasions two Liberals, the Conservative and the third Liberal running a dead heat for the last place; and on the other three occasions two Liberals and one Conservative were returned. It was perfectly plain, therefore, that the system now proposed would involve a very considerable element of chance, as in no two consecutive cases were the same results attained. He was, therefore, prepared to abide by the proposals contained in the redistribution scheme now before the House; and he could not support the Instruction which had been moved by the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock).

MR. W. FOWLER said, that the hon. Member behind him (Mr. Albert Grey) had referred to the views of Mr. Bagehot in reference to Parliamentary Reform, and had said that Mr. Bagehot objected to proportional representation simply on the ground that it was a reproduction of Mr. Hare's scheme. That was not quite correct, because in his essay on *Parliamentary Reform*, published in 1859, Mr. Bagehot said—

> "If every minority had exactly as much weight in Parliament as it has in the nation, there might be a risk of indecision. Members are apt enough to deviate from the plain, decisive path from vanity, from a wish to be original, from a nervous conscientiousness. They are subject to special temptations which make their decisions less simple and consistent than the nation's. We need a counteracting influence, and it will be no subject for regret if that influence be tolerably strong. It is therefore no disadvantage, but the contrary, that

diffused minority in the country is in general rather inadequately represented. A strong conviction in the ruling power will give it strength of volition. The House of Commons should think as the nation thinks, but it should think so rather more strongly and with somewhat less of wavering."

Mr. ALBERT GREY said, the extract read by the hon. Gentleman referred to Mr. Hare's plan, and not to the plan advocated by the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock).

Mr. W. FOWLER said, that it referred to the general principle of minority representation taken as a whole. The volume from which he had quoted had no special reference to Mr. Hare's plan, but only to the general principles of Parliamentary representation. The arguments against the principle of minority representation were forcibly urged by Mr. Bagehot; but he did not think the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey) had in any degree removed the difficulty. The whole question had been so fully discussed that he would not attempt to protract the discussion; but he did hold strongly that the objection of Mr. Bagehot was one which could not be got over. It was pointed out that the adoption of Mr. Hare's system, or of any other scheme of minority representation, would give minorities a power which would tend to produce a stagnant Parliament, an undecided Parliament, and one that did not know its own mind as well as it ought to do. He felt certain that the more hon. Members reflected upon the subject, the more they would come to the conclusion that that was a most serious objection. A great deal had been said about the unfairness of the present plan. Well, it was impossible to have a perfect representation of everybody's opinion. How was it possible that that could be done? They must keep as near as they could. Every individual could not be represented in every opinion he entertained. There were not three men in the House who agreed about everything. It was desirable to make the representation as perfect as it was possible to make it; but if they were to give to every conceivable crotchet the power of getting itself represented simply because it existed, they would run the danger of having a Parliament—he was going to say a Parliament without a mind—but a Parliament having so many minds, that it would be unable to use any of them to any effect. He thought that was an objection which had never yet been disproved, and no thinker had ever discussed the question with more ability than Mr. Bagehot. For his own part, the more he thought about it, the more convinced he became that this proposal was a most dangerous one —one that would only lead to confusion, and not to real, genuine representation. No doubt, there were objections to the proposal contained in the Bill of single-Member constituencies; but he did not know of any plan which could be proposed that would not be open to objection. Single-Member constituencies would unquestionably be objectionable in various points of view—such as being somewhat rough and uncertain in their results. There could be no doubt about that; but it was impossible to make any system perfect, and whatever objection there might be to single-Member constituencies the system had more common sense about it than the plan which professed to give representation in that House to every fraction of the community made up of a certain number of people with different opinions combining together to vote. The hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey) had pointed out that it would be necessary for a certain proportion of the electors to combine in order to produce a certain result; but according to the plan proposed by the Government there might be a great variety of combinations even in the same borough. In a large borough there might be seven or eight bodies differing from each other in their opinions—for instance, they would not find the same class of people in Westminster as they would find in Whitechapel, and certainly the combinations would be very different in different parts of a great city or a great town. So they would get a variety of representation by the single-Member plan. His main objection was that the adoption of this principle of minority voting would make Parliament weaker than it ought to be made, and not so forcible or so strong in its opinions as the nation itself; whereas he thought that Parliament ought to reflect the views of the majority of the people even more decisively than they were at present represented.

MR. ACLAND said, that when first the Proportional Representation Society was started he had been extremely anxious to go into all the arguments and hear all that could be said in favour of the scheme; but he must say that the more he had seen of it the less he approved of it. He wished to point out three objections to the present proposal which he had not yet heard put. The first was that according to their system of Government—namely, Party and Cabinet Government, he did not see how it was possible they could expect to go on for any length of time except on a system somewhat similar to that which existed at present—by which the voting community became practically divided into something like two great parts—the one holding one set of principles which united certain men, and the other part in favour, on the whole, of a different set of principles; the one supporting the Government of the day, while the other supported the Opposition. He thought it was far better for the stability and the proper conduct of the affairs of the nation that this principle should continue to exist. He did not see how it was possible for the system advocated by his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) to have free play under such a Parliamentary system as that which the country now enjoyed, and which he believed to be the best for the nation. Then, again, he wanted to know what was to be the relation of a Member to his constituents? Surely that was not an unimportant part of the question of their Parliamentary system? Take a county constituency as an example. In it the number of voters returning a Member to oppose vivisection would be spread all over the county; the same would hold in the case of the temperance, anti-vaccination, and similar movements; and the question was, therefore, how was a Member for any particular section to get into the same sort of relations with the great body of his constituents as he did at present? Surely that was not an unimportant part of their Parliamentary system? The third question he wished to ask was this—Is it not to be expected that the wire-pullers, practised in the business of manipulating elections, would be even more powerful under this system then they are now? Would it not be just as possible, or even more possible, to manage the votes so as to give an undue proportion to particular men than could be done at present? He did not know what there was that would compel the voters to give the whole of their *quota* of votes, if they chose to concentrate their efforts upon the election of one or two men; and by that means an undue advantage would be given to a Party which might not happen to be in reality the strongest in the constituency. He hoped the House would hear stronger arguments than had yet been used in favour of this proposal; but he must say that the reasons which had been given, together with others, completely convinced him that the scheme propounded by the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) was far from being at present practical, especially when it was remembered that a very large proportion of the new constituencies to which they were about to appeal consisted of persons who scarcely knew what the giving of a vote was. Until, therefore, such persons were made acquainted by experience with the nature of the duty they had to perform, it was too bad to condemn them to an intricate system which it was impossible for them to understand.

MR. MACARTNEY remarked, that, as one of the Representatives of a minority which would suffer more by this legislation than any other body in the Kingdom, he wished to say a few words in support of the proposal which had been submitted to the House. He was anxious to cite a case in point. He represented a county constituency numbering 103,000 Roman Catholics and 87,000 Protestants. The 103,000 Roman Catholic electors would, as a rule, support the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell); while the 87,000 Protestants would, as a rule, be supporters of the Crown and the Constitution. It seemed to him that a population of 87,000, as opposed to 103,000, had a prospect of being swamped by the present measure; and therefore any proposal which offered a change for the better representation of such a minority was the one which they ought to support. He believed that by the division proposed in his own county there was scarcely a chance offered of any Representative of the loyal classes being returned. It was his opinion that if the proposal of the hon. Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) were adopted there would be a good chance of securing at least one-third of the representation of that county, although he contended that they were entitled to still more. That being so, he should certainly support the proposal of the hon. Member, and not that of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. HENEAGE said his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had made a pathetic appeal to the Conservatives to support his proposal, assuring them that it would give them a much better chance of representation; but immediately afterwards, and almost in the same breath, he was quite as pathetic in pointing out that under his scheme a second Liberal candidate might find a seat by having a number of second votes handed over to him where the first votes were given to his more popular colleague. On the one hand, his hon. Friend wanted them to believe that his proposal would secure that the minority should not be improperly represented; while, on the other hand, he pointed out that minorities would be over-represented. His hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey) said that he wished to prevent "faddhists" from having too large a share in the representation. But by this proposal "faddhists" were encouraged. It was not necessary for a voter to say that he would give them his first vote; but all he would have to do was to promise his second. These were reasons which induced him to object to the scheme; but he objected to it also upon other grounds. As it had been forcibly stated by the hon. Member who had just sat down, the wire-pullers at elections would have a greater chance of success under the scheme of his hon. Friend than they would have under single constituencies and a single vote scheme. Then again, and especially in the counties, he thought that a great deal would not only be left to chance, but a great deal also would be left to manipulation. He was quite certain from what he had seen of county elections under the ballot that if the Returning Officer chose to act improperly he might do a good deal to affect the result of an election. He had in his mind at that moment an election in which he was quite certain that the Returning Officer could have returned either of two candidates he chose out of the three who were proposed. All he would have to do would be to take the ballot boxes of a particular district in which he knew a large proportion of voters belonging to a particular Party resided, and count them first, and he would then secure that all the second votes on those papers would be thrown away. Now, Returning Officers and Under Sheriffs were not unfrequently Party lawyers living in the county, who were perfectly well acquainted with the various districts in which the voters lived, and knew how they would vote for particular candidates. They would, therefore, know, as well as possible, which of the districts were being counted, and by this manipulation of the ballot-boxes they could affect the result. He admitted, although it was not often done, that any candidate could claim that all the boxes should be emptied and mixed before they began to count the votes. He was also of opinion that much more would be left to chance by the adoption of the proposal of his hon. Friend than by the creation of single-Member constituencies. He believed that these were good reasons for rejecting the Motion in favour of the scheme proposed by Her Majesty's Government, and which had these two advantages—in the first place, the area would be smaller, and every elector would feel that he enjoyed greater power; and, in the next place, a contested election would be much less expensive to the candidates. For these reasons he, for one, felt called upon to oppose the proposal of his hon. Friend.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he was not quite able to follow the argument of the hon. Member who had just sat down, and, therefore, would not attempt to discuss it. He would only say that it was the duty of the Returning Officer to go through all the ballot-boxes, and they were invariably sent to him sealed up, the votes were afterwards carefully gone through, and it was not possible that any manipulation of the votes could take place. What he had risen for, however, was to explain why it was that he could not support the Resolution of his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). Certainly, if the question had come before the House at a time when hon. Members were able fairly and properly to consider it, he thought it was a proposition that deserved very careful attention at their hands. Although he was not a member of the Proportional Representation Society, he had read many of the papers issued by that society. He had always regarded their scheme as a fair proposal, and one that deserved to be fully tested; but he thought it would have been better if his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), instead of going about the country during the autumn, had come to the House and submitted their proposal at a time when it could be fairly discussed and considered. He believed that many hon. Members might in that case have been disposed to give it their support. But they had to consider now the position in which the House was placed in regard to the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. A phrase had been used which very well described the position in which hon. Members stood. The authorship of the phrase had been somewhat unnecessarily repudiated, in "another place," by the Marquess of Salisbury, and he believed that his right hon. Friend below him (Sir Stafford Northcote) also repudiated it on behalf of the noble Marquess in that House. But, whoever was the author of it, the phrase "that they were debating redistribution with a rope round their necks" was, he thought, a very happy phrase indeed, for it certainly seemed to him that they were, on the present occasion, debating the great principles of the Bill with a rope round their necks. Now, what was the actual position in which they stood? On the 1st of January next, the great change which had been introduced into the franchise would become law by the Act which was passed last Session. That change had been carefully debated in the House of Commons, and received the general support of the Party opposite, yet, as regarded the Party who sat on that (the Conservative) side of the House, it was not met with a decided opposition. His noble Friend the Member for North Leicestershire (Lord John Manners) moved a Resolution in favour of seeing the whole scheme of the Government before the House consented to pass a portion of it. A similar Motion had been proposed in a former Parliament, and it had received great support; but his noble Friend, last Session, only obtained the support of the Members of that great Party of which he was so distinguished an ornament. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had been one of his noble Friend's supporters, though, as an humble individual, he had not been prepared to go so far as the Government and many of his hon. Friends. But he found himself standing, perhaps, not altogether in a minority of one. [MR. WARTON: Hear, hear!] Certainly, his hon. and learned Friend who cheered him took the same course, and he thought there were a few others. Still, there was no doubt that a large proportion of the House, and particularly those who were most entitled to speak upon a question of this kind—namely, those who represented county constituencies—did not altogether oppose the proposals of Her Majesty's Government; and his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) as a burgess, and he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) as a citizen, could not put in the same claim to be heard on a question which principally affected the county constituencies; and there was no doubt that the county Representatives did give a modified support to the Bill, and seemed to think that the change proposed, perhaps, was, on the whole, beneficial. It was found, further, that in "another place" those with whom they were connected by Party ties went even further than the county Members did; and when some of the most influential Members of the Conservative Party expressly gave their consent to the Bill, there could be no longer a doubt that the time had come when there must be a great change in the representation of the country, and that the time had arrived when the question should be settled. It was under these circumstances that the present Session of Parliament assembled. The Bill of Her Majesty's Government had been brought forward last Session, and it had not been decidedly opposed, although there had been a few individuals like himself who had not given support to it, while in "another place" it was met with no opposition, but rather with assent. Therefore, when the House met in October last there was a general feeling that the time had come for the settlement of the question. The question then arose, whether the redistribution scheme which Her Majesty's Government were prepared to submit ought not to be laid before the House before the Franchise Bill was passed. ["Divide!"] The hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth) called out "Divide;" but he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) ventured to think that he was fully entitled to be heard, seeing that he had risen many times in the course of the debate upon the second reading, and had failed to catch the Speaker's eye until too late to discuss the subject. Not having had an opportunity of expressing his sentiments on that occasion, he certainly should not be deterred by the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea, who had his own personal reasons for interrupting him, from expressing them now. When Parliament re-assembled for the Autumn Session, it was quite evident that the question was quite ripe for decision. It was generally admitted on both sides of the House that the extension of the county franchise was virtually conceded, because the proposal had not been opposed except by a few antiquated Tories like himself. That being the case, they had to consider what would be a fair scheme of redistribution under the circumstances in which they were placed. The contention of the Conservative Party was, that they were not justified in introducing a great change in the county franchise until they had before them the whole scheme of Her Majesty's Government with regard to redistribution. On the other hand, the contention of the Party opposite had been during the preceding Session, and also during the Recess, that the House of Commons should give a blank cheque to Her Majesty's Government, binding the House to pass the Franchise Bill on the understanding that, when it came into operation, Her Majesty's Government would condescend to submit their redistribution scheme. By that means they would have handed over the whole power of altering the Constitution of the country to Her Majesty's Government. What was virtually said was this—"Pass the Franchise Bill, then humbly wait until Her Majesty's Government ask you to pass any Redistribution Bill which they may think proper to introduce." That was the suggestion of the Party opposite during last Session; it was the contention of the same hon. Gentlemen when they were engaged in perambulating the country during the Recess; and it was the object for which the Prime Minister went down to Mid Lothian. ["Question!"] Hon. Members cried "Question." Was he stating the Question unfairly? If so, he would be glad to hear the remarks of any hon. Gentleman upon that point. But he apprehended that he was simply stating the history of the last seven months. If any hon. Member opposite disputed his facts he was prepared to listen to him. These were the circumstances under which Parliament assembled in the early part of the Session. The Franchise Bill was passed by a large majority in the House of Commons and sent to "another place," where it was read a second time. The question then arose, whether the Conservative Party in that Assembly should allow it to pass without knowing what the whole scheme of the Government was?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is travelling beyond the Question before the House, which is that it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power, in all cases where an elector is entitled to one vote only, to enable the elector to nominate more than one candidate to whom that vote might, under certain circumstances, be transferred.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he was aware that that was the question directly before the House, and he was about to come to that point. But the point he wished to put before the House, in the first place, was that there was an arrangement entered into between the two political Parties, which arrangement the two Parties were bound to carry out, but which would be materially interfered with if the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) were adopted. That was the point which he was going to allude to presently, and he hoped he was not out of Order in attempting to illustrate that point. The question he had to consider, as an individual Member of the House, was whether he could support the scheme of his hon. Friend opposite. He had said that under the circumstances to which he had been alluding, an arrangement had been entered into by the Leaders of the two great political Parties, and he had no doubt that in entering into that arrangement the Marquess of Salisbury and his right hon. Friend below him (Sir Stafford Northcote) did the best they could for the interests confided to their charge. As the Leaders of the Conservative Party, they had entered into the arrangement; and that being the case the question now arose whether he (Mr. R. N. Fowler), as a Member of the House, ought to give his vote against the spirit of the arrangement which had been entered into. It might be stated that no Member was bound to vote for every detail in the Bill. That was perfectly true; but, at the same time, if the Amendment now before the House were carried, there could be no question that it would upset the whole scheme contained in the Bill. If his hon. Friend carried his proposal, it would be found that the arrangement, on the faith of which the Franchise Bill was passed, would be upset, the whole scheme of Her Majesty's Government would be thrown into confusion, and the subject of Parliamentary Reform would be left in the condition in which it would have been if Her Majesty's Government had carried the plan they recommended last year. That being the case, he thought that every Member of the House ought to ask himself whether, under such circumstances, he was justified in supporting the Motion of his hon. Friend. Had that Motion been brought forward at a time when it could be fairly discussed, and if there had been no other considerations in the way, he might have been glad to give his support to it; but they must bear in mind that the scheme which had been agreed upon by every eminent statesman of both Parties was the scheme submitted by the Government. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) believed that the question might have been dealt with in a better way. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) asserted that his plan was a much better one. That might be so. He was disposed to think it might have been the better scheme, but that was not the question now before the House. The question was whether his hon. Friend had any possible chance of carrying the proposal he had submitted to the House, seeing that, if carried, it would upset the whole arrangement entered into by Her Majesty's Government and the Leaders of the Conservative Party. Under these circumstances he and other hon. Members sitting on that side of the House had to ask themselves whether they would be justified in upsetting the scheme which had the support of their Leaders, and which met the views of most practical men. The proposal of the Government was that there should be single-Member constituencies, by which means a greater variety of representation would be introduced than that which now existed. He was disposed to believe that the Government scheme went as far as any practical scheme could go even in the direction of carrying out the views of his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London. He had to thank the House for its indulgence, and he would conclude, as he had begun, by repeating, that as the House were debating the matter with a rope round their necks, they had no course before them but to support the Bill in its present shape. He repeated that it would ill become hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House to upset the arrangement which had been made, with very great care, by the Leaders of the Party to which they belonged. Under the circumstances there was no other course open to him than to vote against the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he looked upon the proposal of the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) as a powerful weapon that could be used against that most vicious of all contrivances, the dividing of Parties at elections. He had therefore worked with his hon. Friend a very great deal during last summer, and he did not now share the arguments which had been adduced against his proposal. But when the proposal came from Her Majesty's Government to deal in a moderate way with the question in the Bill he considered it was entitled to consideration. He had nothing to say in the abstract against the Motion, and felt that in the case of very large constituencies a proportional scheme would be a powerful one for the purpose referred to. The House had before them a counter scheme to that of his hon. Friend, put forward by Her Majesty's Government, and he thought that proposal deserved support; it was, in his opinion, one which deserved the support of the country, and around which both Parties should rally. Having had experience of single-handed constituencies and others, he believed there was a great advantage in having large constituencies, although, on the other hand, they were open to objections. For instance the candidate could not come to the same personal contact with the members of the constituency in the case of those of large size, which was possible in the case of constituencies of more moderate dimensions; and the labour of canvassing them was extremely hard. He believed that the proposal of Her Majesty's Government would have the effect of bringing the candidate into more close personal contact with their constituents, and of reducing expenses. On these grounds he asked the favour of hon. Members and the country to the proposal of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. EWART said, his hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had informed them that during the last autumn some negotiations had taken place between the contracting Parties — the Government and the Front Opposition Bench—with regard to this Bill, and on that ground had appealed to hon. Members not to support the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London. There were few Members of the Conservative Party who respected more than he the authority of their Leaders, yet he felt himself in no way bound by that agreement. He viewed this question from an Irish standpoint,and it was his intention to give his vote in favour of the Motion of the hon. Baronet. He believed that the system which he proposed was an honest and a fair one, and that it would go far to give a fair and true representation of all classes and of all opinions; and although he was aware that there were some difficulties in the practical working out of the system he could not suppose that they were insurmountable. If hon. Members reflected for a moment they would see the effect of the Government proposal. Let them consider the case of Ireland, for instance; it showed in the most emphatic manner the injustice of the Government measure. There was in Ireland a loyal minority of fully one-third of the population; and yet as the Bill stood, if it became law, that loyal minority would not be able to return more than one-seventh of the representation. Notwithstanding the number of the Loyalists in Ireland, no estimate that he had seen of what their representation would be under the proposal of Her Majesty's Government gave them more than 15 or 16 Members. Could this be just; was it possible that the House of Commons with open eyes could commit such a wrong as he had pointed to as being the effect of the measure now before them? And yet from what they had heard he was afraid that it was useless to try to induce Her Majesty's Government to listen to reason on this subject. However, in the name of the Loyalists of Ireland he protested against a proposal which would practically annihilate their influence in that House, and should record his vote in favour of the Motion of the hon. Baronet.

MR. CROPPER said, he should detain the House but a very short time in stating his view upon the present question. He wished to say that, as he was a member of the Proportional Representation Society, he did not intend to follow in the train of other Members who had joined the Society, but meant to vote against it. He was prepared to vote for the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London; but he would advise him not to divide the House upon it now, because he thought his hon. Friend would see that his arguments might be reserved to influence the country at a future time with better effect. In his opinion, there was a great deal to be said in favour of a system of proportional representation beyond what had been advanced in the course of that night's debate. He considered that its adoption would have the effect of entirely preventing the influence of those Associations, Liberal as well as Conservative, who endeavoured so largely to influence the election of Members of Parliament, and leave no choice for the voter except to vote for one of two candidates presented to him, who, probably, did not represent his opinions at all. Having said so much, he would merely add that, from his point of view, he would rather advise his hon. Friend who brought forward the present Motion not to divide the House upon it. He did not think he would miss his chance by doing so, but would gain by having had his Motion put so fully before the House.

MR. GORST said, although he had listened to the various arguments addressed to hon. Members by speakers who had taken part in the latter part of the debate, he thought it extremely unfortunate for the House that the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir John Lubbock) had made his speech in support of his present Motion during the dinner-hour, the consequence of which was that very few hon. Members heard the whole of that speech. Since that, however, they had listened to some able speeches delivered by Members of Her Majesty's Government in support of their scheme, and they had also had a very able speech from the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey). But most hon. Gentlemen on those Benches were very desirous of hearing the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) on the Motion, who was, no doubt, very anxious to address the House, and to dispose, in his speech, of a great number of the arguments which had been put forward by Her Majesty's Government. He did not think it would be fair, at that hour of the morning (12.30), for the hon. Member for Liskeard to make his speech, because, although hon. Members would most willingly remain in the House to hear him, it would not be possible to have a very full report of his statement, which, he had no doubt, would be looked for and read very carefully throughout the country. He would, therefore, propose that the debate should be adjourned—a course which he did not think the Government could consider unreasonable, because the question before the House was one in which the country was very largely interested; and it was probable that another opportunity of fully discussing it would not present itself during the subsequent progress of the Bill, if the Government obtained a majority, as, no doubt, they would, on the present occasion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was sorry that the Government could not agree to the Motion of the hon. and learned Member opposite. The reason given for the adjournment of the debate was that, although it had lasted a very long time, the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) had not had an opportunity of addressing the House, and that many hon. Gentlemen had been absent during a large portion of the debate. The debate had already extended over a period of four hours; and, under the circumstances, as they wished to make progress with the Bill, he trusted the hon. and learned Gentleman would not press his Motion for Adjournment. Of course, the hon. and learned Gentleman was perfectly right in wishing this question to be fully debated; but he would remind him that the hon. Baronet who introduced the Motion had already informed the House that he should raise the subject again on a future occasion.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK remarked that the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) had not had an opportunity of speaking.

MR. CHAPLIN said, he had heard, with much surprise, the reply made by the right hon. Baronet to the extremely reasonable proposal of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham for the adjournment of the debate. And what were the reasons of the right hon. Baronet for not agreeing to the Motion? He said that the Question before the House had been debated for four hours, and that during that period it had appeared to him to be somewhat slack, the effect of his contention being that, therefore, this question, which had excited so much interest during the Recess, was to be determined in one evening. He had never heard a more audacious proposition. This Bill before the House was the most important measure that had been before the House for years; and how had it been dealt with hitherto? Why, there had been no debate upon it, practically; the House were told by Her Majesty's Government that they would have an ample opportunity of discussing it in all its aspects on the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair; and now the right hon. Baronet said that this question was to be disposed of—absolutely disposed of—before the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) had had an opportunity of stating his views upon it. He was bound to say that his own views upon this subject were in abeyance at the present moment. He was anxious to wait and hear the speech of the hon. Member for Liskeard, which, he had no doubt, would be as lucid and full of knowledge as were all his speeches on these questions, and which would enable him, perhaps, to come to a perfectly right conclusion on the subject. An hon. Gentleman had said just now that the view entertained by a great many people was that the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill must be considered as a foregone conclusion, because the Leaders on both sides of the House were agreed. He (Mr. Chaplin) protested altogether against that position. This was a matter which affected every Member of that House, and in that capacity he had nothing whatever to do with any arrangement that might have been entered into between Parties. He said that the question should be threshed out, and in order that it might be threshed out, let the House have an opportunity of hearing the hon. Member for Liskeard to-morrow; for it was impossible that at that late hour it could be properly dealt with. He begged to support the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that all Her Majesty's Government asked was that the Amendment should be disposed of by the House, after which they would certainly agree to the adjournment of the debate. Hon. Members to-morrow, or at any future time, would be able to raise any questions they desired to raise.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, it should be remembered that the debate on the present Motion had come on quite unexpectedly. Her Majesty's Government appeared to think that those hon. Gentlemen who had spoken in the course of the debate represented the real amount of the interest taken in this question; but that was not a correct view of the position. He himself had come down to the House in a state of complete ignorance as to the debate coming on at all. He understood that his hon. Friend near him was absolutely burning to hear all the arguments on both sides of the question; and he believed that if Her Majesty's Government agreed to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate they would find that more hon. Gentlemen desired to speak upon it than they appeared to think. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board said that at one moment the debate was languishing, and that when the Postmaster General rose to address the House no other Gentleman rose to do so. But he believed that the right hon. Baronet was under a misapprehension on that point, because he (Mr. Balfour) had risen at the time referred to. He trusted that, without putting the House to the trouble of a division, the Government would accede to the Motion of his hon. and learned Friend for the adjournment of the debate.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I am very anxious to make progress with this Bill; but I am bound to say that it is my opinion, from what we have heard, that Her Majesty's Government will not gain anything by the course they are taking of resisting the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. Everyone, I think, must be struck with the fact that, with the exception of the hon. Baronet who brought forward the Motion, and one or two other Gentlemen, everyone has told us that, although in favour of the principle from the beginning or in the past, they saw no reason on the present occasion to vote in favour of the proposal. It is not unreasonable to ask how far the supporters of the proposal are prepared to carry that argument? Now, I think, if they have exhausted all the arguments in favour of the proposal, that we should go to the division. I should, in that case, desire to give reasons, not why I object to, but why I cannot approve, the proposal of the hon. Baronet opposite. But if we are to understand that the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) is anxious to address the House, I do not think we should be wise in stopping the debate on a question of so much importance.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he thought that his right hon. Friend had made, as the Minister in charge of the Bill, a very natural suggestion. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who had only just come down to the House, had said that he had not received sufficient instruction on the subject. A great number of Members, however, considered that the instruction imparted had been quite sufficient. He was bound to own that the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote), whose interest in the progress of the Bill was well known, advanced a very strong argument in favour of adjournment; and in deference to the right hon. Gentleman's wish, and out of respect to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), whose views on the question a large number of Members were anxious to hear, the Government would be only too happy to accede to the desire for an adjournment of the debate.

MR. BROADHURST said, he was one of those who had had the advantage of hearing the debate which took place during the time the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) was absent; and he had been waiting in the House since 11 o'clock on the promise that they were to take a division on the question. He hoped the Government would not attempt to repeat the occurrences of that night. If they did they need not count upon him staying in this public-house till the time when all others were closed by the law—[*laughter*]—all the respectable public-houses—only to find that the debate was adjourned for the convenience of some particular hon. Gentleman. It would be within the recollection of the House that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) gave the House something like one evening's lecture upon this subject only a few weeks back, and that at the end of it those of them who had previously thought they understood the question were more fogged than ever. They had had quite enough debate upon this very complicated electoral plan—a plan which seemed to be deserted by its friends at every step it attempted to take. He sincerely hoped that the Government would take a division that night. He, for one, would not be persuaded to stay another night on the promise of a division.

MR. BLENNERHASSETT repudiated the idea put forward by his hon. Friend (Mr. Broadhurst), that the cause of proportional representation had been deserted by its friends. As a matter of fact, several hon. Members interested in the question would have been present that night to speak had they had any idea that the subject would have been brought up. He considered the question of vital importance to the country, and hoped to have an opportunity of speaking upon it. He sincerely hoped the Government would adhere to their intention of agreeing to the adjournment of the debate.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

ELECTIONS IN COUNTIES (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.—[BILL 19.]

(*Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Cochran-Patrick.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Hours of polling in counties).

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who had charge of the Bill, what was the course he proposed to take with regard to it? The Committee would remember that when the second reading of the Bill was discussed in December last there was a very general expression of opinion in favour of the measure, contingent, of course, upon the passing into law of the Franchise Bill, which would so materially increase the number of voters in counties—voters who, being mainly of the working classes, would require to have the hours of poll extended for their convenience. That view was met by the clause which stood on the Paper in the name of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke)—namely, that this Act should not come into operation before the Franchise Act. But there were other matters which were mentioned by more than one speaker, some of which he (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) himself took the opportunity of bringing under the notice of the House. In the last Session an Act was passed extending the hours of poll in Parliamentary boroughs above a certain size—he thought boroughs containing more than 3,000 electors. Some years ago an Act was passed extending the hours of poll to 8 o'clock in the Metropolitan boroughs, and now a Bill was brought in to extend the hours of poll in counties. This was an important matter, no doubt for the convenience of the electors; but it was a very simple matter of legislation, and it did seem to him an absurdity that such a question as the extension of the hours of poll should require to be embodied in three Acts of Parliament. Even this Bill did not complete the series, because it left outside the operation of the Acts the small borough constituencies which would retain a separate Parliamentary representation under the Parliamentary Election (Redistribution) Bill—that was to say, boroughs containing less than 3,000 voters. What he had now to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman—and he assured the right hon. Baronet his suggestion was made with no intention of impeding the progress of the Bill—was that the law should be made uniform. He would now ask the right hon. Gentleman to repeal all previous legislation on the subject; and, on Report, remodel the Bill so as to make the law uniform in all constituencies. It was very desirable there should be a measure dealing with the whole matter in a satisfactory manner. It might also be well to consider a case which had happened under the existing Acts—namely, the case of a polling place at which very few voters polled being kept open for 12 hours to the great inconvenience of all those who were engaged in taking the poll, and with no commensurate convenience to the voters themselves. It was worth considering whether it would not be possible to shorten the hours in those cases in such a way as would not be inconvenient to the working classes. It might be well in some places to open the poll at 10 o'clock in the morning instead of at 8. It might also be well to consider the possibility of making the hours of poll different in winter and summer, making the polling hours long in summer when the labour hours were long, and short in winter when the day's work, at any rate in the country, was practically done by half-past 4. If anything could be done in this way to meet the legitimate convenience of those officials who were engaged in taking the poll, it was very proper it should be done. He did not propose, however, to press the matter; but what he did press was that the law should be made uniform in all constituencies, and comprised in one Act of Parliament.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that when the Speaker left the Chair during the Autumn Sitting of the present Session he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) threw out the suggestion that it would be desirable, on Report, to amend the Bill in the way proposed by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), and he was quite disposed to so amend it, subject to one doubt he had in his mind. He said he would take steps to find out during the Recess the opinions of Members from various parts of the United Kingdom on the subject. He did take those steps. He had quite made up his mind as to the desirability of taking the course suggested with regard to England and Scotland; but he was not yet acquainted with the opinion of Irish Members on the subject. The only Irish Member he had had any communications with on the subject was the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and the hon. Gentleman only informed him that he would inform him of his views as to what Amendments in the Bill were desirable. The hon. Member had not informed him what those Amendments were; but he had intimated that, so far as he was concerned, there was no objection to the Bill coming on to-night for consideration. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke), therefore, spoke with some doubt as to the Irish opinion on the subject. At the same time, the changes which would have to be made in the Bill were changes which could not be made at the present stage of the Bill, because they were limited in Committee to the scope and title of the Bill. It was a Bill to extend the hours of poll in counties. It was because there were a large number of municipal boroughs in which the hours of poll were not extended by the present Bill or by former Bills the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) suggested that, as regarded England and Scotland, at all events, the law should be made uniform; that whatever the hours were they should be made the same in municipal boroughs, which were not at present covered by the Bill. That change could only be made on Report, because to make it in Committee would have required an Instruction to the Committee. If between this and Report or to-night he should find that the opinions of the Irish Members did not differ from those of the English and Scotch Representatives he should be glad, on Report, to make the change suggested applicable to the Three Kingdoms, and of course it could be made in a single clause. With regard to the second suggestion of the right hon. Baronet, he very much doubted whether it was advisable to attempt to close the poll during any portion of the day. At the present time, in the case of school board elections the system of closing the poll during a portion of the day prevailed. It was, however, an optional closing, and it had been found to have its inconveniences. Neither could he accede to the right hon. Baronet's suggestion to open the poll later in the day. Between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning was an hour when very heavy polling took place in almost all parts of the country. There were, too, great numbers of what were called suburban voters—not only round London, but round all large towns—who had to go to business early, and who generally voted between 8 and 9 o'clock. Between 8 and 9 o'clock was an hour which suited those voters best; and, therefore, it would be most undesirable that the poll should be closed at that time of the day. If it was determined to close the poll at some portion of the day, between 3 and 4 in the afternoon would be the most convenient time. He, however, was not disposed to make any change in the present arrangement—indeed, he thought it was better to run the risk of a long day's work. The suggestion that the hours of poll should vary according to the time of year was made many years ago. It was embodied in a Bill; but it was rejected, if he remembered rightly, by the House of Lords. He did not think such a proposal would meet with general favour in the country.

MR. SEXTON said, he had had the opportunity of communicating with the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) with reference to the Bill; and the desire of the hon. Gentleman, and, indeed, the desire of every Irish Member, was that every facility should be afforded, so that every person entitled to the franchise could, if he chose, go to the poll. There was just one matter to which he wished to call the attention of the Committee. Under the Prevention of Crime Act, now in force in Ireland, the police had the power to arrest any person who was out of his house after dark. Now the Irish Representatives were certainly indisposed to give an unquestioning assent to the passing of a measure which lengthened the hours of the poll far beyond the period of daylight, if it were open to any constable to arrest and imprison for the night any person he might meet returning from the poll. What they were anxious to obtain was the insertion of a clause in the Bill to prevent any man being arrested on his way from the polling booth. It seemed to be amusing to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General; but Gentlemen who were connected with the law in England and were in Office in this country did not know what the humble citizen had to bear from the officers of the law in Ireland. Unless the Irish Members were given some reasonable explanation on this subject he should move to report Progress.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Gentleman move?

MR. HEALY said, he would remind the hon. and learned Gentleman who seemed to be so amused that it was provided in the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill that offences under it should not be tried under the provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act. The hon. and learned Member would, perhaps, remember the little Amendment of his (Mr. Healy's), which was accepted after considerable discussion. The suggestion of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) should be taken into consideration; and an amalgamated Bill—that was to say, a measure dealing with the Metropolis, with boroughs and counties—should be brought in. The general practice of the Government was to bring in a Bill dealing with some county, some town, or some village; and when that had been carried, to bring forward another on the same subject also dealing with a county, town, or village. The Government seemed to be actuated by some little common sense for the first time, and there was some prospect of the three Bills being rolled into one. He wished to call attention to the action of the Clerks at the Table in regard to this Bill. These gentlemen seemed to be omnipotent in the House—to have all kinds of power. How was it? They could hardly be said to be acting directly under the inspiration of Heaven. This Bill was marked on the Paper with an asterisk, and, referring to a corresponding asterisk lower down, he found that Bills so marked were Government Orders of the Day. He turned to the Bill itself, and found that it was brought in by Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, and Mr. Cochran-Patrick. Were these Members of the Treasury Bench? Mr. Cochran-Patrick he believed to be an honest Conservative, and Mr. Grey voted against the

Government on the Vote of Censure. It could hardly be said, therefore, that these Gentlemen were Ministerialists. What security had hon. Members that Bills purporting to be Government Bills were really so, when they found that a measure marked with an asterisk was really a private Member's Bill? He considered that, in this matter, the Clerks at the Table were trifling with the House. It seemed to him to be a great liberty on the part of the Clerks to mark this Bill with an asterisk; and he objected to Bills introduced by private Members being trotted out as Government measures without the House having an opportunity of knowing what the measures really were. Before the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo moved to report Progress, they should have some Amendment promised to test the *bona fides* of the Government — an Amendment providing that the Prevention of Crime Act was not to apply to what might happen under this Bill. Last Thursday night 14 men were dragged out of their beds in Kerry, and kept all night in gaol, and the greater portion of next day, on a charge of being supposed to have fired into a house. The case against them was really that they had been out after nightfall. The fact was, that a policeman, having shot a bailiff by mistake, arrested 14 innocent persons. When 14 persons could be arrested in this way—in consequence of a policeman having discharged his rifle—he (Mr. Healy) wished to know what security they would have in Ireland that a man going to record his vote after nightfall would not be arrested? The Government would, he thought, be doing a wise thing in accepting an Amendment providing that the Curfew Clauses of the Prevention of Crime Act should not be put in force on a polling-day in Ireland.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE wished to offer an explanation. The Bill appeared as a Government measure under the following circumstances. He had stated publicly in the House—acting on the express wish of Members sitting on both sides—on the last occasion the Bill was under discussion, that it would be taken up by the Government. It was in consequence of that pledge that the measure was now on the Paper as a Government Bill. With regard to the place it occupied on the Paper as an Order of the Day, on Monday night, and on all Government nights in fact, the Government had control of the Business, and could put Bills down in the order they thought proper. As to the asterisk, he knew nothing about it; but it could, no doubt, be explained by the officials. As the Clerks, however, could not answer or speak in the House, any question to them must be put to and answered by Mr. Speaker.

Mr. HEALY: As Mr. Speaker is not in the House, I would ask you, Sir Arthur Otway, to explain this matter. I think an explanation is necessary, for we have reason to look with great suspicion on every act of the gentlemen at the Table, who are becoming every day more and more inclined to encroach on the rights of private Members.

The CHAIRMAN: The Clerks at the Table have in this case followed the usual course. When a Bill is taken up by the Government——

Mr. HEALY: How did they know this Bill was taken up the Government?

The CHAIRMAN: It is usual to mark it in the way indicated—by an asterisk. If this Bill had not become a Government Bill, the Clerks at the Table would not have been able to put it in the position in which it now stands on the Paper. It is because it has become a Government measure that it is marked with an asterisk.

Mr. HEALY said, he should like to ask the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who said he knew nothing about the asterisk, whether he had instructed the Clerks to deal with this as a Government Order of the Day? They had a statement from the Chairman that the Clerks in some way or other knew that this was a Government Bill.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I believe the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Richard Grosvenor) informed the Clerks that this had become a Government Bill, in order that they might make no mistake about it.

Mr. HEALY: Does that account for the asterisk?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: That is a mere detail. I have nothing whatever to do with it. It became a Government Bill, and, of course, was placed amongst the other Government measures.

Mr. SEXTON said, he did not wish to further refer to this mysterious matter of the asterisk. Could not the Government, for the convenience of the Irish Members, allow them a night for the discussion of this Bill? Thinking that such an opportunity should be given, he would now move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. HEALY said, he would appeal to the right hon. Baronet to give the Irish Members a night to debate this subject. This was the first time the Bill had appeared on the Paper, and it must not be forgotten that the House had only been sitting a few days. The Bill should be put off for one or two nights. It would not be unreasonable to ask the Government to put it off until Thursday; at the same time, he did not desire to enter into a wrangle on the subject. The Government were very fond of getting into wrangles—and were also fond of getting out of them. He would ask the Government to postpone the consideration of the measure until Thursday.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Bill had been down on the Paper some days, and ample opportunity had been afforded to hon. Members for the preparation of Amendments.

MR. HEALY: Will you re-commit the Bill?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: On Report; it could not be done on the Committee stage.

MR. HEALY said, he understood what the right hon. Baronet meant. Suppose they allowed the Bill to pass through Committee now, in order to have Amendments inserted at a later stage, would there be any objection to re-committing the Bill? If they were going to put in the Bill the whole of one Act, and repeal a former Act which consisted of four or five clauses, it was only reasonable that they should re-commit it. The old Act did not deal with Aldermen in Ireland, who were elected in a different manner to Aldermen in England.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I do not know whether it is competent to re-commit the Bill after Report.

MR. HEALY: Certainly it is. You can do it on third reading if you like.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes; for a definite purpose, I know; but I am not sure whether it can be done generally. According to the way in which the hon. Member puts the matter, I understand that he would like to see the Bill in a new form, in order to consider it before moving Amendments. I am not sure that that could be done; but the Committee stage can be disposed of now, and, if it will be convenient to hon. Members, the Report stage can be taken on Friday, and it can then be re-committed.

MR. HEALY: Will my hon. Friend accept that? I think he might fairly do so.

MR. SEXTON: I think that course would be satisfactory.

MR. HEALY: Then we will prepare our Amendments, and put them on the Paper; the Report will be taken on Friday, and then we will re-commit the Bill.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Definition).

Amendment proposed, after the Clause, to insert the following Clause:—

(Commencement of Act.)

"This Act shall not come into operation until the end of this present Parliament."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. HEALY said, he did not wish to oppose the clause; but he desired to know whether any provision would be made in this Bill, or in the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, or in the new Registration Bill, dealing with places for counting votes? In Ireland, the place fixed upon was a matter of great importance. It should be central. Where there was a district split up into four divisions, and where railway communication might be defective, what course would be followed?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it would be out of Order to deal with that subject in the present Bill. It could be dealt with in the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

MR. HEALY: Will you deal with it there?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: We have not dealt with it in the Bill as it it before us; but it is quite competent for the hon. Member to move to amend the measure.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. WARTON said, it would be better if the clause was put in a positive form, and he would move to leave out the word "not," and to substitute for the word "until" the word "at."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "not."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "until."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question, "That the word 'at' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining Clause *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Friday.*

SHANNON NAVIGATION BILL.

(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

[BILL 54.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. HIBBERT, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, expressed a hope that hon. Members would allow that stage to be taken, because he proposed, after it was read a second time, to refer it to a Select Committee. It was merely an enabling Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hibbert.*)

Mr. SEXTON asked whether the hon. Gentleman had yet made up his mind as to the proportion of Irish Members to be placed upon the Select Committee?

Mr. TOTTENHAM inquired if the Bill was the same as that which was introduced last year?

Mr. HIBBERT replied that it was practically the same measure. He certainly hoped to be allowed to place a fair proportion of Irish Members upon the Committee.

Mr. KENNY asked if he was to understand that, if the Bill were read a second time, it was intended to refer it to a Hybrid Committee?

Mr. HIBBERT: No.

Mr. KENNY said, it was quite necessary that they should have a clear understanding upon that point. There had been an impression that it was intended, not to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, but to a Hybrid Committee. Last year there was an arrangement to refer the Bill to a Select Committee; and it was understood that at least one-half, or seven or eight Irish Members altogether, should be upon the Committee. He hoped that a similar arrangement would be made now; and there ought, also, to be a further understanding that the Committee should have power to summon witnesses from the various districts affected by the proposals in the Bill. It would be impossible for the Members sitting upon the Committee to understand the local opinions unless persons were brought from the locality to explain the views of the locality. He had himself received a large number of communications, and especially from the town he represented (Ennis), with regard to the probable bearing of the Bill upon the pier of Clarecastle. The history of the pier of Clarecastle was an extraordinary one. It had been in the hands of the Board of Works, who had spent something like £5,000 in repairing it. Each time they repaired it, it broke to pieces, and he believed that result was due to the defective engineering of the Irish Board of Works. As he had said, they had expended £5,000 upon the repairs, and towards that sum they had confiscated £2,000 out of the surplus dues. The pier had now fallen to pieces again, and, owing to the bad engineering of the Board of Works, the river had been so narrowed that vessels passing up and down found it extremely difficult to get inside the pier. Yet the Board of Works now wanted to raise £2,000 for the purpose of repairing the damage which they had thus occasioned. The action of the Board of Works was, in reality, about the most stupid piece of jobbery, with regard to engineering arrangements, which had been perpetrated in Ireland for some time. Owing to the contraction of the river, vessels inside the pier were detained for a considerable time until the state of the tide enabled them to go out; and the consequence was that vessels in perfect readiness to go out were unnecessarily delayed. Under these circumstances, he considered that it was absolutely essential for the Select Committee to have the views of Irish Gentlemen who were locally interested in these questions. He complained that the Commissioners of the Board of Works in Ireland had too much power under the Bill. In point of fact, the Board of Works might do this, might do that, and might do nothing. The Bill also gave power to transfer various harbours to individuals. Now, he knew the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill objected to the transference of the local harbours to individuals. [Mr. HIBBERT: Hear, hear!] He was quite aware of that; but, with regard to the Port of Kilrush, he believed that a Memorial had been sent up seeking to have that port transferred to certain persons named in the Memorial. What did the Board of Works do? They said that a sum of money had been spent by a local landlord on the pier, and that it was necessary to consider his claims before those of the Trustees, proposed to be appointed, were considered. If that sort of thing were allowed to go on, it would be better to withdraw the Bill. Certainly, if it were passed, there should be a clear understanding that, although powers might be transferred to Local Bodies, whether Trustees or otherwise, yet they certainly would not be transferred to landlords and persons having pecuniary interests in the pier. He hoped there would be a clear understanding upon that point, at any rate. There were many provisions in the Bill with which he quite concurred, and he believed it would have a salutary effect if these local harbours were placed under the control of local gentlemen. That was an object that had long been desired, especially by persons who were connected with the town of Ennis. He was constantly receiving applications from merchants and others, asking him to obtain the establishment of a Harbour Board for the Port of Clarecastle. He was told that Lord Monteagle had put in a claim to have the entire control of the harbour of Foynes. At present a certain class of vessels could not get beyond that point, and it was necessary to transfer the goods they carried and send them up to Limerick by other means. Lord Monteagle was the owner of the soil, and, having spent a certain amount of money, he wished to obtain the sole control of the harbour. If the noble Lord were to have his way, it would be disastrous to the interests of the people of Limerick, who wished to have this harbour, which could only accommodate vessels up to 300 tons, under their own control. It was highly essential to the people of Limerick that they should have control of Foynes Harbour as well as of the river. In point of fact, one was virtually part of the other, and it would be necessary to hear local witnesses, in order to show clearly what the claim of Limerick was to have control of the harbour of Foynes. As Foynes was not part of the City of Limerick, it would be necessary to examine gentlemen belonging to Limerick Harbour before the Select Committee, in order that they might substantiate their claim to have full control of Foynes Harbour. In the main, he agreed with the principle of the Bill, which was to establish local control over local harbours; and if the hon. Gentleman in charge of the measure would agree to the examination of witnesses from Ireland before the Committee, he would assent to the second reading, and also to the proposal to refer it to a Select Committee.

MR. DAWSON said, the harbour of Foynes was one of the most important interests affected by the Bill; and anyone who was acquainted with the town of Limerick knew that the Harbour Board of Limerick was the proper authority to have the management of the harbour of Foynes. Foynes was practically part of the harbour of Limerick, and a comparatively small expenditure of money would enable larger ships to be accommodated. He very much feared that that expenditure would not be undertaken if the harbour were not placed under the control of Limerick, because persons connected with Foynes Harbour would be of opinion that they were acting against their own interests, unless they set up an authority in Foynes which was hostile to, and in rivalry with, that of Limerick. Now, the City Harbour Board of Limerick piloted vessels up the Shannon from its mouth, and had the sole jurisdiction over the river. Apart from that fact, if it was intended to hand over this important harbour to private individuals, the most natural course was to place it in the hands of the harbour authorities of Limerick, who had always been, up to a recent period, the controlling power. Foynes occupied an important position on the Shannon, and was likely to become, in the near future, a Transatlantic station; but with the appointment of any other Trustees than the Harbour Board of Limerick the harbour of Foynes would never obtain that development to which it was entitled. Limerick, with its great trade and position, would be able to develop the harbour of Foynes into what it was really capable of. He hoped the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would take a broad view of the matter, and that no great public interest would be allowed to be compromised for the sake of private and individual interests. He had every confidence that a Select Committee, properly constituted, would afford every facility to Limerick for developing the trade of the Shannon; and the harbour authorities of that city ought to be allowed a fair opportunity of stating their case. He, therefore, trusted that the Select Committee would have power to hear the evidence of local witnesses.

Mr. O'SHEA remarked, that if the Government consented to send the Bill to a Select Committee, and agreed to allow witnesses to be heard, a very small amount of evidence would be sufficient. Reference had been made to the Harbour Board of Limerick; and he was certain that that Board would be prepared to send up one or two representative men. With regard to the Port of Kilrush, he also believed that the evidence of one or two individuals would be quite sufficient to satisfy the Committee. It was, however, absolutely necessary to hear their case, because Kilrush was a very important port on the Lower Shannon, and there existed a large amount of dissatisfaction. He trusted that, under the circumstances, the Bill would be read a second time, and referred to a Select Committee, with power to call evidence.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY, referring to the composition of the Select Committee, suggested that there should be an arrangement between the Secretary to the Treasury and the Irish Members, by means of which the appointment of a higher proportion of Irish Members upon the Committee would be secured than was usually the case. He added, as a precedent, that in the case of a Committee nominated two years ago, at the instance of the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone), where the inquiry affected Irish interests of great importance, the Committee was composed almost entirely of Irish Members.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he should be quite prepared to nominate upon the Committee a large proportion of Irish Members selected from both sides of the House. In all matters affecting Ireland he thought it was desirable that a large proportion of the Members nominated upon the Select Committee should be drawn from that country. He proposed to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, and not to a Hybrid Committee; and he had no objection to give the Committee power to call witnesses. But, in assenting to that proposal, he hoped that hon. Members who served upon the Committee would not be too pressing to have a large number of witnesses called. He did think it desirable to hear witnesses in regard to the piers and harbours affected by the Bill; but he did not think it would be necessary to call too many. His idea of the provisions of the Bill was that they should be made to serve the interests of the people who were most materially affected by them.

Mr. KENNY asked when the hon. Member proposed to nominate the Committee?

Mr. HIBBERT replied, that it would be nominated in a day or two, and probably on Thursday.

Mr. HEALY said, the House must remember that this was the Bill of last year.

Mr. HIBBERT remarked, that he had not the charge of the Bill last year.

Mr. HEALY said, that nevertheless it was a Bill of last year, and he believed that the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. Synan), who was now absent, had a strong objection to it, because it would raise the tolls in some of the places situated along the shore of the Shannon. Of course, whenever he found a Bill of this kind brought in in regard to Ireland by Her Majesty's Government he always regarded it with suspicion, because it was generally introduced with the object of transferring some charge from the Treasury to the people, or for some other scheme of that kind. He understood that the object of the present Bill was to take away the charge and control of the harbour dues from the Board of Works, in whom they were now vested; and he had reason to believe that upon that ground the hon. Member for Limerick entertained a strong objection to the measure. It must be borne in mind that they were proposing to deal with a very poor class of persons who had to pay the dues—poor persons who ran turf along the shore in boats, and who would be called upon to pay 3*d.* for harbour dues. These persons required to have their interests properly represented; and in the absence of the hon. Member for Limerick no guarantee whatever ought to be given as to the number of witnesses to be called, seeing that it was proposed to place these dues upon the shoulders of the people. If he had had any idea that the Bill was likely to come on, he would have blocked it upon principle. Whenever they found a Bill introduced by Her Majesty's Government for the purpose of dealing with rates and charges in Ireland, they might be sure that it was a bad Bill, and that it certainly deserved to be blocked until the nature of its provisions were fully explained and clearly understood. The plea that any such Bill could be introduced by the Government from a wish, on their part, to do good to the people of Ireland was simply absurd.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

SALMON WEEKLY CLOSE TIME (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. HEALY: Can the noble Lord state when the Select Committee will be appointed to inquire into this matter?

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: It will be appointed as soon as possible.

MR. SEXTON: I would remind the noble Lord that he gave the same answer a week ago. It is very unsatisfactory to have to wait so long.

COUNTY COURTS (DIVORCE) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. JAMES HOWARD, Bill to extend the jurisdiction of County Courts to Divorce suits, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. JAMES HOWARD and Mr. BROADHURST.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 77.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 3rd March, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Standing Orders; Selection, *appointed* and *nominated.*

PUBLIC BILL—*Second Reading*—Prevention of Crimes Amendment * (20).

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE NATIVE INDIAN PRINCES.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it was true, as stated in the papers, that some of the Native Indian States had offered assistance in aid of the Expedition to the Soudan; and, if so, whether he would give the names of such States?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I am much obliged to my noble Friend for giving me the opportunity of stating the names of the Native Indian States which up to this time, as I am informed by telegram from the Viceroy, have made offers of military assistance to this country. They are the States of the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Begum of Bhopal, the Rajah of Puttiala, and the Rajah of Jheend. The first two States are Mahommedans and the last two are Sikhs. I need scarcely say that this offer on the part of the Native States of India is a most gratifying proof of their loyalty and good feeling towards Her Majesty and the people of England. I cannot conceive anything more striking than the fact of these States coming forward on this occasion and showing the same eagerness to assist us, and the same good feeling towards this country, as has been shown by men of our own race in our Colonies. Whether it will be possible or not to avail ourselves of these offers I do not know; but of this I am quite certain—that the recollection of them will strengthen our position in India, as well as the ties which bind us to those Native States.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.—QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I wish to ask the noble Earl the

Leader of the House a Question of which I have given him private Notice —namely, Whether he has any intelligence from Sir Peter Lumsden as to the present position of the Russian outposts with respect to the Afghan Border; and whether he has any reason to expect an early advance of those outposts?

EARL GRANVILLE: I am not surprised at the Question of the noble Marquess, because the subject is one of the very greatest importance. According to the latest Reports received from Sir Peter Lumsden, the Russian outposts have occupied the Zulfikar Pass, about 20 miles to the South of Pul-i-Khatun, Akrobat, between Zulfikar and the River Khushk, and Sari-Yazi. A post of Yulatan Turcomans has also been stationed at Pul-i-Khisti, a few miles North of Penjdeh, by Colonel Alikhanoff, who, after placing them, has retired, presumably to Sari-Yazi. Representations are being made to the Russian Government earnestly pressing them to give stringent orders to their Military Commanders to refrain from any further forward movements which would bring about a collision between the Afghan and Russian outposts. The Russian Government, in reply to a remonstrance from Her Majesty's Government, declined on the 24th instant to withdraw from their advanced posts at Sari-Yazi and the Zulfikar Pass, but gave assurances that their officers had been ordered carefully to avoid conflicts with the Afghans, and that complications were only to be feared in the event of the Afghans attacking the Russian posts. Sir Peter Lumsden, who has exerted himself to prevent any collision, has advised the Afghans to maintain themselves in the positions now occupied by them. This advice has been approved by Her Majesty's Government; and he has been instructed to urge them, at the same time, not to advance beyond their present positions. Negotiations are proceeding with the Russian Government.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Are these places named by the noble Earl as occupied by Russian outposts within, or are they outside what is accepted by England as the Afghan boundary?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The noble Marquess will see that the question of the precise boundary is exactly the question concerning which negotiations are going on. It is therefore impossible for me, while the negotiations are going on, to say what are the precise limits of the Afghan boundaries; but I have no hesitation in saying that these places are within those portions of the territory which Her Majesty's Government have regarded as within the Afghan boundaries.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I will only ask if there is a possibility of Papers being laid upon the Table?

EARL GRANVILLE replied in the affirmative.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: Are we to understand that there has been a considerable advance of the Russians in the direction of Herat?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: If the noble Lord will look at the map he will see that there has been a very considerable advance in the direction of Herat.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: May I ask whether the best map that is available will be placed in the House for the convenience of noble Lords? The intimation made by the noble Earl is very important, and it would be very interesting to know the exact localities which the movement affects.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I will inquire and see what can be done in order to meet the wishes of your Lordships.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: Are we to understand that the whole question of peace or war between Russia and Afghanistan, and therefore between England and Russia, depends upon a chance squabble between Afghan and Russian outposts?

EARL GRANVILLE: I must ask the noble Marquess to form his own opinion on this matter.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA TRAINING.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether the orders fixing the dates for Militia training could not in future be issued earlier in each year?

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he quite agreed that the notice should be sent out not later than the end of January. He should take care that that was done.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—KASSALA.—QUESTION.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: I beg to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for War, How it is proposed to relieve the garrison of Kassala? I believe the garrison is short of ammunition and of food.

EARL GRANVILLE: It is impossible to relieve this garrison, except through the agency of the friendly tribes. Colonel Chermside has been communicated with on this matter. It is outside the scope of our military operations.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: I thought it was understood that it would be relieved from Abyssinia.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Is there any news as to a further advance of Italians from Massowah?

EARL GRANVILLE: There is no news.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:

D. Somerset.
M. Winchester.
M. Bath.
Ld. Steward.
E. Devon.
E. Carnarvon.
E. Cadogan.
E. Belmore.
E. Chichester.
E. Powis.
E. Verulam.
E. Morley.
E. Amherst.
E. Camperdown.
E. Lathom.
V. Hawarden.
V. Hutchinson.
V. Hardinge.
V. Eversley.
L. Clinton.
L. Saye and Sele.
L. Balfour of Burley.
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Boyle.
L. Monson.
L. Digby.
L. Carrington.
L. Hopetoun.
L. Foxford.
L. Colchester.
L. Silchester.
L. De Tabley.
L. Sudeley.
L. Belper.
L. Hartismere.
L. Penrhyn.
L. Wolverton.

PRIVATE BILLS.

All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Standing Orders Committee unless otherwise ordered.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following; viz.,

E. Morley.
E. Lathom.
L. Colville of Culross.
L. Boyle.

were appointed, with the Chairman of Committees, a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 3rd March, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Standing Orders, Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray *added;* Selection, Mr. Justin M'Carthy *added;* Public Accounts, *nominated.*

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Bradford Waterworks and Improvement; Hastings Corporation*; Scarborough, Bridlington, and West Riding Junction Railways; Southport Improvement*; Sunderland Corporation*; Wakefield Corporation*; Wrexham and Ellesmere Railway*.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered — First Reading* — County Courts (Ireland)* [78].

Second Reading — Municipal Voters (Relief) [64].

Committee—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-comm*) [49], [*Second Night*] *debate adjourned*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

PARLIAMENT—STANDING ORDERS.

MR. SEXTON moved—

"That the Select Committee on Standing Orders consist of Twelve Members:—That Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY be added to the Committee."

The hon. Member said that in making the Motion he wished to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford (Sir John R. Mowbray) for the considerate attention he had paid to the wishes of the Irish Members on this subject.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, that, in assenting to the Motion on the present occasion, he by no means wished to be understood as concurring in the opinion that it would be desirable permanently to increase the numbers of the Committee of Selection.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Standing Orders consist of Twelve Members;—That Mr. EDMOND DWYER GRAY be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

PARLIAMENT—SELECTION.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection consist of Nine Members:—That Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

BRADFORD WATERWORKS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

Mr. HOPWOOD said, that, with regard to the Bradford Waterworks and Improvement Bill, he desired to explain to the House the action he had taken yesterday in giving Notice of opposition to this and other measures which then stood on the Paper for second reading. He had done so from no wish to place any impediment in the way of the passing of these measures, which were, no doubt, very useful to the communities in respect of which they were being promoted, but simply in order to call attention to the fact that it had fallen to his lot once or twice before to point out to the House that some of them came within the provisions of the Standing Order which had been passed in former years. That Standing Order applied to all Bills which contained arbitrary provisions in excess of, or altering, the general law relating to sanitary questions, and dealing with matters of police regulation. His only object was to secure that, in dealing with these Bills, the House would adopt the course, which had been taken on other occasions, of referring them to a special Select Committee. Since he had given Notice of opposition, he had had an opportunity of communicating with his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler); and he found that his hon. Friend had made satisfactory arrangements for carrying out this year the previous order of the House. Probably his hon. Friend would explain the course he proposed to take. He would only add that he did not intend to persist in his Notice of opposition.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER remarked, that in preceding years the intervention of his hon. and learned Friend in regard to Bills of this nature had been a great public service, because it had had the effect of bringing directly under the notice of the House some of the extravagant provisions which were introduced into these measures. The House, for some years, had appointed a Committee to deal with Bills which contained provisions relating to police and sanitary regulations; and he certainly felt that it was necessary to propose the reappointment of that Committee this year, seeing that a number of Bills had been brought forward which dealt with questions of this character, the provisions of which would require careful scrutiny. If the Bills were now read a second time, in the course of a day or two he should be prepared to bring forward a Motion for the reappointment of the Select Committee to consider them in the same way as in former years.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER asked if he was to understand his hon. Friend to say that the Select Committee would have the whole subject before them in the case of every Bill that contained provisions affecting sanitary and police regulations? [Mr. H. H. Fowler: Yes.] He (Mr. W. E. Forster) believed that the main part of the Bradford Bill, if not the whole of it, would not come within the scope of his hon. Friend's remarks. He did not, however, object to the Bill being sent to the proposed Committee, on the understanding that that did not imply delay in the consideration of the Bill.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

SCARBOROUGH, BRIDLINGTON, AND WEST RIDING JUNCTION RAILWAYS BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

Mr. HICKS said, that yesterday he had objected to the second reading of this Bill on the ground that the clauses contained in it with regard to tolls and rates pressed hardly on the agricultural interest, owing to the proposals which they contained for an increase of tolls. Since then he had been in communication with the promoters of the Bill, and he was happy to say that an arrangement, which he thought would be satisfactory to the interests he had the honour to represent, had been made. Under those circumstances, he desired to withdraw his opposition to the Bill. It might save the time of the House if he were allowed to add that the Wrexham and Ellesmere Railway Bill, No. 8 on the Paper, was in the same position, and that he intended to withdraw his opposition to that Bill also.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

RAILWAY RATES AND CHARGES BILL.

PETITIONS.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had been requested to present a Petition from Chichester, Arundel, Littlehampton, Midhurst, and 126 parishes in the Western Division of the county of Sussex, against the Bills promoted by the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company, and eight other great Railway Companies, in reference to railway rates and charges. He wished to ask the Speaker whether, supposing these Bills should unfortunately be read a second time in that House, and referred to an ordinary Private Bill Committee, the Petitions which he now presented would be laid before that Committee?

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. and gallant Baronet that these various Bills might be referred to several Committees, and it is difficult to see how the Petitions could be presented to each Committee.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Could they not be referred to one of the Committees—namely, that upon the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill?

MR. SPEAKER: That would be irregular.

Ordered, That the Petitions lie upon the Table.

ILLNESS OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION (MR. WARTON).

MR. WARTON: Sir, I wish to throw myself upon the indulgence of the House while I make a personal explanation. It may be in the recollection of hon. Members who were present in the House yesterday that when the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) announced the fact of the illness of the Prime Minister I indulged in a cheer. That cheer I have reason to think was misunderstood; and although I do not care for any of the malicious comments of a partizan Press any more than I do for the numberless statements about myself which I have never condescended to notice, I do care for the good opinion of this House. I, therefore, beg leave to assure the House that when I cheered the noble Marquess's expression of sorrow at the slight indisposition of the Prime Minister I had not the slightest idea of expressing joy at the fact that the Prime Minister was unwell. I hope no one will believe that I could be so brutal as to rejoice at the sickness of any fellow-creature, and least of all at the illness of one whom every Member of this House is bound to respect for the high Office he fills as Leader of this House and First Minister of the Crown.

QUESTIONS.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—MR. WILLIAM IVORY, SHERIFF OF INVERNESS-SHIRE.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, with reference to the following extract from the letter to him from Mr. William Ivory, Sheriff of Inverness-shire, dated 10th February 1885,

> "Macpherson also said in the presence of the Marines that it was a good thing that I had no power to shoot them. I replied that he was quite mistaken; that I had the power; that if I considered it to be my duty to give the order to fire it would be obeyed; and that he might congratulate himself on having such a considerate and merciful Sheriff to deal with,"

the Law of Scotland confers any such powers as those claimed by the Sheriff?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I understand it to be the Law of Scotland, as well as in the rest of the United Kingdom, that in the case of a riot the rioters may be dispersed by force, and, if absolutely necessary, by the use of fire-arms. If so extreme a measure becomes necessary, the proper person to give the order is the Civil Magistrate. The words of the Sheriff quoted in this Question can only have had reference to such an extreme emergency as would justify the use of fire-arms; and in such an emergency the Sheriff would be the proper person to give the order.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, in reference to the following paragraph in a Letter addressed to him by Mr. William Ivory, Sheriff of Inverness-shire, dated 10th February 1885,

> "Your Lordship will observe, from the last-mentioned Report, that three of the parties whom we tried to apprehend escaped to the hills before the police reached their houses. Before leaving Staffin for Portree we carefully considered whether, after taking the Glendale prisoners to Portree on Saturday the 31st ult., we should return to Staffin on the following Monday, and renew our endeavours to apprehend the three runaways at Valtos. But, as we had apprehended Norman Stewart, alias 'Parnell,' the leading ringleader of the mob, and the principal promoter of the former lawless proceedings in the district, as Crown Counsel had not directed any person in particular to be arrested in this case, and as there was no evidence in the precognition to establish that the three absconding parties had been guilty of any special acts of violence to the Sheriff-Officer, we were unanimously of opinion that we should rest contented with what had been already accomplished, and that it was not expedient to make a second expedition to Valtos, at the risk of its proving wholly abortive,"

if he will inform the House whether by the Law of Scotland it is lawful to arrest by armed forces, or by ordinary criminal officers, lieges who are unnamed in any warrant or whose apprehension is unauthorized by Crown Counsel; and, whether persons against whom no order of seizure had been granted, alarmed by the appearance of armed forces in their midst and choosing to absent themselves, thereby fall to be classed by the chief legal authority of the county of Inverness as runaways and absconders?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): In cases of riot, in which large numbers of persons have taken part, the practice is to arrest and try a limited number of those who appear to have been the ringleaders, as it is considered that by their trial the ends of justice will be satisfied. In the precognitions in the case to which the Questions relate, the names of a number of the persons alleged to have taken an active part were mentioned, and an order for the arrest of a limited number of them was given, and warrants for arrestment obtained in due course. I understand that no one was arrested without warrant, and that the observations of the Sheriff applied to persons included in the warrants, but who could not be found. I may explain that the armed forces were not intended to be employed, and they were not, in fact, employed, in making the arrests. They were merely present for the purpose of protecting the civil officers in performing their duty. The last part of the Question is one of nomenclature; and, probably, upon the facts stated, it will not be thought that the language employed by the Sheriff to describe the persons who were wanted, but who had disappeared, was inappropriate.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE SKYE CROFTERS—POLICE AND MILITARY EXPEDITION—THE "SCOTSMAN" AND THE REPORT OF SHERIFF IVORY.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that a document, purporting to be the text of Sheriff Ivory's Report to the Lord Advocate on the recent police and military expedition to Skye, dated Edinburgh, February 10th, was published in *The Scotsman* of February 12th; whether the document is really what it purports to be; if so, did any meeting of the Inverness Police Committee, to which body it is said to have been communicated, take place between February 10th and February 12th; and, whether he has asked from Sheriff Ivory and the Police Committee of Inverness any explanation of the manner in which an official document, bristling with aspersions on the character of individuals, and since denied to Parliament, was communicated to *The Scotsman* for publication?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): I am aware that the document to which this Question relates was published in *The Scotsman.* The document is what it purports to be; and upon inquiry I have learned that it was forwarded for publication by the Sheriff. Allegations had been made in a letter to a newspaper, regarding which a Question was put in the House yesterday, with respect to certain things which he was stated to have said in Skye; and he was desirous that what had really occurred should appear. He sent a copy of the document to the newspapers in the belief that in a conversation which he had had with me before the Report was made I had indicated that I would not object to his so publishing it. It may be proper to add that I had not intended to convey this impression; and it has now been made clear that no official document of that class shall be communicated to the Press.

DR. CAMERON said, on the Vote for Salaries he would move the reduction of the salary of this official.

AFRICA (SOUTH) — CAPE COLONY— METHUEN'S IRREGULAR HORSE.

MAJOR GENERAL ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can state why Methuen's Irregular Horse, serving in South Africa, to whom uniform was promised, have not been supplied with great coats?

MR. BRAND (who replied) said: Sir Charles Warren, before leaving on the 13th of November, requested that great coats should be sent to the Cape. They were accordingly despatched on the 14th of November.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CASE OF JAMES M'CULLAGH.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will re-consider the case of the boy James M'Cullagh, who was, at the Pomeroy Sessions on the 13th October last, sentenced to the severe punishment of five years in a reformatory for an assault on another boy?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I find that this boy was, on the 14th of July, 1880, convicted of stealing potatoes, and not imprisoned in consequence of his youth. In April, 1881, he was again convicted on two charges of stealing fowls and stealing boots, and was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment on one charge, and to 14 days' imprisonment and four years in a reformatory on the other. He was subsequently released on licence; and it is to be observed that if he had not been so released the term of his first period of detention in a reformatory would not yet have expired. In October last he committed a wilful and serious assault on a boy who had been a principal witness against him in one of his previous trials, and was relegated to the reformatory for five years, after undergoing 14 days' imprisonment. The manager of the reformatory gives a favourable report of the conduct of the boy, who is now 15 years of age; and, on the whole, I think it would be both for his own interests and those of the public that he should remain where he is for some time longer.

MR. DEASY asked, when the Government intended to introduce a measure on the question of reformatories in Ireland?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that as the Question did not arise out of his answer, he would be glad if the hon. Member would give Notice.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—CASE OF THOMAS DEANE.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the attention of the Irish Government has been directed to the fact that a man named Thomas Deane was lately arrested at Cappagh, county Galway, on a charge of having set fire to a cock of hay, and, although he was of good character, and had been 14 years in the same employment in the neighbourhood, the man was committed to bridewell, and kept there for more than a fortnight, and when at last brought before the Ballinasloe Petty Sessions Bench, was discharged from custody, there being no evidence against him; and, whether the Irish Government will convey to the persons officially concerned an expression of opinion on this case, and will take some step to secure that respectable persons are not sent to prison to await a hearing of the charge against them unless a primâ facie case is made?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I find that Deane was arrested on the charge referred to, and the reasons for his arrest were that he was found to have been in the locality of the burning on the night it occurred, and that footmarks which led from a path in the direction of his house to the scene of the fire were found to correspond exactly with his boots, and he subsequently admitted to the police that the marks were his. He also gave contradictory accounts of his movements on the night in question. He was brought before a magistrate, and remanded to prison for 14 days, pending further inquiries. He was then again brought up, and no further evidence being forthcoming, was discharged, the Bench remarking that there was a strong case of suspicion against him, and that the absence of motive alone prevented them from sending the case forward for trial. The information I have received does not agree with what is stated in the

Question as to Deane's character or length of employment in one situation; and, taking into account all the circumstances, I think a *primâ facie* case for his detention was made out.

Mr. SEXTON: Would the right hon. Gentleman state whether the place in which the footmarks were found was not a general public way; and whether Deane, when admitting that the footmarks were his, did not say that they must be old footmarks?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he was not aware. There was a sufficient *primâ facie* case to justify what was done.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE (NORFOLK).

Mr. DUCKHAM asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he is aware that there is an outbreak of foot and mouth disease at Swaffham, in the county of Norfolk; and, if so, whether he can state its origin, date of introduction, and date at which it was reported to the local authority; and, whether the necessary regulations for guarding against its spread have been promptly enforced?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease at Necton Hall, near Swaffham, Norfolk, was reported to the Agricultural Department on Monday, February 23. Immediately on receipt of the information one of the Inspectors of the Department proceeded to Norfolk, where he found foot-and-mouth disease to exist among a herd of 84 cattle and 52 swine, then on the premises. A flock of 521 sheep, belonging to the same owner, was then on the farm, but at some distance outside the infected circle, and up to the present time have not been attacked by the disease. In reference to the origin of the affection, it was ascertained that a pig had been brought on to Necton Hall from near Gillingham, in Dorsetshire, on January 12, and some of the pigs with which this animal came in contact were seen to be lame about 10 days afterwards; but no suspicion of foot-and-mouth disease appears to have arisen until the cattle became affected, when notice was given to the police in due course. The Local Authority in Norfolk have taken very active and full precautions to prevent the spreading of the disease. An inquiry at the farm whence the pig was sent to Norfolk on January 12 led to the conclusion that no disease has recently existed on those premises. The pig was sent to Norfolk in a crate, which was cleansed and disinfected, as is usual, before leaving the farm. Assuming that the disease was carried into Norfolk by this animal, the infection must have been contracted in transit. On this point, however, no information has been obtained.

In reply to Mr. Chaplin,

Mr. TREVELYAN said, the Privy Council did not think it was a case in which it was necessary to order the compulsory slaughter of all the animals diseased and in contact with them.

In reply to Mr. Duckham,

Mr. TREVELYAN said: The Lords of the Council have approved of a form of communication addressed by the Foreign Office to Her Majesty's Consuls in the following countries:—Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United States of America—instructing them to communicate by telegram to the Agricultural Department immediately on receipt by them of information of an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease. No reply is expected from the Consuls until they receive information of fresh outbreaks in their districts.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—EXECUTIONS AT LINCOLN GAOL.

Mr. RUSTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the efficiency of the arrangements for the execution of criminals in Her Majesty's Prison at Lincoln; whether the floor of the scaffold is upon the same level as is the floor of the condemned cell; whether the centre of the drop is at a distance not greater than 10 or 12 yards from the condemned cell; and, will he, if satisfied that the position and mode of construction adopted in the said gallows do prevent long processions of convicts to the scaffold, and the painful scenes sometimes occurring when steps have to be ascended, order similar humane provisions to be carried out in other prisons of the Country when capital punishments have to be executed?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER (who replied) said: I am informed by the Prison Commissioners that the arrangements for executions at Lincoln are as described by the hon. Member. The responsibility of carrying out the extreme sentence of the law rests with the Sheriff; but I understand from the Prison Commissioners that the arrangements made at other prisons do generally provide for the special points to which the hon. Member refers.

COMMISSION ON ACCIDENTS IN MINES —THE REPORT.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Report of the Accidents in Mines Commission is likely to be presented at an early date?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER (who replied) said: The Secretary of State has communicated with the Chairman of the Accidents in Mines Commission, and finds that much of the final Report of the Commission is in type. There are, however, still some experiments to be made with safety lamps; and an important point bearing on the subject of shot firing in mines has also rendered some further experiments in this direction necessary.

IRELAND—THE VICEREGAL COURT—PRECEDENCE AT STATE ENTERTAINMENTS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Who is responsible for the discourtesy shown to His Eminence the late Cardinal M'Cabe, by the officials of Dublin Castle, in placing his name on the list of guests at the State entertainments after those of persons of inferior dignity, and will he state, in view of the visit of the Prince of Wales, whether dignitaries of the Disestablished Protestant religion take predecence in Ireland over Cardinals and Archbishops of the Catholic Church; and, whether any reparation was offered to the late Cardinal, or will be conveyed to the present Vicar Capitular of Dublin by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant?

Mr. JERNINGHAM: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I should like to submit whether it is not a Question which should not be addressed to His Excellency, and not made the subject of explanation in this House?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No discourtesy whatever was intended to the late Cardinal M'Cabe, whose name appeared in a newspaper list which was not made out in the order of precedence. No new order of precedence has been issued since the disestablishment of the Irish Church; but it is intended shortly to issue an order on the subject, and it will answer the Question of the hon. Member.

Mr. HEALY: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that the present Protestant Archbishop of Dublin is a new dignitary, and is not entitled to the precedence which he would have been entitled to before the Church Act? Archbishop Plunket is a new dignitary, and entitled to no precedence over the Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have not said anything to imply either that he has or has not. No doubt, the accession of the present Archbishop has altered the situation.

Mr. CALLAN: The Chief Secretary's answer implies that the discourtesy originated with some member of the Press. I have to ask him, was not the list published in the Dublin *Freeman's Journal* exactly as supplied by the Castle officials?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not imply for a moment that any mistake which was made was a mistake originating with any member of the Press. The names were not given, and did not profess to be given, in the order of precedence.

Mr. SEXTON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, before the present holder of the Protestant See of Dublin can be restored to the original *status* in Ireland, will not a portion of the Irish Church Act have to be repealed?

Mr. MACARTNEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the present Archbishop of Dublin is not a Peer of Parliament?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot answer Questions without Notice affecting the new arrangement of precedence. I have already stated that a new list is about to be issued.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that a certain Secretary of State, Lord Chesterfield, writing to his son on this point, told him that Cardinals were Princes of the Church, had the rank of Princes, and should be recognized as such; and, whether Mr. Disraeli, when Leader of this House, speaking on the same subject, recognized the *status* of the Cardinals of the Church?

[No reply.]

THE BRITISH BORNEO COMPANY.

Mr. DILLWYN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that the British Borneo Company has recently extended its authority for a distance of sixty miles on the West Coast of Borneo, whereby about 4,000 square miles of territory have been added to the possessions of the Company; and, if this statement be true, whether the Company obtained the previous consent of Her Majesty's Government to the annexation?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE (who replied) said: On the 15th of January last the Company notified to the Foreign Office that they had obtained from the Sultan of Brunei the cession of the Padas and Kalias district, subject to an annual rental. The Company are entitled, under Article 15 of their Charter, to make further acquisitions of territory to be held by them on the terms of the Charter; and there is no adverse claim to the district in question which would justify any objection to the cession on the part of Her Majesty's Government under Article 16 of the Charter.

IRELAND—THE VICEREGAL COURT—FESTIVITIES AT DUBLIN CASTLE DURING THE LYING IN STATE OF THE LATE CARDINAL M'CABE.

Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government has expressed any disapproval of the conduct of its representative in Ireland in permitting festivities in Dublin Castle at the time when the city was in mourning for the chief dignitary of the National faith of Ireland, the late Cardinal M'Cabe, whose body was then lying in state?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; no such expression of disapproval has been given.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—COLONEL LLOYD, CO. CLARE.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Upon whose recommendation Colonel Lloyd has been appointed by the Lord Chancellor a justice of the peace for the county of Clare; and, if the grounds of his appointment can be given?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Colonel Lloyd was placed in the Commission of the Peace for Clare on the recommendation of the Lieutenant of the county, a magistrate being much wanted in the locality where he will be available. His qualifications are stated to be (1) personal fitness; (2) residence in the county; and (3) property in this and a neighbouring county.

Mr. KENNY asked how much property Colonel Lloyd had in the county of Clare; whether 95 per cent of the population was Catholic; and, whether only one or two Catholic magistrates were appointed during the past two years in the county?

[No reply.]

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE SUB-SHERIFF AND SURVEYOR, CO. CAVAN.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the Sub-Sheriff of county Cavan gets the use of a room in the County Court House with fire and light without charge; and, if so, whether the Grand Jury are justified in giving him these privileges; and, whether the County Surveyor of county Cavan lives a number of miles from the county town, and has no office or clerk in it, although he is specially paid for office and clerk; if so, will he use his influence to have the irregularity remedied?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The matter referred to in the first paragraph of this Question is one over which the Government have no control; but I am informed that the Sheriff of Cavan has the use of a room, with fire, in the County Court House, by permission of the Grand Jury. I also understand that the County Surveyor resides something under two miles from Cavan, and has his office at his private residence. He was granted this privilege by the Grand Jury; and no representations of inconvenience have been made in consequence of the arrangement, which has been in existence for the last 15 years. I am informed that during Sessions and Assizes the County Surveyor transacts his business with contractors, &c., in a room in the Court House.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — LICENCES TO CARRY ARMS—CASE OF JAMES LORD.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If a youth named James Lord has got a licence to carry arms in the district of Mount Nugent, county Cavan; and, whether Lord is a holder of land; and, if not, what special reason is there for his having a licence?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: In 1882, James Lord obtained a licence under the Peace Preservation Act to carry a gun in the county of Cavan, on a certificate of two magistrates that he was a farmer. I understand he is not now a holder of land; but that fact would not, in the opinion of the Government, justify the withdrawal of the licence, the practice being only to do so in cases where the person holding the licence is shown to be unfit to have or carry arms.

MR. BIGGAR asked if the Chief Secretary would inquire whether the magistrates made a mis-statement when they certified that this man held land at the time he was granted a licence; and whether, if it was found that they made a mis-statement, they would be censured or superseded?

[No reply.]

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE CLARE SLOB LAND SCHEME.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state the estimated acreage which will be reclaimed when the Clare Slob lands works are finished, and the basis of calculation upon which it is assumed that such reclaimed land will be worth over £70,000; if the Clare Slob Land Reclamation Company only expended the £92,000 borrowed from the Government for the purpose, and if they expended money derived from other sources, such creditors are to be taken as having suffered a dead loss, owing to the Treasury having a first claim on the property; whether it can now be stated upon whose recommendation the original loan was made to the so-called "Clare Slob Land Reclamation Company," and what was the nature of the securities given, and also their present value; if the Herbert Charles Drinkwater, who obtained this loan, is the same person who has recently been returned for trial by the Manchester stipendiary for obtaining large sums of money from private individuals on bogus securities; and, whether any inquiries had been made into the antecedents of Drinkwater by the Irish Government to satisfy themselves that he was a person fit to be entrusted with an enormous loan?

MR. HIBBERT: About 1,300 acres will be reclaimed, and they are valued at nearly £55 an acre. The Company expended, besides the Government loans, £10,000 of their own and £8,000 belonging to private persons. The loan was made after full inquiry by competent professional authority, the securities being a mortgage on the lands reclaimed and a bond of the Directors of the Company. It is at present impossible to get a sufficiently trustworthy estimate of the value of these securities. None of this money was advanced to the Drinkwater referred to, who was merely a contractor, and his services were dispensed with last May.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK'S REPORT.

MR. GORST asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Papers to be laid before the House in reference to the finances of Egypt will comprise the Earl of Northbrook's financial Report?

MR. GIBSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When it is intended to lay upon the Table the Papers disclosing the financial proposals relating to Egypt?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE (who replied) said: Extracts from the Earl of Northbrook's Report explaining the proposals made by Her Majesty's Government to the Powers regarding the finances of Egypt will be laid before Parliament. The Papers relating to the financial proposals will be laid as soon as the negotiations are concluded, and in full time for any discussion which may take place in Parliament.

MR. GORST: Is it intended to give extracts only, or the Report itself?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Extracts; but I think that the hon. and learned Member will find that the extracts are very full, and contain everything material for understanding the negotiations and their history.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—THE ABU KLEA WELLS.

Mr. STOREY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is correct that the British forces, on retreating from Abu Klea, adopted the course of filling up the wells?

Mr. Joseph Cowen and Mr. Cropper had Questions on the Paper referring to the same subject.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: With reference to the nearly identical Questions which stand in the names of the hon. Members for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), Kendal (Mr. Cropper), and Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. J. Cowen), I have not received any official Report of the circumstance alluded to; but I have made inquiries from Lord Wolseley in the matter. Although I know nothing of the particular circumstance, perhaps I may say that from the information we have received respecting the wells on the Desert route, it appears that some of the so-called wells are only holes in the sand, which might be rendered unserviceable for a short time by being filled up, but would not in the slightest degree be permanently injured. With regard to the wells at Gakdul, I think there can be no foundation for the report that they have been destroyed, because it would require very considerable operations — in fact, it would be impossible.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL asked the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the statement in *The Times* of this morning, as to the pumping apparatus for the supply of water along the projected Suakin-Berber Railway, Whether any, and, if so, what steps have been taken to obtain tenders from English manufacturers?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: All materials connected with the arrangements for the supply of water have been, or are being, obtained from English contractors, with the exception of a few special pumping engines, which, as I explained last night, were ready to hand at New York.

SALMON WEEKLY CLOSE TIME (IRELAND) BILL — NOMINATION OF COMMITTEE.

Mr. RICHARD POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he proposes to nominate the Members of the Select Committee on the Salmon Fishery Bill?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I hope to be able to do so in a day or two.

NEW GUINEA—NEGOTIATIONS WITH GERMANY.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD (for Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can make any statement to the House as to the progress of negotiations with the German Government regarding the annexation of New Guinea?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that negotiations were still proceeding upon the subject; and it was, therefore, impossible to make any further statement at present.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that the Russians have advanced to Penjden and Zulfikar, both of which are on Afghan territory; and, if so, what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE (who replied) said: Russian troops have advanced to Sari Yazi, and Colonel Alikhanoff has stationed a post of Yulatan Turcomans at Pulikhisti, a few miles north of Penjdeh. Russian troops have also occupied the Zulfikar Pass. Representations are being made to the Russian Government, earnestly urging them to give stringent orders to their military commanders to refrain from any further forward movement which would bring about a collision between the Afghan and Russian outposts. The Russian Government, in reply to a remonstrance from Her Majesty's Government, declined on the 24th ultimo to withdraw from their advanced posts at Sari Yazi and the Zulfikar Pass, but gave assurances that their officers had been ordered carefully to avoid conflicts with the Afghans, and that complications were only to be feared in the event of the Afghans attacking the Russian posts. Sir Peter Lumsden, who has exerted himself to prevent any conflict, has advised the Afghans to maintain themselves in the positions now occupied by them. This advice has been approved; and he has been instructed to urge them at the same time not to advance beyond their present positions.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Can the noble Lord say how many miles the Russian and Afghan outposts are apart?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: At Pul-i-khisti they are close to one another. Pul-i-khisti is about six miles from Penjdeh.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: Are the places which the noble Lord has named, to which the Russian advance has penetrated, strictly within Afghan territory?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must remind the House, almost in the terms of the answer given by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India the other day, that the Commission of Sir Peter Lumsden, who, so far as this country is concerned, is the principal member, was appointed for the purpose of ascertaining what the Afghan boundary in this district is. But no doubt, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, Zulfikar and Penjdeh are within Afghan territory.

MR. R. H. PAGET: Is the noble Lord able to inform us how far the nearest place mentioned by him is from Herat?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: From the Zulfikar Pass it is about 90 miles to Herat; and from Penjdeh a little over 100 miles. These distances are as the crow flies, and are, of course, approximate.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Is it the case that the Russians have advanced to Pul-i-khisti within the last few days?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I meant to imply in my answer that this advance had recently taken place.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: Are these points to which the Russians have advanced points the Sovereignty over which is in dispute, and has to be ascertained by the Boundary Commission?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I do not desire to go beyond the answer which I gave just now, when I said that the Commission had been appointed to ascertain where the Afghan boundary is as between Afghanistan and the Russians. Naturally the existence of the Commission implies a certain amount of uncertainty with regard to the question. The districts referred to are, as stated by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India, indicated in different ways on different maps.

MR. BOURKE: Can the noble Lord inform the House whether or not the Russian Government have been told that Her Majesty's Government have approved of the advice given by Sir Peter Lumsden to the Afghans to maintain their present position by force?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think it would be reasonable that the right hon. Gentleman should give Notice of that Question.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked whether it was to be understood, from the answer which the noble Lord had given, that the Russians had advanced 50 miles since Monday the 23rd of February, in the direction of Herat?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he would naturally like to refer to maps and documents before answering a Question of detail on what was really a matter of geography.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS remarked that, from the answers of the noble Lord, it was evident that the Russians must have advanced 50 miles.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have answered the Question on the Paper. Perhaps the hon. Member will give Notice of the further Question.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, that he would put down the Question for a future day.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SCHEME FOR CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.

SIR WHITTAKER ELLIS asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If the new scheme for the administration of Christ's Hospital is in print, and when it will be issued?

MR. MUNDELLA: A technical difficulty has arisen in consequence of the Charter lately issued incorporating the municipal borough of Croydon, and it is proposed to consult the Law Officers upon the points raised. It is not probable that any legislation will be necessary.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—EUROPEANS AT KASSALA.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What Europeans are known or supposed to have been in Kassala at the time of the recent sortie?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I find, on inquiry, that we have no information at the Foreign Office on this subject.

EGYPT—OPERATIONS IN THE SOUDAN—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY CONTRACT.

Mr. CHAPLIN (for Mr. Sclater-Booth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table the terms of the contract or arrangement with Messrs. Lucas having reference to the construction of the Suakin-Berber Railway?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; the document embodying the arrangement with Messrs. Lucas, Aird, and Co., will be presented to Parliament.

Mr. CHAPLIN asked, whether the noble Marquess could give any definite statement as to when the railway might be completed; and, whether it would be completed in time to afford assistance to Lord Wolseley in the event of his renewing hostile operations against the Mahdi after the hot season?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: It is impossible for me to form any accurate estimate when the railway will be completed. There can be no doubt, however, that, from a military point of view, whatever may be the progress of the railway, it will be of considerable assistance to any military operations which may be hereafter undertaken.

Mr. CHAPLIN: By Lord Wolseley?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes; by Lord Wolseley.

THE BURIALS QUESTION—LEGISLATION.

Mr. RICHARD asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the promise of the Government in the Session of 1883 that they would endeavour to effect a settlement of the Burials question, and of the statement made last Session that they had endeavoured to frame a measure on the subject, whether a Bill will be brought in this Session; and, if so, at what period?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER (who replied) said, that in the present state of Public Business, and until progress had been made with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, his right hon. Friend was unable to give any reply to the Question of the hon. Member.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE REGISTRATION BILL.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, looking to the complexity of the details of the Registration Bill, he will consider the desirability of moving the Second Reading without delay, and of then referring it to a Select Committee for careful examination?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) asked to be allowed to answer the Question. The Bill was a very complicated one, dealing as it did with technical matters. Those who were in charge of it would be happy to receive any assistance from Members of the House whose practical knowledge was likely to be of service. Their desire was to read the Bill a second time as early as possible; but he was not in a position to say whether the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee or to a Standing Committee. But he would consult the Prime Minister with a view to meet the wishes of the House.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE FORCES IN THE SOUDAN.

Colonel DAWNAY asked the Secretary of State for War, What steps have been taken by Her Majesty's Government to send reinforcements and supplies, more especially supplies of clothing, boots, and ammunition, to the forces under Lord Wolseley; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have taken into consideration the serious consequences of leaving our troops during the hot season on the Upper Nile?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: As regards men, Lord Wolseley has intimated that he will require reinforcements in the autumn, and steps will be taken to meet his requirements. As regards supplies of all kinds, the Army on the Nile draws upon the reserve stores at Cairo, which are replenished from home. The reserve at Cairo is very large, and the supplies are ample to meet any demand likely to be made from the front. The transport for these supplies is a matter of arrangement for the General in command, and I have no reason to suppose it is insufficient. Special arrangements are being made to increase the means of transport, so as to meet the additional strain which will be thrown upon it when the reinforcements and supplies for the Autumn Campaign are being sent to the front. Her Majesty's Government are fully alive to the possible serious consequences of leaving the troops during the hot season on the Upper Nile.

MR. BRODRICK asked whether there was any intention of prolonging the Nile railway for the purpose of supplies?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Lord Wolseley has made some proposal on the subject; but as he has only just sent home his demand in that direction, no decision has yet been come to.

NAVY—THE ROYAL MARINES.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the administration and employment of the Royal Marine forces will be inquired into and reported upon by the Committee on Naval and Military Expenditure?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY (who replied) said: The Committee will, undoubtedly, be able to take up and discuss the expenditure on the Royal Marines. To what point they should carry this inquiry will be a question for the Committee itself.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—NAVAL OFFICERS AND MEN IN THE SOUDAN.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What is the proportion of Naval Officers to Petty Officers and men of the Royal Navy serving with the forces under Lord Wolseley?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: According to a Report of January 6, the strength of the Naval Brigade under Lord Charles Beresford was as follows:—Officers, 11; seamen and Marines, 103; interpreters, 2; total, 116. Of these officers two have been killed and two wounded. Another naval force is employed with General Brackenbury's column. The precise details have not come into the Office. A considerable number of naval officers and men are employed under Captain Boardman on the line of communications.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES (IRELAND).

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Do the Government hope, this Session, to propose any legislation regarding the Queen's Colleges?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Until the Government have had time to consider the Report of the Commission, which has only just been received, it is impossible to say whether or not they will propose any legislation regarding the Queen's Colleges in this Session.

MR. HEALY: Yesterday, in his answer, the right hon. Gentleman said that the Government could not do anything for Professor D'Arcy Thompson, of the Galway Queen's College, because legislation was intended. Now we find on this question that legislation was not intended.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND).

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Irish Government hold that the law of England with regard to meetings, as stated by the Home Secretary in the following passage, does not apply to Ireland:—

> "In a particular case the magistrates ordered that a meeting should not be held, on the ground that information had been sworn that there was danger of a breach of the peace, and the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice declared that the magistrates had no authority to stop a meeting in these circumstances. . . . Therefore, I say, since that decision (Beatty and others, Appellants, Gillbanks, Respondent, 13th June 1882), the power to stop processions on these grounds seemed to be put an end to, and that they could not be prohibited;"

and, if so, whether their view is founded on the judgment in the case of O'Kelly v. Harvey, and would he cite therefrom the passages which the Government consider to be a reversal of the decision in Beatty v. Gillbanks?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I stated yesterday what the law in Ireland is with reference to processions, and that law governs the action of all magistrates in that country. The case of "O'Kelly *v.* Harvey" is only one of the decisions in Ireland supporting that view. I did not state that the Irish

Courts had reversed, or purported to reverse, the English decision.

Mr. HEALY: Yesterday the right hon. Gentleman stated that he would quote the passage on which the decisions on which the magistrates acted was founded. To-day he has not quoted any passage whatever. I will put this Question again.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND)—LEGISLATION.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can tell the House when the Government intend to introduce their Bill to improve the condition of the Irish National School Teachers?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I hope to be able to introduce an Education Bill next week. It will include several proposals, in addition to that affecting the emoluments of teachers.

EGYPT—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN—KASSALA.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps Her Majesty's Government have taken, or are taking, in reference to the very serious news from Kassala, communicated yesterday (Monday) to the House; whether any correspondence has taken place with the Italian or Abyssinian authorities on the subject; and, on what day and hour the telegram reporting the crushing defeat of the Garrison of Kassala was received by Her Majesty's Government?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In regard to the first part of this Question, I have nothing to add to answers already given on this subject. No correspondence has taken place with the Italian authorities. I stated yesterday what had occurred in connection with the King of Abyssinia. The telegram referred to was received at the Foreign Office at noon, on Sunday, March 1.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION) — CASUALTIES IN LORD WOLSELEY'S FORCE.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return, showing the casualties that have taken place in the entire force under Lord Wolseley's command since its arrival in Egypt, stating the number of deaths in action, and from wounds, from climate, and from drowning, also those disabled from all causes?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER (who replied) said: The information sought for by the hon. and gallant Baronet has not yet been received from Egypt; but when received there will be no objection to laying it upon the Table of the House in the form of a Return.

ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS — REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES.

Mr. CAUSTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether statements of the disabilities of Army Quartermasters have recently been received by the authorities; and, if he will state whether the grievances complained of by those officers will be removed?

Sir ARTHUR HAYTER (who replied) said: The statements referred to have been received in the War Office. Having been fully considered, I can only repeat the opinion which the Secretary of State expressed on the 19th of June last, that, as a body, the Quartermasters have not a reasonable grievance.

CYPRUS (FINANCE, &c.).

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is a fact that certain falsifications were discovered in the accounts of the late Governor of the Central Prison at Nicosia in Cyprus; whether the same were reported to the High Commissioner, Sir R. Biddulph, by Colonel Gordon, the Inspector of Prisons; whether a letter was thereupon written to Colonel Gordon by order of Sir R. Biddulph; and, whether the Government will have any objection to furnish a copy of (1) the Auditors' Report on the Accounts; (2) the Report of Colonel Gordon to Sir R. Biddulph; and (3) the Letter of Sir R. Biddulph to Colonel Gordon relating thereto?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that he would give the hon. Member a copy.

In answer to further Questions,

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that the matter was investigated two years ago, and that the whole amount involved was only £16. The Governor of the prison was removed, but chiefly for other reasons, and the Inspector of Prisons did receive some censure from the High Commissioner; but the evidence that the censure was slight, and was not ratified by the Colonial Office, is that he is now in a responsible position at Hong Kong.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) ACT —EXPENSES OF CANDIDATES.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (for Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether persons who, in view of an approaching Election, defray the expense of holding meetings, to be addressed by a particular candidate in order to promote his return to Parliament, are guilty of an "illegal practice," unless such expenses are paid through an election agent, and included in the Return of Election Expenses; and, what would be the consequence if such illegal practice were committed with the knowledge and consent of the candidate?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, he hoped he should not be considered guilty of any discourtesy if he declined to answer the Question. He was asked to explain the law on the subject; but any Member of the House was as capable of answering the Question as himself. Many text-books had been published upon the matter, amongst them one by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), which gave very full information, and which were open to every Member of the House. Whilst he should be most happy to render any hon. Member any assistance he could by answering any Questions put to him, such communications should be of a personal character, and not by way of obtaining a fuller exposition of the law.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE MILITIA.

VISCOUNT LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Upon what principle, if any, the Militia Regiments to be embodied have been selected; whether the regiments in question offered to do their duty; whether such offer of service is necessary in the case of the Militia, and expected from Colonels commanding to insure embodiment; whether it was not originally intended to embody Militia Regiments when wanted under a system which required the two affiliated Line Regiments to be out of the Country; and, whether this has been carried out now?

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER (who replied), said: Militia battalions have been selected for embodiment which belong to territorial regiments having both their Line battalions abroad. Militia battalions are embodied as required, and quite irrespective of any offers on their part. No offer is necessary or expected. The principle referred to has been followed, so far as the embodiment of Infantry battalions has proceeded.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS COMMISSIONERS — RAILWAY MORTGAGES.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state the amount of mortgages to the Government given by the Railway Companies in Great Britain and Ireland; the rate of interest; whether it has been punctually paid; and, if not, what amount of interest is due in each case?

MR. HIBBERT: The total amount of loans to railways outstanding on March 31st last was £1,454,000, of which all but £94,000 was in Ireland, the rest being in Scotland. The rate of interest is generally 4 per cent, and there were at the date named arrears of interest amounting to £72,000, owing by about 10 different Companies. The hon. Baronet will find details of many of these loans at pages 30, 122, and 123 of the last Report of the Public Works Loans Commissioners.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — THE CROYDON SCHOOL BOARD.

MR. SPENCER BALFOUR asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If it is the fact that doubts have arisen as to the legal position of the Croydon School Board in consequence of the recent incorporation of the Municipal Borough of Croydon; and, if such be the case, whether, having regard to the serious difficulties which may arise, particularly as regards the proceedings of the School Board and the other local authorities in the matter of the School Board finances and prosecutions, he will take steps to remove any such doubts by immediate legislation.

MR. MUNDELLA, in reply, said, that, taking into consideration the difficulties that might arise, it was proposed to consult the Law Officers of the Crown on the matter.

EGYPT—SIR EVELYN BARING.

Mr. MARRIOTT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that Sir Evelyn Baring, Her Majesty's Consul General in Egypt, gave a fancy dress ball in Cairo the day after the receipt of the news in that town of the fall of Khartoum and the death of General Gordon; whether he is aware that this circumstance has given offence to the European and Native inhabitants of Cairo and Alexandria; whether he has seen a letter, dated February 10th, Alexandria, signed "several ashamed Englishmen," a copy of which appeared in *The St. Stephen's Review* of February 28th, in which great indignation is expressed at the conduct of Sir Evelyn Baring; and, whether the Government approve of this action of the Consul General; and, if they do not, whether it is their intention to place on record their disapprobation?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE (who replied) said: We have no information on this subject.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.

Mr. BROADHURST asked, Whether, as the Government had taken to-morrow for the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, the Prime Minister would afford an opportunity, as soon as that Bill was through, to bring on his Redistribution Bill—the Leasehold Enfranchisement Bill? Both were very similar measures, and his stood first; but in case of the Government not doing what he proposed, would the Government take charge of the Bill themselves?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am really sorry, Sir, that my hon. Friend and his Bill should suffer from the pressure of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, which undoubtedly is a matter of great inconvenience to many Members of the House. We do not doubt that, and we regret it very much; but it would not tend to mitigate the evil if I were to make any arbitrary exceptions; and I am afraid I have no option but to decline to make any engagement contingent upon the getting through with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

ADJOURNMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE RULINGS OF MR. SPEAKER—RULING OF MR. SPEAKER ON THE 24th ULTIMO.

Mr. SEXTON, Member for the County of Sligo, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance — viz., the course of action pursued by Mr. Speaker during the sitting of the House on the 24th ultimo, in silencing the Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond), naming the Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), and procuring the application of the Closure Rule to a debate; and the consequent danger to the constitutional rights of Members of this House to speak and vote.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. Member bring the Notice to the Table?

Mr. Sexton having accordingly handed in his Notice,

Mr. SPEAKER: I think it my duty to make some remarks to the House in connection with this Motion which the hon. Member has just handed to me. It would, I think, be a matter of very grave and dangerous import if, upon such action as the hon. Member proposes now to take, my conduct in the Chair were impugned. The House has intrusted me, as Speaker of this House, with large discretionary powers, and those discretionary powers have been greatly increased by the Rules that were passed at the close of 1882. If, upon my exercise of any of those powers, my action is to be brought before the notice of the House, not by way of definite Motion, to which a definite Amendment can be moved, but by way of casual conversation and indirect assaults upon the Chair; then, I say, and I say it solemnly, that the bonds of discipline in this House will be relaxed, and a grave, if not a fatal, blow will be aimed at the authority of the Chair. I have pointed out the consequences which would ensue. I have also to point out to the House that the action now proposed to be taken by the hon. Member is out of Order. It is my duty to respect the rights of every hon. Member of this House; but, in common with all other Members of this House, I have my rights, and my right is that, if my conduct is impugned, it should be impugned by a direct appeal to the House, upon Notice of Motion, properly given, when a direct issue would be laid before the House, and an Amendment be moved which shall test the judgment of the House. I ruled this on more than one occasion during last year, both in the ordinary and in the Autumn Session; and I should not be doing my duty to the House if, for the sake of getting any personal advantage by having the matter immediately discussed, I were to transgress what I believe to be a Rule and Order of the House. It is to my interest, as I said before, to have this matter fully discussed; but I must rule that the action taken by the hon. Member is out of Order, and I will take upon myself not to allow this Motion to be submitted to the House. I submit my conduct to the judgment of the House, and by the verdict of the House I must and I am content to abide.

MR. SEXTON (who rose amid cries of "Order!"): I trust, Sir, that, after the observations which you have felt it your duty to make, the House will allow me, as the Member who presented the Motion to you—[*Cries of* "No!"]—to say a few words by way of personal explanation. I wish to disavow any particle of personal feeling or hostility towards yourself, and I accept, in the fullest sense, the declaration of your own rights, as well as of the rights of other Members of the House. I respectfully assure you that no other feeling than the desire to vindicate the rights of private Members prompted me to take the painful course I have taken. You have spoken of indirect assaults upon the Chair. I hope, Sir, that it is not in my nature to make indirect assaults; and I beg to say that, on Thursday last, I did give Notice of the definite Motion on this subject, and it was only the action of the Government, in refusing me the opportunity, which prevented me from bringing on that Motion. I will conclude what I have now to say by asking the Prime Minister whether, in view of the fact that the Government has debarred me on one occasion, and that I have again been prevented, by the ruling of Mr. Speaker, from bringing on the Motion, he will consider the inconvenience and impropriety of having a charge of this kind hanging over the Chair for an indefinite period, and that the Government will give facilities to a considerable body of Members of this House, who desire to impeach the conduct of Mr. Speaker, to bring the matter to a regular test?

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member has addressed a question to me which he has supported by a plea, and the plea is that he was debarred, on Friday last, by the action of the Government, from bringing forward a direct Motion on the subject of the conduct of the Speaker. Now, I apprehend that the hon. Member is altogether wrong in saying that he was so debarred by the action of the Government. The Government has no power to set aside the Order of the House which requires Supply to be set down on the Paper as the first Business on Friday. It was the desire of the House and the act of the House which set aside that Order, so that we might proceed with the debate on the Vote of Censure. [An hon. MEMBER: The Government proposed it, though.] Therefore, there is no ground for the plea of the hon. Member. His proposal now is that the Government should consent to some arrangement whereby, in derogation of the Rule lately established with regard to giving precedence to the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, he may be enabled to bring forward his charge against the Speaker in a direct form. I entirely appreciate the desire of the hon. Member to bring that charge in a direct form, and I will go further and say that I had just now to express my sincere regret for the great inconvenience that arose from the pressure put upon the individual action of Members in consequence of the decision of the House with regard to the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. I am very sorry that the hon. Member's Motion should be delayed; but I cannot agree to depart from the Rule which the House has considered it absolutely necessary to lay down, or to introduce any principle of arbitrary selection for permitting either this or any particular question to be brought forward in derogation of the Rule laid down by the House in regard to the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. I am not aware why a Motion to be made by the hon. Member to impugn the ruling of Mr. Speaker should be more favoured than any other Motion.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: It relates to the first employment of the *Clôture* Resolution.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I fail to understand what that has to do with it. In my opinion there is nothing in the nature of a Motion of that sort to entitle it to precedence. There is a Motion of the same character now on the Books, of which Notice has been given by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), impugning in the most decisive manner the ruling and conduct of Mr. Speaker, and appended to that Motion is an Amendment which is very adverse indeed to the terms of the Motion. These Notices have been quietly on the Papers of this House since the month of November last, and no application has been made to the Government in regard to them to interfere with the ordinary course of Business in order to allow those Notices to be discussed. It is quite evident that I should be establishing a most formidable precedent if I were to admit, when any Member or body of Members—I care not which—one Member has just as good a right to challenge the ruling of the Speaker as any body of Members—I should be establishing a precedent of a character most formidable to the discipline of the House, if I were, by any act on the part of the Government, to accede to a proposition which implies that whenever the ruling of Mr. Speaker is to be questioned, precedence is to be given to a Motion of that kind in derogation of the ordinary Rules of Business. I am sorry to say, therefore, that I cannot give the hon. Member the precedence he desires.

Mr. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman consent, when the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill has been dealt with, to give facilities for the discussion of this Motion? Or will a body of Members who desire to raise a question which gravely and fundamentally concerns the rights of Members, be relegated hopelessly to the chance of the ballot?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have already been obliged to-night, in reply to a Question put to me with reference to a Bill of great interest and importance, to say that I am unable to make any promise. When the time arrives to which the hon. Member looks forward, it will be open to him to repeat his request, and I will endeavour to give that answer to it which may appear to be dictated by considerations of prudence and convenience.

Mr. O'DONNELL (who rose amid cries of "Order"): I desire, Sir——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that there is no Question before the House.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I desire to make a personal explanation, Sir, which is necessitated by the reference just made by the Prime Minister to the Motion now standing upon the Paper in my name, and relating to your conduct in the Chair, for which no day has been fixed. I originally put down that Motion to be discussed on the Motion for going into Committee of Supply, with the intention of bringing it on at as early a date as possible. But I received a letter from the Clerk at the Table informing me that it was not in Order to contest the ruling and conduct of Mr. Speaker in that manner, but that the matter should be brought on by a separate and distinct Motion; and, of course, the Clerk at the Table, on your authority, Sir, I presume, put down the Motion, which I had intended to bring forward on the Motion for going into Committee of Supply, among the Motions for which no day has been fixed; and for the subsequent disposal of the time of the House not I, but I believe Her Majesty's Government, are responsible.

Mr. HEALY: In regard to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, that your conduct in the Chair cannot be discussed except a definite issue be raised, I wish to ask if it is not the fact that Mr. Speaker Brand, on the 4th of August, 1881, allowed the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) to call attention to the suspension of the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), on the Motion for going into Committee of Supply, and at a time when no definite issue could be taken?

Mr. SPEAKER: There was a very strong objection taken, if I remember rightly, to allowing the matter to come on in an interlocutory form.

Mr. HEALY again rose amid cries of "Order!" and "Chair!": Mr. Speaker——

Mr. SPEAKER: The Clerk will now proceed to read the Orders of the Day.

The following is the Entry in the Votes:—

Mr. Sexton, Member for the County of Sligo, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., the course of action pursued by Mr. Speaker during the sitting of the House on the 24th ultimo, in silencing the Member for Wexford, naming the Member for Mallow, and procuring the application of the Closure Rule to a Debate; and the consequent danger to the constitutional rights of Members of this House to speak and vote:—

Thereupon Mr. Speaker declared that the course proposed by the honourable Member for Sligo was out of order, on the ground that the conduct of the Speaker could only be impugned upon a direct appeal to the House, by a substantive Motion, open to Amendment, on which a definite issue could be raised, and the judgment of the House obtained. He therefore took upon himself not to allow the Motion of the honourable Member to be submitted to the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed*) BILL.

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

[BILL 49.] COMMITTEE.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Motion [2nd March],

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-committed*) Bill, that they have power in all cases where an elector is entitled to one vote only, to enable the elector to nominate more than one candidate to whom under certain circumstances that vote might be transferred in the manner indicated by the elector."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he was unable to be present last evening and hear the debate on the point under discussion; but he had read the reports, which were somewhat meagre, and he failed to see that any very valid arguments had been raised against the proposal of the hon. Baronet. He, however, had found in *The Daily News* a leading article which referred to the debate. There was one sentence in the article which he would like to read, as it appeared to him to describe the debate very correctly and succinctly—

"Many of the stereotyped objections to the single alternative vote really resolve themselves on examination into little more than thinly veiled accusations of ignorance and stupidity against the nation."

That was an argument which could hardly be refuted. He was astonished that hon. Gentlemen should express a difficulty in understanding the proposal which was upheld by the advocates of proportional representation. It was not merely a question of argument, but a question of fact. They had held test elections at all the public meetings, and at no single one had there been the slightest difficulty in uneducated people understanding what they were required to do. What was more, they had uneducated people to count the votes, and they had no difficulty in coming to a satisfactory conclusion. One convincing proof of the feasibility of the proposal was the Northumberland test election. In that case the voters were all miners, and the counting of the votes was conducted by miners. The objection of the hon. Member for Huddersfield that the adoption of the proposal would destroy the secrecy of the ballot was a most extraordinary one, for it was not proposed that the electors using this means of recording their votes should sign their names. The secrecy of the ballot would be as inviolate under the proposed scheme as it was now. He could quite understand Her Majesty's Government being anxious to push the present measure forward, because it might be that they wished to carry the Bill and then gracefully to make their bow to the House. He, however, thought it would be better for the House and the country that they should thoroughly thrash out the proposal of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London. It was urged against their proposal that the country had not accepted it. The fact was, its advocates had not yet had time to put the question before the constituencies, so as to make them understand it. There were, however, many other questions, like those of Free Trade and the Ballot, which had taken quite as long to drive into the heads of the electorate. Then it was said that their scheme would lead to a great amount of cross voting—but there was no more reason for it under their proposal than that of the Government—and that it would induce some electors to give their votes to men on some such grounds as that they were good customers. A voter, however, who would act in that way could not be regarded as a person of any great stability of character, and could hardly be called a capable citizen. A great objection made was that too much scope was allowed to the element of chance. But at present the representation was very much left to chance. There might be a Liberal majority in the Three Kingdoms, which, if equally distributed, would secure the whole representation. In that way, a minority, however large, would gain no representation in that House. Therefore, by the Government scheme, the representation of the minority depended entirely on the chance disposition of the electorate. Yet they were told that the scheme of the Government would give a fair share of the representation to the minority. By increasing the size of the constituencies as they proposed, the element of chance would be very nearly eliminated. He believed that it would be far better now to waste a little time in thoroughly threshing out this very difficult question of representation and arriving at the best possible solution than to plunge into the proposal of the Government, which experience in foreign countries had shown to be eminently unsatisfactory in its working. He believed that in the short time they had had at their disposal they had strongly impressed the people with the necessity of something in the direction of proportional representation being adopted; and if it was impossible to get some kind of fair proportional representation in the passage of this Bill through the House, it would not be long before the country would have seen the absolute necessity of such a measure. The question would have to be re-opened, and, sooner or later, either the proposed system or one analogous to it would be carried to a triumphant issue.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he thought it was quite evident from the speech of the noble Lord that people had come to the conclusion that the proposals of the Proportional Representation Society were not such as could with advantage be adopted. No doubt in every large constituency there were certain persons who would naturally sympathize with the scientific and philosophic notions of the noble Lord and his Friends; but he believed that for every one of these scientific and philosophical politicians there were at least 100 practical men who would have nothing to do with such a new-fangled proposal to obtain an expression of public opinion. Certainly the people at large were not in favour of it. The truth was that there was an element of chance in the system which could not be overcome. The experiments which had been made had certainly not been satisfactory in this respect, and it was impossible that the public could accept a system which would give the possibility of large differences in the results arising from chance. If anything turned upon how the papers were sorted, or on the way in which they were shuffled, it would take a good deal of cutting and shuffling before the people would be satisfied whose candidate had been rejected. Then, in a constituency like Liverpool, where they might have 30 or 40 candidates, the confusion of voting papers would be very great. He thought that so far from improving the House of Commons, the effect of that proposal would be to emasculate the political life of the country. At present men entered on a political contest with a clear issue before them, and those who might at one time be a minority were stimulated to endeavour to turn themselves into a majority; but the minority vote would destroy, to a great extent, that stimulus which tended to political growth. Of course, people who liked crotchets approved the proposal, because my means of it their mouthpieces might obtain seats in Parliament. Ever since Mr. Cobden, with great wisdom and prescience, recommended the scheme of single-Member constituencies, he had himself been anxious to see it adopted, and he hoped that the day was not very far distant when they would have entirely got rid of double-barrel constituencies; when constituencies throughout the country would be of the same size, and would each be represented by one Member, for that he believed to be the way to secure a true representation of the feeling of the nation.

Mr. GREGORY, while admitting that fair proportional representation was desirable, held that the real question was whether they could carry it further than was proposed by the present Bill. On the whole, he thought they could not. Under the plan advocated by the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), it was intended that a candidate should be returned by one vote above a certain *quota*, any excess of votes given to him beyond that *quota* to be transferred to a second candidate. Now, under the ballot, they reserved the power of scrutiny; and if a scrutiny took place, and two of the candidate's votes were bad, he would lose his seat, notwithstanding that he might have had a majority of some thousands of votes. He agreed with the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) that the second vote would be, to a great extent, a matter of chance. The first vote would most likely be given upon principle, and in accordance with the political bias of the voter; but the second vote would very probably be given to anyone for whom the voter had a personal preference. He did not think, therefore, that it would, as a rule, give much indication of the strength of political opinions. Then the manipulation of the system appeared to be of so difficult a character that it was almost impossible that it could be substantially carried out in practice. They were told that it had been tried experimentally, and had proved successful; but he would remind the House that the experiments had been personally conducted by the hon. Baronet who had made the Motion, by the hon. Member for Liskeard, the hon. Member for South Northumberland, and other friends of the scheme—superintendence and assistance which could not be provided when the scheme was set to work practically in an election. It would require men of mathematical knowledge, and of practical skill, to work the system with any approach to a satisfactory result; and he thought, under the superintendence of our present Returning Officers, they would find that the scheme would entirely break down. If the proposal became law, he should feel inclined to bring up a clause to the effect that every Returning Officer should be a duly accredited mathematician. He believed that the plan of single-Member constituencies was the only way of obtaining a fair representation of the people; and he should, therefore, oppose the proposition before the House.

MR. COURTNEY said, there appeared to be an idea in the minds of some hon. Members that the Instruction only applied to single-Member constituencies; but on looking at the Instruction it would be seen that it had been rather misread. Its terms were not "where only one person is elected," but "where an elector is entitled to one vote only." The constituency might have three, four, five, or more Members to return, but each voter was only entitled by the scheme before the House to one vote; and the Instruction was intended primarily to enable the voter, where there was a multiplicity of candidates, to indicate the order of his preference among them by writing the figure 1 against the name he preferred first, 2 against the name he preferred next, and so on. In fact, the Instruction was meant to enable the clauses for carrying out the system to be considered in Committee. He should not, however, be dealing frankly with the House if he did not point out that, although the Instruction was intended by its framers to apply to constituencies electing a number of Members, it also extended to constituencies returning one Member only, because there the elector was entitled only to one vote. He would now indicate what would be the use of that machinery in the case where only one Member would be returned. In that case the adoption of that machinery would be the means of effecting in the simplest, easiest, and least expensive manner, whether of time or of money, the objects aimed at by those who desired a second ballot. A second ballot was a matter that was already pressed out-of-doors, and one of which much more would be heard. The objects of a second ballot could be achieved by their machinery without the objection that was so strongly made to a second ballot. It was said by the leading journal that the worry, the delay, the anxiety, and the expense of a second ballot constituted almost a fatal objection to its adoption. He admitted the great weight of those objections; they were so strong that he should be reluctant himself to adopt a second vote. He desired to avoid it if possible. Under the machinery now suggested the result would be achieved without the necessity for a second election. Taking it that there was only one Member to be elected, there might be four or five candidates for that one seat—say one candidate belonging to the one side that was best organized, and two, three, or four on the other side. If on the voting paper the elector was able to indicate the order of his preference by writing 1, 2, and 3 among the candidates belonging to his side, as he preferred them, then, if on the first election no one obtained an absolute majority of the votes—the condition on which the second ballot depended—they would be entitled to take the votes given to the candidate who polled the lowest number and distribute them among those marked second on his papers, thus reducing the number of candidates by one. If necessary, that process would be repeated until they obtained a candidate who was left with an absolute majority of the votes. He pointed out that by this method, without the anger arising from prolonged contest, without the anxiety and worry of a week's delay, and without the trouble of bringing the electors up a second time, they gained by this most simple machinery the result of a second ballot, and altogether avoided what he believed to be the practical objection on the Treasury Bench to the institution of the second ballot. He had shown that the Instruction on the Paper would cover the adoption of that machinery; but the Instruction was not intended, primarily at least, for that purpose. It was intended for the purpose of enabling voters to record their successive preferences when three or more candidates were to be elected; and their object was to secure that the divisions of the electorate should be represented when three or more candidates were to be elected. For that purpose they provided machinery, and power was given in that machinery which would give effect to the wishes of the different divisions of the constituency. This Instruction was simply to enable the House to discuss the propositions in Committee in further detail; it did not compel its adoption; and if a vote was passed in favour of the Instruction, it committed the House to nothing as to what the Committee should do. Objection had been taken the previous evening by a right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench as to the practicability of the measure. The advocates of the scheme had addressed many audiences throughout the country, who had come to the meetings without any previous knowledge of the subject. Crowded, and to some extent excited, meetings had been addressed in Manchester, Glasgow, Newcastle, Liverpool, and elsewhere. Test ballots had been held at all of those places under the proposed machinery; papers had been distributed and collected in those crowded meetings; votes had been given and the election held; and, so far as the electors were concerned, their part had always been discharged with perfect smoothness and regularity. In one or two cases there had not been a single spoilt paper, and the proportion of spoilt papers had always been extremely small. It had also to be remembered that the persons taking part in those test ballots had had no preparation whatever before undertaking the task. Look, again, at the experience gained by his hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey). Several test elections were held by the working miners of Northumberland. They had been conducted by themselves, held under their own organizations, and held, so far as the voting was concerned, with perfect success. His hon. Friend the Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) said that the Returning Officer would have a very elaborate and painful task to discharge. At the test elections which were held bankers' clerks, lawyers, accountants, and others of this class assisted; and they had all proved themselves not merely competent for the counting and the sorting of the papers, but had proved themselves to be intelligent masters of the machinery. At no place which they had visited in the course of these test ballots had they experienced any difficulty whatever in finding a Returning Officer ready and able to discharge the business. Here, again, they were entitled to appeal to their experience, and to show that the practicable character of the scheme had been proved. It was idle to talk *à priori* of the incapacity of the capable citizens they had enfranchised. The advocates of this proposal could point to experience; they could point to facts. They could show that working men, factory hands, miners, and others belonging to the lower classes of society had been addressed on the subject; and they had all shown a capacity for doing that which, it was said, the electors would not be able to do. So much for the practicability of the scheme. Then, again, they had insisted over and over again that under this system, and under this system alone, they would secure a representation of the different minorities which deserved representation. The

President of the Local Government Board on the previous evening said that he thought single-Member seats would secure the representation of minorities, and the same thing had been said that evening by the hon. Member for East Sussex. Thoughts and hopes were, no doubt, valuable things; but here, again, they could confront thoughts and hopes with facts. They might, in the first place, ask whether Parliament had indeed secured the representation of minorities in past experience? He was not now speaking of securing the representation of the Liberal Party as against the Conservative Party; this was a most valuable object to be aimed at, but it was not all. He appealed to facts; and he asked any right hon. Gentleman whether the facts and the experience of the last 16 years had shown that under what was practically single-Member seats—that was to say, under majority representation—they had obtained a sufficient certainty of securing the representation of minorities. Take the working men as an example. Working men as householders had been enfranchised since 1867. They had commanded a very large proportion indeed of the votes in the Metropolitan boroughs, and in the large manufacturing and commercial towns of the Kingdom; and yet it was a remarkable fact that throughout this time no working man had ever been elected to the House by the working-men electors in any of those boroughs. Lambeth, the Tower Hamlets, Greenwich, Southwark, Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham were full of working men; and in not one of those places had the working men been able to obtain a seat in the House. Did that give any assurance of the representation of minorities? It might be said that it was a thing not to be desired; that was a different question; but at all events he showed the House that a very numerous minority of the Kingdom which had enjoyed the franchise all those years had not obtained a seat from the constituencies referred to; and they had very little promise of obtaining from similar seats in the future the representation of working men. The hon. Member for Huddersfield (Mr. E. A. Leatham) said that the truth was that the working men had a generous confidence in their employers. That was what Members said for themselves; but as far as he had discovered the working men were keen to obtain a representation by their own men. They had tried it again and again, and it was not from a want of desire, or from a surfeit of generous confidence in their employers, that they had not been able to obtain that representation. There was another class to which he wished to refer. Since 1832 the large tenant farmers of the Kingdom had had votes and a considerable share in the county electorate. How many tenant farmers had got into the House? There were something like 200 County Members, and out of this number there had not been an average of one tenant farmer in the House. It might be said that they did not wish election. [General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR: Hear, hear!] The hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire said "Hear, hear." The hon. and gallant Member was one of the foremost members of the Farmers' Alliance, one of whose objects was to secure a larger representation of tenant farmers in the House of Commons. The tenant farmers who desired representation, and whose representation would be valuable not only for themselves but for the House, had failed to secure representation in the past, and there was no warrant to show that they would secure in the future a representation commensurate with their numbers. Next, as to the labourers—great things were expected from the emancipation of the agricultural labourers; the world was going to be turned upside down by the agricultural labourers. The agricultural labourer, however, had had a vote since 1867. ["No, no!"] He asked his hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings) to allow him to finish his sentence. The agricultural labourer had had a vote since 1867 in some eight or ten constituencies which were dominated by agricultural labourers. East Retford, Cricklade, Shoreham, and other places were patterns of county constituencies of the future. The agricultural labourer had had his vote in those places; but he had not been able to get a single Representative into the House. He also regarded with alarm the prospect that under the proposed system political economists would, as had been foretold, be driven from the House. [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: Hear, hear!] It was because he had so great an apprehension of his hon. Friend and his Friends that he deprecated the exile of political economists. He was inclined to think they were going to have rather a bad time in respect of some questions which they had thought were settled some 50 years ago, and that they might have to fight over again the question of the Poor Law and the question of Free Trade, and the banishment of the political economist would, he thought, be a serious thing for the nation. Another important aspect of the question was one which had already been alluded to—namely, that the system proposed by the Government would fail to give adequate representation to the Conservatives of Scotland and of Wales, and also to the Liberals of the Southern parts of England. But, worse still, the one-Member one-seat system would leave the House with scarcely any, and perhaps with no Representatives of the loyal Liberals of Ireland. There would still be some Representatives of the loyal Conservatives of Ireland; but the loyal Liberals would be practically disfranchised. Roughly speaking, it might be said that two-thirds of the population of Ireland were Nationalists—persons desirous of a separation of the Legislatures of England and Ireland; the remaining one-third were in favour of maintaining the Union. Elections in Munster and Connaught had recently shown the existence of a large proportion of Liberal electors who were desirous of maintaining the Union with Great Britain. These voters would not be disfranchised, and notwithstanding the extension of the franchise would still remain a good proportion of the electors. This had been shown in the contest at the General Election for the representation of the County Roscommon, when the O'Conor Don was defeated, and also in Sligo, when an election a year or two later took place upon the death of Mr. Denis O'Conor. It was also a well-known fact that there was a large body of Loyalists even in Tipperary and Cork. But under the one-Member system there would in future not be a single Representative of the Loyalists in Munster and Connaught. The whole hope of the Loyalists was derived from Ulster and Leinster; and in regard to Leinster it was very faint, while in Ulster there would be a considerable diminution of the Loyalist Representatives. They were thus face to face with a most serious condition of things. They were face to face with the fact that they were about to compass the extinction of the representation of a large Liberal class in Ireland. That appeared to him to be a matter of the very gravest anxiety. He confessed that if this one-Member system was adopted he did not know how they would bear the strain in the next Parliament. The passing of this Bill would be a serious trial, if it were not, indeed, the death-knell, of the Union. When 80 or 90 Irish Members were returned, pledged to extreme Nationalist views, the result, not alone on Parliament, but on English opinion, would be pregnant with most tremendous issues. It would be impossible to keep Englishmen alive to the fact that there was a large mass of loyal opinion in Ireland unrepresented. The votes in Parliament of the 85 Members would alone be borne in mind, and this must have a most injurious effect on the maintenance of the Union. It would also have a considerable effect in Ireland, for Irish Liberals, deprived of their representation in Parliament and on Local Boards, would be compelled to throw their fortunes in with the Nationalists, and would cease to desire that Union which had failed to secure them any sort of influence over the destinies of their country. Under a National system of government in Ireland they might still hope for some influence, and he believed they would get it. Under this one-Member system, which was said to secure the adequate and satisfactory representation of minorities, they would extinguish the representation in that House of the great loyal minority in Ireland, and put in eminent jeopardy the maintenance of the Union, which they were all pledged to support. Though it might secure the fair representation of the Conservative Party by over-representation in one place and under-representation in another, the system would certainly fail to secure the fair representation in the House of the different classes whose presence, by their Representatives, was necessary to the making of good laws and the integrity of the Empire. The Postmaster General, in his speech last night, repeated his argument as to the figures of the General Election, and showed extreme ingenuity and tact in keeping the real issue clouded in words and figures which quite concealed it. There was no doubt whatever of this fact—that at the Election of

1874, when the Conservatives had a majority of Members, they had a minority of the votes actually given, and the discussion on this point was as to what should be considered as the number of votes in the constituencies which were not contested. His hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) took the number of votes as the same as at the previous Election in 1868; and that showed that the Liberal electors, though in a majority, did not secure a minority of seats. The Postmaster General, however, instead of this method of estimation, set up an arbitrary estimation of his own, which threw the balance the other way. Supposing that they took the county constituencies that were contested in 1868 and in 1874, and calculated how much the Liberal votes had retrograded, and if they applied that standard of retrogression to the uncontested seats, which surely was a fair method of calculation, they would find that in 1874 the minority of electors secured the majority of Members. On a previous occasion he had referred to the results of elections in the United States, where the franchise was the same from beginning to end, and where the constituencies were equalized every 10 years, and where, nevertheless, a majority of Members were sometimes returned by a minority of electors. No Member of the Government had met that statement, or attempted to get over it. Why did not right hon. Gentlemen face the facts of the American case? Why did they run off on hypothetical cases when they had ugly facts to meet? It was because they were ugly. We, too, should realize again and again in the near future that a minority of electors would secure a majority of Members. Why should we run that risk when we were offered a means of escape? A good deal was said against chance; but why should we run this real chance? The chance incurred depended upon the distribution of voters and their inclusion or exclusion by this or that line; and upon such a chance it rested whether the elected corresponded with the electors. Those who were so apprehensive about chance in the shuffling of the voting papers were indifferent to a chance which exposed the real objects of Parliamentary institutions to peril. The case of Switzerland had been mentioned repeatedly, and no answer had been given to it. The Federal Council passed a law, and the electors disapproved of it. If that happened here with the Permissive Bill, should we say the House represented the people? It was said this system took no account of abstentions from voting; but it would diminish them, because it would bring to the poll those who had hitherto declined to vote for candidates in whom they felt no interest, as he himself had done sometimes. With a greater choice of candidates, and of better candidates, we should remedy a state of things which had prevailed in some places in which 60 per cent of the electors did not vote, and of those who did nearly 50 per cent were unrepresented. Candidates were now selected with the object of keeping the Party together. They were not to offend any prejudices; they were not to have strong opinions; and often they were not strong in any way, and so could accommodate themselves to all the varying demands made upon them. But candidates and electors would be emancipated under the proposed system; electors would enter into political life, and they would come to the poll. The effects would be salutary upon both electors and Members. The Members would not need to trim so for the sake of keeping the Party together. A more vigorous political life would be developed among the whole body of electors by the fact that fewer ignored their political rights and duties. Single-Member constituencies gave no such promise of improvement. There were some who said that all this was assumption, and that men who were born slaves would remain slaves; but surely it would not be denied that machinery did affect our political life. The Postmaster General had spoken on the element of chance, and had mentioned an experiment on a small scale which gave varying results. But when the Postmaster General assumed that the operation of chance would be the same with 70,000 as with 70 voting papers, he forgot his experience as a Director of an Insurance Company, which would regard the risks as the same in dealing with 70 or 70,000 lives. And an underwriter would not restrict his risks to 70 vessels. The greater the numbers the less the risk of the operation of chance, and, so infinitesimal was it, that it could not have falsified an election if the proposed scheme had been in use since the days of pre-historic man. The Attorney General had said that a dealer might have 13 trump cards in his hand; but, according to eminent mathematicians, the chance against that was 150,000,000,000 to one. This element of chance could most easily be got rid of, so that not a shadow of it should remain. Let them suppose that 8,000 votes had been given to the Prime Minister, who, by the way, always received an enormous proportion of the votes in these test elections—and that he only wanted 5,000. Then 3,000 of these votes would have to be transferred. Let those 3,000 be distributed among the other candidates in exactly the same proportions as their names were marked 2 on all the 8,000 papers where the Prime Minister was first. If, for example, B was marked 2 on 4,000 out of the 8,000, let him have 1,500 out of the surplus 3,000; and so on. What was the difficulty in thus transferring the surplus votes and distributing them in the exact proportion in which the second choice was expressed? Thus, the question of chance entirely disappeared, and the plan might be made comparatively simple and easy. If this method were adopted, it might, indeed, take a little longer time, but it would be perfectly easy to carry out. This terror about chance was a mere terror of superstitious ignorance. What was the objection to the system, if a machinery could be devised so simple, that it could readily remove this tremendous bugbear? It had been shown that proportional representation insured the representation of minorities and majorities in the proportion in which they stood to each other. It had also been shown that the objection to its impracticability was baseless, because the system had been tried, and that the element of chance might be entirely eliminated. There only remained one objection, which was that it would prevent a strong Government. It was said that you must have a Government with a large majority at its back. He could suggest an easy way of getting over that difficulty. If it was so necessary that the Government should always have a strong backing in the House, however feeble might be its majority in the country, let the Government always begin its divisions with 50 up. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members laughed at the suggestion. The hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) laughed. But it was really of the essence of the argument advanced in favour of what was called strong Governments. It was admitted that the balance of opinion was not really represented in the House. Why not then have a nominal 50, instead of 50 actual human beings? Suppose that the Government were defeated by 36 Members present, in that case the result would be a majority of 14. But that opinion about a strong Government was falsified by experience. We did not always get a strong Government when they had a strong majority. From 1874 to 1880, for example, the Government had a strong majority; but they were not a strong Government, and could not carry out the policy they wanted. That confirmed his statement that a Government was not strong by a virtue of its strong majority. If we wanted a strong Government, we must have strong people and strong men in the House of Commons, men capable of forming strong re-combinations, independent of the two great Parties, on the different questions of the day, and who by their action would maintain a Liberal or a Conservative Government in power, according to the general balance of political opinion. Elections must not depend on the settlement of compromise in the constituencies, resulting in the sending of weak Members to the House of Commons. What they relied upon was the preservation of a right representation of all the political elements in the country. That was absolutely necessary for the maintenance of a healthy political life. With respect to Ireland, he would remind the right hon. Member for North Devon that he shared the responsibility of settling the representation of that country with the Government. If the representation of minorities in Ireland were not secured, and the Union was in consequence put in jeopardy, the blame would rest on the right hon. Gentleman as heavily as on the Government itself.

Mr. LEWIS said, it was impossible for him to refrain from speaking on this occasion, especially after the concluding words of the hon. Member for Liskeard, (Mr. Courtney). It was right that someone on the Conservative Benches should at once accept the challenge thrown out by the hon. Gentleman, that the Leaders of the Conservative Party would have to take their share of the responsibility of the destruction of the representation of the Irish Protestant Party. However much the Ulster Members had reason to complain of the conduct of the Leaders of the two Parties in reference to this Bill, they could not dispute that there would have been pretty much the same result if, under the new franchise, the country had been divided into two-Member constituencies. The real injury was the lowering of the franchise. It had struck him that the great weakness of the action of the advocates of proportional representation was, that they had brought forward their plan at the wrong time. To have been consistent, and to have had the smallest chance of obtaining a fair and legitimate consideration to the proposal, they were bound to bring it forward on the Franchise Bill. This was not a Party question, and one could not shut his eyes to the fact that Liberals supported this plan, because they were afraid of what they had done in so largely extending the franchise, and the Conservatives took refuge in the proposal as the only amelioration of the supremacy of mere numbers. It appeared to him that the House and the country had, like ostriches, put their heads into the sand, and had refused to consider what was likely to be the result to the Sister Country of the passing of the Franchise and Redistribution Bills. The hon. Member had just said the result would be the demolition of all the power of the House to resist the advocates of the repeal of the Union. It was generally suggested that the Loyalists of Ireland would retain only 15 or 16 out of the 103 seats. Assuming that suggestion to be made good, what would be the result? From one end of the Session to the other, Parliament would be told by the 87 Members,—"All your work as regards Ireland is merely idle business." They would delight in calling Ireland a foreign country, and they would appear in the House not for the purpose of taking a useful part in legislation, but for the purpose of accomplishing their one object—namely, the repeal of the Union. And, having regard to the speeches made by the Prime Minister and his Colleagues, they would ask what justification there was to resist the demand of 85 out of 100 Members from Ireland. This was a question purely between those who were loyal and those who were disloyal. Since the House had been sitting they had had a specimen of what had been going on, when the hon. Member for Westmeath went to Ireland to a meeting of the National League, and described the relations between England and Ireland, stating that the people of Ireland were most hostile to the Power which they desired to overthrow. The hon. Member was so severe as to suggest that the only refuge for the Liberal Protestants in Ireland would be to join the Nationalists after this Bill came into force. He did not think so badly of the Liberal Protestants. He did not believe that they would take refuge among the Nationalists. He felt that they would rather join their fellow-Protestants and fellow-Loyalists; and he protested most emphatically against the suggestion that the Liberal Protestants of Ireland, when they were effaced—and unquestionably they would be effaced—by this Bill, would throw in their lot with those who were the enemies of the Queen and the Constitution.

MR. COURTNEY said, he had not spoken of the Liberal Protestants, but of the Liberal Loyalists.

MR. LEWIS said, that that was severer still. The hon. Member recognized that there were Loyalists amongst the Catholic population of Ireland now, but held that these Loyalists would join the Nationalists out of spleen or spite, because they were so obnoxious to the Conservative portion of the Protestants of Ireland that they would not join them. He repudiated that altogether. As a matter of practical legislation, this question never came before the House until a thoroughly democratic franchise was imminent, a proposal which was brought forward by the Liberals, first to get them back into power, and next to maintain them in power when they had got back. He had been driven to consider if this proposal offered any practical salvation from that to which one so much objected—namely, a purely democratic franchise, giving the power over to mere numbers. He admitted there were objections to this plan, and that there were difficulties connected with it; but, on the other hand, he believed this plan was slandered by its opponents. He was convinced that it was by no means impossible even for an ignorant person to take part in these elections so as to produce a definite, clear, and intended result. In the discussion of voting by ballot, in the case of illiterates, it was said it would be impossible to get them to understand it; but they now found by experience that the difficulty had been very slight indeed, and the truth was, that in many cases the difficulty arose, not with uneducated, but with well-educated people. As to the carrying of it out, he did not think that this plan presented greater difficulties than were presented at school board voting, or ordinary voting by ballot. He was surprised to find that the hon. Member for East Sussex (Mr. Gregory) raised the objection that the Returning Officers of the country would not be able to perform the duty imposed upon them. He thought that objection was even more ill-founded than that raised with regard to the voting. He also made the statement that second votes would not be recorded by the persons who had to fill up the papers, but would be thrown away. That also was a most extraordinary objection. His principal object in rising was to say that, if there was any portion of the United Kingdom in which such a measure as this would be useful, it was that part of the Kingdom with which by representation he was connected. In Ireland he could name such counties as Donegal, Fermanagh, Antrim, Down, and many others, where, under the Bill, many portions of the constituencies—certainly in Donegal—the Protestant population entirely would be wiped out by the extension of the franchise, notwithstanding the division of the constituency into single-Member divisions. He concluded by expressing his thorough conviction that, so far as it was possible, under the present system of voting, to represent the minority, the single-Member constituency was the best and purest. It was because he thought that this proposed system of proportional representation was an effort towards real and genuine representation that he should give it his support. There might be many difficulties in carrying it out, which might render it obnoxious in many respects, and ultimately bring it into discredit. It would be a vast advantage in Ireland, at all events, if it were possible by this system to secure an adequate representation of those who would otherwise be practically effaced.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he wished, before the House went to a division, to state, in a very few words, his view of this matter. He objected to the views of the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock), and to the proportional representation system, not upon the ground of difficulty in understanding or working the scheme, because that difficulty might easily be solved by the ingenuity of those who had to administer the system, but upon the ground that it would destroy all the variety which it was said ought to be maintained in our representation. The necessary consequence of the adoption of such a measure would be first to overthrow the single-Member divisions, and, in the next place, to carry out to a much greater extent the principle of equal electoral districts; because if the theory was that everybody had a natural right to be represented in the precise proportion of his individuality to that of the population, it would seem to follow that everybody had a right to be equally represented, and there must be a recasting of the present system, which would bring about equal electoral districts. They were entering upon an important experiment in the great enlargement of the constituencies. His hon. Friend who had just sat down said truly that those who were advocating this measure were endeavouring to shield themselves from the consequences of the enlargement of the franchise. Everybody must feel some anxiety as to the working of a greatly extended franchise; but he did not believe that the way to meet the difficulty was by artificial contrivances, but rather by bringing the Member and elector as closely together as possible, and by making the question of the election depend upon the elector's knowledge of the man, and not upon his subservience to a system. What he was afraid of in these elaborate pieces of machinery was that clever electioneering agents would set to work and see if they could use them for the benefit of their Parties; and then they would have not a man who would do all he could to impress his ideas upon the electors, but a number of persons put forward on a ticket. He was afraid that the proposal, however well-intentioned and ingenious it might be, would land them in that system to which he had the greatest aversion—the system of *scrutin de liste.* The real way to get safely through the dangers which some thought they were threatened with was not by endeavouring to evade difficulties, but by fighting them boldly. It was upon these grounds, and not upon any mere technical question, or question of detail as to the working of the system, that he found himself obliged to vote against it.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 31; Noes 134: Majority 103.

AYES.

Allman, R. L.
Archdale, W. H.
Beresford, G. De la P.
Blennerhassett, R. P.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Cartwright, W. C.
Cohen, A.
Corry, J. P.
Courtauld, G.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowen, J.
Crichton, Viscount
Cropper, J.
Errington, G.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, A. O.
Grant D.
Grey, A. H. G.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Hicks, E.
Lea, T.
Lewis, C. E.
Lindsay, Sir R. L.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Pennington, F.
Rankin, J.
Rathbone, W.
Read, C. S.
Sinclair, Sir J. G. T.
Thomasson, J. P.
Verney, Sir H.

TELLERS.

Folkestone, Viscount
Lubbock, Sir J.

NOES.

Ainsworth, D.
Armitstead, G.
Asher, A.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Barran, J.
Bass, Sir A.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biddell, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Borlase, W. C.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, rt. hon. J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brogden, A.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Caine, W. S.
Callan P.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, rt. hon. H.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Clark, S.
Clarke, J. C.
Clifford, C. C.
Collings, J.
Colman, J. J.
Corbett, J.
Cotes, C. C.
Cross, J. K.
Davenport, H. T.
Davey, H.
Davies, R.
Dawson, C.
Deasy, J.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, T. A.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Earp, T.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Evans, T. W.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Ferguson, R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Giles, A.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Gourley, E. T.
Grant, A.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hayter, Sir. A. D.
Healy, T. M.
Henderson, F.
Heneage, E.
Hibbert, J. T.
Holden, I.
Holms, J.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, J.
Illingworth, A.
Ince, H. B.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, Sir H.
James, C.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kenny, M. J.
Kinnear, J.
Lalor, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Lee, H.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Lloyd, M.
Lyons, R. D.
Macfarlane, D. H.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Mahon, E.
Magniac, C.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
Meagher, W.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
O'Connor, J.
Onslow, D. R.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Peddie, J. D.
Picton, J. A.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Ramsay, J.
Roe, T.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Russell, G. W. E.
Scott, M. D.
Small, J. F.
Smith, E.
Smith, S.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, T.
Thompson, T. C.
Thornhill, T.
Tillett, J. H.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Vivian, A. P.
Waddy, S. D.
Walker, S.
Warton, C. N.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
Willis, W.
Winn, R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolff, Sir H. D.
Woolf, S.

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, right hon. Lord R.
Kensington, rt. hn. Lord

MR. KENNY rose to move—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to include within the boundaries of the county of the city of Limerick, as at present existing, such additional areas as may be necessary to increase the population of the Parliamentary borough to the limit necessary to entitle it to retain its present representation."

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member would be out of Order in moving the Instruction, as the Committee had power to do what the Instruction proposed.

MR. KENNY said, he would bring the matter forward again when the Bill got into Committee.

MR. HEALY, in moving—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert an Amendment that medical relief shall not disqualify any voter under £12 valuation,"

said, that in Ireland they were quite in the dark as to what the effect of medical relief would be. By the 13 & 14 *Vict.*, passed in 1850, any person in receipt of pauper relief was disqualified from the exercise of the franchise. It had been held in a Sligo case, under the Municipal Law—3 & 4 *Vict.*—on appeal, that medical relief was not pauper relief, and that, therefore, it did not disqualify a person from exercising the municipal franchise. Under the Municipal Corporations Act persons in receipt of relief were disqualified from voting; but objection was taken to it in the appeal "Phipps *v.* O'Brien," in which it was decided that medical relief was not pauper relief, on the ground that the Medical Charities Act passed some time after the disqualifying Act became law. No decision had been given on the subject with reference to the Parliamentary franchise; and the consequence would be that when persons appeared before the Revising Barristers in Ireland those Revising Barristers would act according to their fancy. In the Orange districts they were already preparing to disqualify electors who had been in receipt of medical relief. The Orange Lodges, who had the entire machinery of the Poor Law in their hands in the North of Ireland, and the dispensary doctors and clerks of Unions at their disposal, were now making arrangements to disqualify labourers and others wholesale who would be entitled to the franchise. It appeared to him to be a very hard thing if they proposed to give the vote with one hand and take it away with the other. They all knew the labourers of the country were quite unable to pay for medical relief. There were thousands of men who only earned 10*s.* per week, who had a wife and family, and who were compelled in the ordinary course of nature to get the "red ticket." That "red ticket" was being worked in Ireland to disqualify the working men. Even free vaccination might be held to disqualify. He ventured to say that unless his Amendment passed at least 250,000 voters would be disqualified. That Amendment was a compromise. It did not propose to qualify every person who received relief; but only those who were under £12 annual valuation. That was to say, that any person who had held the franchise previous to the passing of the new Act would still be disqualified by receiving medical relief; but any person who became a voter under the new Act would not be disqualified under similar conditions. He moved his Amendment because the law was not quite clear on the subject. The Judges had decided that the receipt of medical relief did not disqualify a voter from exercising the municipal franchise; but they might distinguish between that and the Parliamentary franchise, and disqualify the latter. Last Session they heard continually from the other side of the House that the Irish Party were opposed to the extension of the franchise to the labourers, but not as regarded the farmers, because they preferred having the present constituencies. If the innuendo had any truth, they would have been glad for the present law to stand. The Solicitor General for Ireland was in his place, and he should like him to state his views on the Sligo case. There was at least one way of dealing with the difficulty that presented itself, apart from Parliamentary enactment. Why not have in the Registration Bill a provision that in the case of every man objected to because he was in the receipt of medical relief a column should be inserted in the Schedule in which the clerk to the Poor Law Guardians should be obliged to write the amount of medical relief received by each voter; and, in the event of that being done, on the voter appearing before the Revising Barrister, and repaying the amount which he had received, he should be reinstated on the list of voters. It was not really the services of the doctor that these men so much required as medicine; and the salary of a medical officer—£100 or £150 a-year—spread over a whole district, would amount to very little for each person. In Ireland Revising Barristers need not grant cases for appeal unless they liked to do so, and they never liked to do it. The Monaghan Revising Barrister, 40 years ago, sentenced a man to death for stealing a goat; and this showed the mental calibre of those who would have to decide nice legal points. The voters in Ireland should have the privilege, the right, of going before the Supreme Court when they wished to appeal against the decision of the Revising Barrister.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert an Amendment that medical relief shall not disqualify any voter under £12 valuation."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. Member had stated his case very clearly, very ably, and very fairly. There could be no doubt that in England medical relief disqualified a voter. At Shaftesbury, for example, 60 voters were, on a certain occasion, disqualified, because their families had received some boxes of pills. In the case of England, however, Parliament had hitherto shown no desire to do away with this particular ground of disqualification. He himself had been instrumental in having a Bill brought forward with this object—a Bill proposing that people should not be disqualified as voters who had, when suffering from infectious disease, been removed compulsorily to hospitals partly kept out of the public funds. The Bill passed with difficulty, and was thrown out in "another place." He mentioned this to show the hon. Member that he felt some sympathy with his view. There was a good deal of doubt in Ireland whether medical relief acted as a disqualification; and he admitted that it would be desirable to have the question settled once for all. He should himself be unwilling to distinguish between the case of voters under the £12 valuation and that of other voters.

MR. HEALY explained that he mentioned the £12 valuation on account of the new voters.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had quite followed the hon. Member. He believed, however, that the question raised by the hon. Member could not rightly find a place in a Redistribution Bill. It was a matter to be dealt with in a Franchise or Registration Bill. Then, as the measure before the House partook of the nature of a consent Bill, he felt constrained to resist the introduction into it of what might be called extraneous matter, for otherwise he should be guilty of committing a breach of faith with the House generally. His suggestion to the hon. Member was that he should raise the matter upon the Registration Bill. The hon. Member might possibly have a doubt in his mind as to the Registration Bill being an equally certain chance; but he could assure the hon. Member that a Registration Bill for Ireland was essential, and must be passed, and the hon. Member would lose nothing practically by raising the question. Then the hon. Member had raised two other points—one was as to possible repayment. If the House should be disposed to accept the general principle the hon. Member might make valuable use of that suggestion. It was not, however, new, for it had already found a place in Acts of Parliament. He undoubtedly sympathized with the hon. Member upon the question of appeal; and he thought it would be very desirable that Revising Barristers in Ireland should be obliged to grant appeal.

MR. CALLAN reminded the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that the House had not proved favourable to the proposal on former occasions. Many things had happened since then, and it would likely prove more favourable now. After the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, he should have been disposed to appeal to his hon. Friend to withdraw his Motion, had it not been for the fact that the Local Government Boards in Ireland had received peremptory instructions to object to any person being placed upon the Registers who had received parochial relief. When the matter was under discussion on the Franchise Bill, the Attorney General for England and the right hon. Gentleman had expressed opinions contrary to the proposal. He would be glad to receive a definite pledge from the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, while declining to bind himself by any pledge, was disposed to give the subject of the Instruction favourable consideration.

MR. KENNY said, he hoped his hon. Friend would press his Motion.

MR. T. A. DICKSON remarked that, in prospect of the immense amount of registration work which would have to be done, it was most desirable that this point should be settled. Great uncertainty at present existed as to whether medical relief was a disqualification, and there had been conflicting decisions. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) suggested that the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) should bring up a clause in Committee on the Registration Bill; but that was hardly the way to dispose of the question. It should be dealt with by the Government. The Solicitor General for Ireland was present, and knew the difficulty, and the Government had all the facts before them.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, there was no doubt that there was serious difficulty in determining what the law was. There was indoor relief, which ought to disqualify; there was outdoor relief, which most would agree ought to be on the same footing as indoor relief; and then there was the debatable ground of relief under the Medical Acts. This raised difficult questions about which lawyers had been divided. That being so, it was the duty of the Government, when they brought in a Registration Bill, to make it clear what were their views upon the subject. There was a difference between English and Irish registration with regard to the right of appeal, and that right ought to be given in Ireland the same as in England. The hon. Member's present proposal, however, was not within the scope of the Bill now under consideration; and he hoped, therefore, that, having regard to the answer of the President of the Local Government Board, the hon. Member would hold the matter over until the Registration Bill.

Mr. DEASY said, that the reply of the Solicitor General was satisfactory so far as it went; but it would be more satisfactory if the reply of the hon. and learned Gentleman was more explicit. They did not claim that persons who broke up their homes and went into the workhouse should have votes. All they asked was that labourers and others should not be disqualified from voting because they were attended by a dispensary doctor, and had their children vaccinated. At present, the sanitary authorities might order a house to be disinfected and whitewashed; and if the householder did not pay the expense of the operation he would, under the present law, be disqualified from voting. It would be necessary for them, therefore, to insist that the law should be amended in this respect.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR, who had the following Motion on the Paper:—

> "That, considering the admitted right of Scotland to a large increase in the number of Representatives, this Bill is not satisfactory, in so far as it makes that increase dependent on the chance of both Houses of Parliament consenting to an addition to the number of Members in this House,"

said, he felt he ought to apologize to the House for interposing between the House and the Committee with a discussion on a matter which might appear to many to be a local question. From an Imperial point of view, no doubt, the adequate representation of Scotland was a local question; still, from a Scotch point of view, it was a national question of the very first importance. Indeed, he might say that in Scotland they regarded it as the pivot, upon which much of the future of the political state of Scotland turned. They believed that if they were to have an adequate representation in Scotland they should get along with that representation many of the reforms which had been pressing for some time, but which had never yet been carried out. They should have reform in the management and administration of Scotch affairs, and in other political matters which specially interested their country. That was one reason for the great anxiety that existed among the Scotch Members, and in Scotland, that they should have a full and adequate representation. During the Recess there had been meetings held in different parts of Scotland—not Liberal or Conservative meetings only, but non-Party and public meetings—and in nearly every one of these—certainly in every one he had followed—where this question was raised, resolutions were passed urging the Government to make it a vital provision that Scotland ought to have the 12 Members promised in the Bill. Another reason for anxiety was the manner in which the Government had dealt with this matter. The Government had admitted by their Bill that Scotland was entitled to these 12 additional Representatives. There were many of them who thought that, having regard to the population and taxation of Scotland, this was but a scrimp allowance; but he did not suppose any Member in that House would quarrel with the number, provided the offer of the Government was fairly and fully carried out. The question he had to ask the House and the right hon. Gentleman was this—Was that offer to be fairly and fully carried out? The Bill and the Schedules were as satisfactory, so far as Scotland was concerned, as anything they could desire. Under the Bill England was to have 465 Members, Wales 30, Ireland 103, and Scotland 72. That, as far as they were concerned, was satisfactory;

but if they added up these numbers they found they came, not to 658 Members, but to 670 Members. For his part, he had no serious objection to an increase of 12 in the number of Members of the House. He thought it was Mr. Disraeli who said there was no magic and no cabalistic charm about the numerals 658. He supposed most of his Scotch Colleagues would agree with that; and if the House took that view there would be no more difficulty about the matter. If it had not been for the gloss which the Prime Minister gave in his opening statement to the Bill and the Schedules, he thought no one from Scotland would have cared to raise this question. In his opening statement the Prime Minister said—

> "There is . . . . a great unsatisfied claim on the part of Scotland; and we propose to meet that claim by asking the House to enact, or if Gentlemen like, to submit to an increase of its own numbers by 12 seats."

From those words it was clear that if the House should decline to add to the number of its Members, Scotland would suffer. It was quite obvious what would happen —England would get her 465 Members, Ireland would get her 103 Members, and Wales would get her 30 Members; but Scotland would have to do without her increase. There was no other interpretation to be put on those words of the Prime Minister than that, if the House should decline to add to the number of Members of the House, Scotland would have to go without. It was admitted by the Government that Scotland had a right to that number provided, and provided only, that the House submitted to an increase of its Membership. Did that fairly and fully carry out the offer of the Government? The Bill professed to deal equitably with all parts of the United Kingdom. His right hon. Friend said last night the Government had proceeded on equal lines, and had drawn no distinction between one part of the United Kingdom and the other. It was quite true that the Bill had drawn no distinction; but by that gloss of the Prime Minister the Government had drawn a distinction. The Government said the claims of England should be satisfied unconditionally; that the claims of Wales should be satisfied unconditionally; that the claims of Ireland should be satisfied superabundantly and unconditionally; but that the claims of Scotland should not be satisfied except under conditions. Why should Scotland be subjected to conditions, and other parts of the United Kingdom not subjected to these? Scotland was not an alien part of the Kingdom. It was as loyal, enlightened, and vigorous, and as capable of governing, as either England, Wales, or Ireland. Why should the satisfaction of the claims of Scotland be conditional, while that of the claims of other parts of the United Kingdom were unconditional? He thought they were entitled to press the Government strongly on this point; and, in so doing, they would be only following the advice given them by the Prime Minister himself. In 1867, Mr. Disraeli made a similar proposal, with this difference—that it was only proposed to give them seven Members. The Prime Minister, who was then in opposition, pointed out that the Scotch Members would have to bear the whole force of the objection to increasing the Members of that House, and asked the Scotch Members to remember the assailable position in which they would stand if they had no fund on which to draw except the speculative increase of the numbers of the House. The Scotch Members were in precisely the same—if not in a worse—position now. The circumstances were identical. The adverse judgment was as strong as ever in regard to the increase of its numbers. The position of the Scotch Members was just as assailable now as it was then; and if the Prime Minister was right in giving the advice he did give in 1867—and that he was right was proved at the time, because, though Scotland got the seven additional Members, she had to get them from a different source—then the Scotch Members were justified in acting upon that advice now. But, looking at the matter as practical men, what was the chance that the House would consent to the addition to its numbers? He believed that there were only two occasions in the last two centuries on which the numbers had been increased—in 1707, at the time of the Union with Scotland, and in 1800, at the time of the Union with Ireland. Since then various attempts had been made by strong Governments to increase the numbers, and not one of them had succeeded. In 1852 an attempt was made, which failed; in 1867 and in 1868 attempts were made, which failed; and in 1866 the Cabinet considered the question, and determined that it was no use to propose an increase, as the House would not listen to it. The present attempt might, no doubt, be more fortunate; but it was obvious that the proposal was not popular in the House. He did not suppose that many of them would agree with an hon. Member who, in 1867, expressed the opinion that it was the most dangerous proposal ever submitted to a Legislative Assembly; but it was very generally regarded as an evil precedent, and there were many who thought it would be better to decrease than to increase their number. That feeling existed among the rank and file on both sides of the House, and they also saw it expressed in the leading organs of public opinion. *The Edinburgh Review* contained a strong protest against the increase of Members, while *The Quarterly Review* said it was obviously objectionable, and the most unpopular part of the scheme, and that the Scotch Members themselves would probably prefer to see their claims postponed than purchase the additional Members at such a price. That was what the writer in *The Quarterly Review* said; and he added that they might pefer six Members drawn from another source to 12 Members who could only be got by swelling the numbers of the House. He did not know whether the writer in *The Quarterly Review* knew the temper of the Scotch Members better than he did; but he would be much surprised if they would be content with six when they were entitled to 12. He had never known that his countrymen were proverbial for their readiness to accept 6*d*. as full change for 1*s*. It was obvious that the proposal was unpopular; and the question was whether its unpopularity would defeat it? He believed that the question of success or failure was in the hands of the Government. If the Government made the proposed increase a vital point of the Bill, and used their authority to get it carried, then he believed it would be carried; but if the Government would not do this, then his opinion was that the House would reject the proposal. Would the Government make the proposal vital? The Scotch Members had tried in vain to get an answer from the Government on that point. His hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) had twice asked the question, and the Prime Minister replied that that was not the time to ask what points of the Bill were vital, and what points were not vital. They had raised the question again before the adjournment; and in the Recess the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster was asked what his opinion was on the matter; but they had not got a very re-assuring answer from him. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to divide himself into two parts. He spoke as the Member for the Border Burghs, and also as a Member of the Cabinet; and while his answer in the first capacity was all that could be desired, there was a very different ring about that which he gave as a Cabinet Minister. They had made two more attempts since the meeting of Parliament. The Lord Advocate had told them that he could add nothing to what had been said in debate upon the subject. But nothing had been said in debate, so that the anxiety of the Scotch Members had not been diminished by that answer. Then a Memorial had been presented to the Prime Minister from an important body in Scotland, signed by many influential names. The Prime Minister, through his Secretary, replied as follows:—

> "The Council may rely on the Government to continue to be alive to the importance of securing to Scotland a just representation; but they will not expect him at the present moment to go beyond this assurance."

That certainly seemed to them like asking for bread and getting a stone. To most of the Scotch Members this hesitation on the part of the Government to give a straightforward answer was very perplexing, and they had hoped that the Government would show some determination and not let the matter drift. They only asked the Government to exercise their authority upon the matter. In Scotland, they knew that they had right and justice on their side, and they knew that the Government could give them the extra Members. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would give a satisfactory answer on the subject. He would ask him whether the Government would make it a vital point of the Bill that Scotland should receive her rights; whether they would give an assurance that in this increase Scotland should be treated as England, Wales, and Ireland were treated, unconditionally; and whether Scotland would get these additional 12 Members even if the House did not agree to the increase of its numbers? In the belief that the Government would respond to this appeal, he did not propose to put the Motion to the House of which he had given Notice; but he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that if he could give an answer such as would be satisfactory to the people of Scotland on this point, he might be assured of the most cordial and full acceptance of the Bill by the people of Scotland, and by the Scotch Members, and they would use every effort in their power to get it passed into law.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that, in his opinion, the hon. Member had wasted a little of his indignation against the Prime Minister in the remarks which he had made. He could not think that the hon. Member could have any real doubt as to the nature of the position taken up by the Government in this matter. Did the hon. Member seriously think that the Government could go on with this Bill if the number of Scotch Members were to be left as it was? The Prime Minister had not departed from the usual practice of the House in declining to state, a long time in advance, what exact parts of the Bill would be considered as vital to its passing. Although the Prime Minister declined to state whether the increase of the number of Members of the House was a vital part of the Bill, the Prime Minister did state it was an essential portion of the Bill that the same lines would be observed in regard to the different parts of the United Kingdom. That statement in itself, as the hon. Member had first shown, implied a very large increase, if not the whole increase of 12. The hon. Member had quoted *The Edinburgh Review* and *The Quarterly Review*, as showing that an increase to the numbers of the House of Commons would not be made. But surely the House, just now, were better judges of what they were likely to do than either of these reviews. The hon. Member himself had laughed at the idea that Scotchmen would rather give up their claim to more Members than that there should be an increase in the number of the House. That was so notoriously erroneous, and so entirely opposed to Scotch views, that it quite disposed of the authority of *The Edinburgh Review* and *The Quarterly Review* on that matter. The hon. Member asked him to make a very strong statement as to what were the vital parts of the Bill. Now, he did not hesitate to say that it would be impossible for the Government to go on with that Bill if the essential lines which the Bill laid down were departed from in any large degree. The increase of 12 Members for Scotland was, he thought, required to keep even lines—which were an essential part of the measure—between the various parts of the United Kingdom. The hon. Member said that he thought the House would disagree with a proposal to increase its numbers. He did not himself agree in that anticipation; he did not know whether the hon. Member was himself going to vote against that increase; but he rather thought not. His own belief was that when the House had fully considered the matter, it would, by an overwhelming majority, vote in favour of that increase. He had not himself the least doubt on that question. The hon. Member had assumed, however, that no alternative was open to the House, as between an increase in the number of the House and the loss of the increase to the number of Members for Scotland. They had no reason to believe that the House generally was likely to support any proposal to raise the 15,000 line or the 50,000 line drawn by the Bill. The Bill was one which was generally agreed on by a large number of Members on both sides; and now all of them must be content to give up something of their individual opinions. There might be some who would wish to increase the number of disfranchised boroughs, or to raise the limit of population at which boroughs with two Members should lose one seat; but although these might be the individual views of certain Members, he thought that the House would hesitate before it altered the essential character of the Bill by raising either the 15,000 or the 50,000 line. Owing to a newspaper indiscretion, they knew that a suggestion had been thrown out by the Leaders of the Party opposite as to a possible alternative to increasing the number of the House. That possible alternative was a reduction of the Irish Members from

103 to 100, and a corresponding reduction of the English Members so as to supply additional Members for Scotland. But when the House carefully considered that alternative proposal, he thought they would reject it by a large majority, and that an increase in the number of the House would be carried. The fact was that, if the House considered any alternative scheme, the probability was that the House would find itself face to face with a difficulty in regard to what seats it would have to give to Scotland. They would find that these were seats which were given somewhat grudgingly to large constituencies, which were at last receiving something like justice, and these would have to be reduced or limited by any such proposal being carried. Take the case of Ireland. The result of a proposal that Ireland should lose three seats would be that the first three to go would be one for Belfast, one for the county of Tyrone, and one for the county of Tipperary. In England the first to go would be such counties as Warwickshire, perhaps Wiltshire, and such boroughs as Birmingham, Sheffield, and other very important constituencies. The House would thus find itself face to face with the fact that Warwickshire, Birmingham, Sheffield, Wolverhampton, and Hull would have to lose seats which the Bill would otherwise give them, in order that they might go to Scotland. He did not think that the House would accept such an alternative, but rather believed that the proposal of the Government would meet with the acceptance of the House. He did not think that his hon. Friend would wish him to go beyond that statement, and tell him definitely at what point of the Bill the Government would give it up, and the Bill be abandoned; but he could assure him that the Government had all along stated, as an essential part of the Bill, that an even line should be observed as between the constituencies of the three countries; and one reason why he should find a difficulty in agreeing to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold), which had yet to come before the House, was that it would draw an uneven line as between one portion of the United Kingdom and the other portions.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, he admitted that Scotland was entitled to her fair share of representation as compared with the rest of the Kingdom; but he was much astonished at the statement just made by the right hon. Baronet in regard to Ireland. The right hon. Baronet had said that, if the Irish Members were to be reduced from 103 to 100, the first constituencies to lose Members would be the largest, most prosperous, and increasing town in the country—Belfast, the county of Tyrone, and the county of Tipperary. If the right hon. Baronet had compared the representation of the different Provinces of Ireland, he would have found that Leinster had one Member for every 43,000 or 44,000 of population, while Ulster only had one for every 55,000. England had not more Members than she was entitled to; Scotland had not as many as she was entitled to; Ireland had more, and Wales infinitely more than she was entitled to. Looking at the arrangement which had been come to between the Leaders of both Parties on that subject—an arrangement by which the Loyal Party in Ireland were to be great sufferers—he was reminded of the memorable meeting of the three Roman Triumvirs, when each of them gave up for sacrifice his own friends in order that he might murder his enemies.

Dr. CAMERON said, he did not know whether it was owing to the diplomatic reserve which the right hon. Gentleman had acquired from his training at the Foreign Office or not, but he had not spoken explicitly on the main point. He said it was imperative that the Government should procure a very large increase for Scotland, if not the whole increase. What Scotch Members wanted was the whole increase to which they were entitled on their population. They did not care whether that increase was to be got by increasing the number of the House, or by other means. That was a matter which the Government would have to decide for themselves. He took it that they were all agreed that the increase of 12 Members to Scotland was not merely an accidental number put into the Bill, but that it was less than Scotland was actually entitled to, numerically speaking, and it was impossible that anything short of that number could be accepted. The number of 12 was not a novel suggestion. If they were to have any faith in railway station speeches again, the additional number proposed must be adhered to, as months ago the Prime Minister named precisely the same number of 12. He thought it could be shown that 12 had not been selected at random, but after careful consideration. The assurance had been given them that it was requisite in order to keep up the even line for the United Kingdom that the number of additional Members allotted to Scotland should be 12. He, personally, had never had any doubt as to the intentions of the Government in that respect; but he ventured to say this, that if any diminution was made in the number of 12—and it was just as well that they should understand this—it would be considered by the people of Scotland as a gross breach of faith on the part of the Government. Notwithstanding the rather diplomatic language in which the speech of the President of the Local Government Board was couched, he thought they need have no apprehensions on the point. [SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Hear, hear!] He was glad to know from the cheers of the right hon. Gentleman that what he said was a correct interpretation of the position of the Government.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he rose to make the Motion which stood on the Paper in his name—namely,

> "That it is inexpedient that the numbers of this House shall be increased, and, in the opinion of this House, Ireland will be sufficiently represented by ninety Members, and Wales by twenty-five Members."

His Motion was based on the fact that an increase in the numbers of the House was a proposal that should never be assented to by the House. A Return which he held in his hand, and which had been laid on the Table of the House since the autumn, showed the proportions of population and representation for the different portions of the United Kingdom. They ascertained from that Return that England had a population of between 25,000,000 and 26,000,000; Wales, 1,360,000; Scotland, 3,867,000; and Ireland, 4,963,000. At present there were 463 Members for England, 30 for Wales, 60 for Scotland, and 105 for Ireland. The Bill of the Government proposed to give 465 Members for England, 30 for Wales, 72 for Scotland, and 103 for Ireland, making the total number 670. The Resolution which he was submitting to the House was founded on the figures stated in the Return, and he proposed that England should have 471, Wales 25, Scotland 72, and Ireland 90. It must be remembered that in 1832 and 1867 the Welsh Members were increased from 26 to 30, and that was done in consequence of the ratio of population requiring it; but since then the population of Wales had almost been stationary, whereas the population of England and Scotland had increased. He regretted that the population of Ireland had also diminished considerably. It must be remembered that the 100 Members given Ireland at the Union were increased in 1832 and in 1867 to 105, and that at one period the population of Ireland had increased to over 8,000,000—one-third the population of the United Kingdom—and in consesequence the number of its Members had been increased. He maintained that it was the duty of English and Scottish independent Members to unite together on this great occasion, when the redistribution of seats was about to be settled for a generation to come, and to make such an arrangement as would be advantageous to the country and just according to the Returns before the House. The exact proportion on which Members ought to be distributed was one to every 54,000 of population; but in the case of Wales and Ireland one was to be given to every 44,000 or 46,000. [SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No, no!] That seemed to him most unfair.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, even including the Universities, the proportion in Ireland would be over 50,000.

SIR JOHN HAY thought his figures were correct, and remarked that the question the House had to decide was whether Wales and Ireland should have one Member to every 44,000 of population, whereas England and Scotland should only have one to every 54,000 or 55,000? The right hon. and gallant Gentleman concluded by moving the Motion.

VISCOUNT CRICHTON seconded the Motion. On a previous occasion he had remarked that if the framers of the Bill had wished to reduce to a minimum the influence of the Loyal minority of Ireland they could not have succeeded better in their purpose. He had also stated that, looking to the number of its population, Ireland had received a most unfair share of representation. He saw no reason to alter those opinions. Whether the House looked at this question on the basis of the Census Return of 1881, or on the basis of the Registrar General's Return of 1884, an overwhelming case had been made out for a reduction in the number of Irish Members. An argument against this reduction had been brought forward by the Prime Minister, who said that in the case of Ireland, as in the case of other parts of the country, some regard ought to be had to the nearness and distance from the seat of Government. But this argument had been completely demolished by the treatment vouchsafed to the three countries. According to the Bill, Scotland had one Member to every 53,290 of the population, Ireland had one Member to every 51,140, and Wales had one Member to every 45,342. In Ireland itself no attention was paid to nearness or distance from the seat of Government. Leinster was nearer to the seat of Government than Connaught, yet Leinster had one Member to every 45,530 persons, and Connaught had one Member to every 55,000 persons. The only other argument against reducing the number of Irish Members was the Union argument, which he believed had a great deal of weight with his right hon. Friends on the Front Opposition Bench. It was urged that the number of 100 Members was fixed by the Act of Union, and that it would be dangerous at a time when so many attacks were being made on the integrity of the Union to alter the number then fixed. That might have been a very good argument 15 or 16 years ago, before the Church of Ireland was disestablished and disendowed. But the maintenance of the Irish Church was declared to be a fundamental part of the Act of Union, and it was scarcely fair that the Act of Union should be disregarded when it told in favour of the Irish Loyalists, and thrown in their teeth when it told against them. As a matter of fact, Ireland would, according to the Bill in its present form, obtain an excessive number of Members, whether the calculation was based on the Census of 1881 or on the Registrar General's Return of 1884. Ireland at most was only entitled to 96 Members, without including those for the Universities, and this would release five seats, which could be given to Scotland if the House was disinclined to diminish the total number of Members fixed by this Bill. It should be borne in mind that the population of England and Wales and of Scotland was increasing, whereas that of Ireland was decreasing. Since the Census of 1881 the population of England, Wales, and Scotland had increased by 1,175,057, whereas the population of Ireland had decreased by 202,728. There was every reason to believe that this decrease would continue, and the anomaly in 10 year' time would be something ridiculous. The five Members now allotted to Ireland above its rightful number should be taken from certain counties, for the county representation of Ireland was excessive and most unfair to the boroughs; and it was very dangerous, from a public point of view, that in a country where the Land Question was the burning question nearly the whole political power should be thrown into the hands of the rural population. But there were strong political reasons for reducing the representation of Ireland. What would the political results of this measure be? They were all agreed that the result of this Bill—and of the Bill passed in the autumn—would be that, at least, 85 Members would be returned as followers of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), leaving 17 seats to be divided among the Liberals and Conservatives of Ireland. That was a prospect which those desirous of maintaining the Union, and of preserving decency and order of debate in the House of Commons, must look forward to with nothing but dismay. At meetings now being held in Ireland cheers were often given for the Mahdi; and a few days ago the Lord Mayor of Dublin declared that when the Prince of Wales came to Dublin he should haul down the civic flag from the Mansion House. Was this the party to be still further strengthened? There was another party which would also be indirectly strengthened, though not represented in that House—the party of dynamite and the dagger—the party who had murdered their Secretaries, and attempted to blow up the House of Commons. There was a third party which would be immensely weakened—the party of loyalty and of law and order in Ireland—the party which through good report and ill report had maintained its fidelity to England and the English Crown. The position of that party in Ireland was always a difficult one. Under the provisions of this Bill its position would be made almost intolerable, and it was because by accepting something in the nature of the proposal of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay) they would in some degree decrease the inequality in the representation of that party, that he supported the Motion.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient that the numbers of this House shall be increased, and, in the opinion of this House, Ireland will be sufficiently represented by ninety Members, and Wales by twenty-five Members."—(*Admiral Sir John Hay.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question"

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he desired to say one word on the speech of the noble Viscount who had just sat down before he dealt with that of the right hon. and gallant Admiral. He would not go into the political question, because he had a complete answer to the speech of the noble Viscount on general grounds. He had referred to the matter of distance. The argument of the Prime Minister, to which allusion had been made, was that it was desirable, other things being equal, that the most distant portions of the United Kingdom should receive very full representation. It was a remarkable fact that, though they followed strict population lines, nevertheless the most distant portions of the United Kingdom were very fully represented under the Bill. Ireland and Wales, and the North of Scotland, were very largely represented, and upon even lines. The right hon. and gallant Admiral assumed that Scotland was under-represented; but it so happened that there was Scotland, and Scotland and the Highlands and Islands, and the more distant portions were represented without any general departure from the principles of the Bill on a higher scale than England, and higher than Ireland or Wales. Upon any even line they could take, Leinster would be over-represented, as compared with the other three Provinces. If they adopted a system of equal lines, which was the only fair and solid ground on which he thought the House could take its stand, whichever even line they adopted they would over-represent Leinster. The right hon. and gallant Admiral desired to retain four Members for the City of London. As he was the most advanced revolutionist in the House, it was an extraordinary thing for him to go out of his way to do this. The day population of the City was not a matter of official record at all; but he might point out that the night population of the central wards of all great towns was considerably less than the day population. In regard to the hardship supposed to be inflicted in this matter, it must be remembered that there was a great set-off in the fact that all these persons dwelt elsewhere and had double votes. The Government, taking into consideration the ancient character of the City of London, had rather strained a point in its favour, and had left it with two Members. As to University representation, he should be very glad to hear the case which the right hon. and gallant Baronet would make later on. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke), for one, speaking as an individual, was opposed to University representation; but he intended to waive his own opinion and to support the scheme embodied in the Bill. He thought the right hon. and gallant Baronet, who wished to cut up the whole country afresh, would have great difficulty in justifying University representation. The right hon. and gallant Baronet spoke of even lines; but he would apply them to the test of population in 1884 as between county and county and different parts of the United Kingdom. Here he might, in passing, observe that Wales had never been separately treated for Parliamentary purposes, but had been always regarded as a part of England. In speaking of even lines, the right hon. and gallant Baronet ignored altogether the even lines proposed by the Bill. They were even as between constituencies and constituencies. They proposed the same rules of enfranchisement and disfranchisement as between all constituencies throughout the whole of the different parts of the United Kingdom. The right hon. and gallant Baronet, as he understood, first of all said that Ireland ought to have so many; that Wales ought to have so many; that Scotland ought to have so many; and that England ought to have so many; and then, having made these four divisions, he apportioned the number in each of these four divisions separately. The result of that would be undoubtedly that he would obtain a different line in each of the four countries; and while remedying one apparent anomaly he would really create another in the representation. The right hon. and gallant Baronet's Bill could not be taken as altogether accurate, for there were one or two mistakes which he should have to point out when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman brought it before the House. The argument which he had to offer to the House in regard to the various portions of the United Kingdom was as follows. It was true, as the right hon. and gallant Baronet pointed out in his Motion, that while Ireland was somewhat more highly represented than England, Wales was considerably more represented than Ireland. But what was the case with regard to various parts of England itself? If they took certain large districts of England itself, they would find very large districts—districts larger than Wales in area and population—which were greatly over-represented, as compared even with Wales. By the Census of 1881, their Bill would give to Ireland one Member to every 51,200 of population, excluding University seats, and Wales one Member to every 45,300 of population; but there were 23 whole counties—not divisions of counties — of England which were more highly represented than Wales, one of them being Rutland, which by the Bill would have one Member to every 21,400. There could be no doubt whatever of the fact that the Eastern and South-Western counties would be more highly represented than even Wales; and, under these circumstances, was it desirable that the House should lay down a system of chopping up the United Kingdom into four separate parts? On the contrary, would it not be better that they should lay down an even line, constituency by constituency? Unless they made a clean sweep of the whole country—a more revolutionary plan than was now placed before the House by the Government—it would be impossible to avoid all anomalies. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman excepted the Universities and the City of London from the clean sweep proposed by his Amendment; and he, therefore, might reasonably appeal to him to make some larger concessions towards other existing antiquated institutions than he was inclined to do.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said, there was this strange circumstance about the Motion of the hon. Member for Haddington, that while it had been on the Paper for long, it was now not only not to be divided upon, but it was not even to be moved. There was something pathetic in the attitude of both the hon. Member for Haddington (Mr. Craig-Sellar) and the right hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for Wigtown (Sir John Hay), inasmuch as they were Members whose constituencies were to be improved off the face of the earth. Yet the Bill generally, notwithstanding their position, was receiving their full attention. In regard to this matter of the additional Members for Scotland, the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had really made no promise whatever. His argument had simply been—Was it possible to suppose that the Government would do this, or would not do that? For his own part, he would not be surprised at anything the Government might do. But he thought they would think twice before they would defraud Scotland of the proposed addition of 12 Members in her representation. He protested against the notion that this was what was called a local question. It was a matter of the highest possible importance. The practice of treating Scotch questions as matters of local interest led them into great mistakes; and one of these mistakes was that the language adopted was such as to make it appear that they were suing for what was their undoubted right. What was so singularly invidious was the method by which it was proposed to give Scotland this supposed increase of representation. If the claim of Scotland was undoubtedly just—as he understood was admitted—it ought not to be made to depend on an invidious and unpopular proposal to add to the numbers of the House. It ought to be granted in any case. He noticed that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) spoke as if it would be shocking to take Members from Warwickshire or Belfast, in order to give them to other parts of the Kingdom. There was, it seemed to him (Mr. Dalrymple), nothing shocking about it if these places had more than their share of Members, and if there were no other source from which to get the Members to which other localities might be entitled. The right hon. Baronet deprecated different treatment being applied to different parts of the Kingdom; but Scotland was being treated very differently by the method in which it was proposed to provide her with the additional representation to which she was entitled. Much had been said about justice to Ireland, and there was not a man in the House but would desire to do justice to Ireland; but justice to Ireland meant too often injustice to other parts of the country. He could understand the stipulation that Ireland should have 100 Members, as had been settled at the Union; but the Bill proposed to continue 103 Members at the very time that Scotland could with difficulty obtain the increased number which was her due. He had always understood that this Bill was to remove all anomalies; but it was now confessed that anomalies were still to exist, and there were none worse than that of giving a Member, as was done in some cases, to boroughs with 29,000 of a population; whereas there was at least one large county constituency of 94,000 in Scotland that would only have one Member. That was not equal legislation on equal lines.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, that whenever the Welsh Members had asked for any legislation for Wales, the hon. Members opposite, belonging to the Tory Party, had invariably objected to any such legislation on the ground that Wales was part of England, and that no distinction could be made between the two countries. But now that they wanted to deprive Wales of five of its Representatives, they said that Wales was not a part of England, and that it must be treated as a separate Nationality like Scotland and Ireland. That was a very unfair argument to be used by those who always, when it served their purpose, maintained the contrary. Ever since the time of Henry VIII., Wales had been treated as a part of England, and every Act of Parliament passed for England extended to Wales as a matter of course. In the Reform Acts of 1832 and 1867, Wales was treated as a part of England; and in all the Franchise and Redistribution Bills that had ever been proposed in that House, the same rule had been followed, and no distinction made between the two countries. The present Bill had followed those precedents and the same invariable rule. The Bill was framed on certain well-defined lines, which were applied to Wales in exactly the same way as they were applied to England. The incidence of those lines might, in some instances, be favourable to Wales; but, on the other hand, they had produced hardships in some cases. The application of the principles upon which the Bill had been framed would have the effect of disfranchising the Anglesey boroughs, which had the largest population of all the boroughs to be disfranchised. The county of Cardigan, by the operation of the same principles, was to have only one Member for 73,000 inhabitants, which was one of the largest county populations to whom one Member only was given. Some English counties had one Member to 45,000 inhabitants. The county of Huntingdon had one Member for every 29,000 inhabitants, whilst Rutland had a Member for its 21,000 inhabitants. Cardiff, with a population of 85,000 in 1881, and a population of over 100,000 at the present time, was to have only one Member, being the largest borough in the Kingdom with one Member only. It could not, therefore, be said that Wales had been unduly favoured by being allowed to retain its present number of Representatives. The Bill was, upon the whole, a fair one, and was framed on certain broad and general principles which had been applied with impartiality to the whole of the United Kingdom. In his opinion, the greatest blot in the Bill was that it proposed to give too many Members to London. The large population in and around that centre was to have 71 Members; and when they considered that the Metropolitan Members represented a population which surrounded that House, and were at all times in immediate touch with their constituents, he foresaw danger to the independence of that House, and an undue influence that might be exerted by the compact population of London in the affairs of this Kingdom. In quiet times the danger would not be felt; but circumstances might arise when the danger might become real. The distant parts of the Kingdom ought to have a relatively larger representation than the seat of Government, in order to maintain and exert their just influence in legislation. The danger he now suggested was present to the minds of the framers of the American Constitution, who adopted an extreme course to avoid it. They declined to select any large town as the centre of their Government, and went so far as to deny any representation to the capital. The City of Washington had no Representative in Congress. That was one extreme; but they were certainly going to the other extreme with regard to London.

Mr. RAIKES said, the House was somewhat embarrassed by the unexpected course taken by the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar). It was one thing to hold that Scotland was entitled to an increase of representation, another thing to hold that Ireland should be shorn of a part, another thing to hold that Wales should be shorn of a part, and a separate proposition to allege that the number of the House ought not to be increased. By the ill-advised course adopted they had to discuss all these four questions together. He, for one, was strongly of opinion that the number of Members of the House ought not to be increased, and if they had a Reform Bill of an ideal character, and one that could be framed without too much regard to the special predilections of Members of the House, the aim would be rather to make a change in the opposite direction. He believed that the number of Members was too unweildy for debate, and when the House was filled, as it was last week, it did not present the appearance of a deliberative Assembly, but rather degenerated into a mob. He could not help thinking that the reformers of the future, proceeding on more exact principles than those which had hitherto governed Reform Bills, would look in a direction opposite to that of an increase of numbers, because if they followed the unfortunate example of the Government, who proposed to get out of their difficulties by increasing the number of Members, they might run the risk of impairing the character and efficiency of the House as a deliberative Body, and of disparaging its credit. He should be prepared to vote for part of the Amendment on the Paper, because it affirmed the proposition that it was inexpedient to increase the number of Members of the House. He should be quite prepared to go with his right hon. and gallant Friend in affirming the first part of his proposal—"That it is inexpedient that the numbers of this House shall be increased;" and he should also have been prepared to have supported the Amendment which was expected to have been moved, and which he thought ought to have been moved, by the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar)—

> "That, considering the admitted right of Scotland to a large increase in the number of Representatives, this Bill is not satisfactory, in so far as it makes that increase dependent on the chance of both Houses of Parliament consenting to an addition to the number of Members in this House."

His right hon. and gallant Friend, however, appeared to have put forward the question in a most unfortunate connection. He not only asked the House to affirm a proposition which he imagined hon. Members from Ireland and Wales would be prepared to accept, but he put forward a second one, and he did not suppose that in any part of the House there was any great desire that the increase should be associated with a declaration hostile to the representation of Ireland and the representation of Wales as they at present existed. The hon. and learned Member for Beaumaris (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) spoke, of course, with personal interest in the matter, because he represented a doomed constituency. The borough represented by the hon. and learned Gentleman was described as that of Beaumaris; but, as the House was aware, it did not consist of one borough alone, but was made up of four separate and distinct places, and as the population of the entire district fell below 15,000, the borough was likely to be extinguished. It was worth while, in referring to the argument of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke) as to "the equal line," to point out the entirely exceptional treatment which Wales received with regard to borough representation as compared with the treatment of England and Ireland. All towns in England below 15,000 were disfranchised by the Bill; but there were in Wales 30 or 40 towns, each of them below 15,000, which were not disfranchised. [An hon. Member: They are grouped.] In Ireland all secondary towns were disfranchised. Lisburn, for instance, was to be disfranchised, but Newry was not, the population there being increased by drawing upon neighbouring towns. Nevertheless, the representation was refused to such places as Queenstown and Kingstown, where there existed a large population fairly entitled to representation. Therefore, the case was not exactly as the right hon. Gentleman had described it, nor could it be said that the Government were proceeding on an equal line. The right hon. Baronet said that, in dealing with Wales, the Government had acted upon an equal line analogous to that drawn for England. He presumed the argument of the right hon. Gentleman was this—that he found a constituency existing which exceeded a certain limit, and he did not propose to ask how many towns contributed towards constituting the necessary population. The statement of the right hon. Baronet amounted to this—"We say that all boroughs containing less than 15,000 ought to be disfranchised; but if we find a borough already existing with a population larger than that, we do not stop to consider whether it consists of one, four, or eight towns, but we leave it alone." Now, he (Mr. Raikes) would not quarrel with that argument, which was an extremely Conservative one. He simply wished to point out how different the system of representation was in Wales when compared with that of England, and also with that to be established in Ireland. When the Bill was introduced some months ago, he had ventured to point out that in North Wales there was not a single town which contained 15,000 inhabitants, and, therefore, if the same rule were applied to North Wales which was applied to England, and which was to be ruthlessly applied to Ireland, it would have been necessary to destroy the whole of the borough representation of North Wales. He was not there to argue the case of the contributory boroughs. He was inclined to think that it would have been well if the Government, rather than destroy the district boroughs in Wales, would have condescended to have taken a lesson from them, and have extended the principle by creating more district boroughs. The insoluble questions which had been transferred to the Boundary Commissioners would have been better met by creating groups of boroughs in England analogous to those in Scotland, rather than that they should be compelled to create districts of most extraordinary shape and most unequal area, which were to be called "county districts," although some of them were created expressly with a view to their containing an urban population. He was only seeking now to put the House in possession of facts which he did not think they would obtain from the statement of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) alone. He had said that he was prepared to support the first words of the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay); but he confessed that he felt very great difficulty in supporting the latter part of that Amendment. There was a great deal of force in what had been stated by the President of the Local Government Board with regard to the apparently unequal treatment which had been meted out by the Government to Ireland and Wales. The disproportion in the number of Members was, no doubt, palpable; but he hardly knew whether it was sufficiently considerable to justify them in upsetting the very basis of the scheme upon which they were proceeding. The House of Commons was invited to accept a measure framed on certain broad and intelligible outlines; and if, in the case of Ireland, they declared that they would not proceed upon the principles which up to the present point had been accepted by the House, they would find themselves re-opening the whole question of the readjustment of representation, and would tax the utmost efforts of the House to deal with the subject satisfactorily. Therefore, he had great difficulty in supporting the latter part of the proposal of his right hon. and gallant Friend. With regard to Ireland, they were told that that country, upon a numerical basis, was only entitled to 86 or 90 Members. At the present time the nominal number was 105, and its actual representation was 103 Members. The Act of Union gave to Ireland 100 Members. Now it seemed to him that the Government had had before them a very easy and a very obvious course to take, and one which would probably have received support in the main—namely, if they had reverted to the Union number. If they had taken 100 Members as the proper representation of Ireland, that country would still have been in the position of the most favoured nation, as she would have had a larger representation than either her wealth or her population entitled her to, and, at all events, the House would have been in a position to say that they were not acting in a manner that was disadvantageous to the interests of Ireland. He should have been quite willing, if the Government had dealt with the question on that principle, to have supported them in resisting any proposal to reduce the number of Members below 100. But he was entirely at a loss to understand how they could justify the proposition to keep up the number to that of the 103 or 105 seats at present enjoyed. That number had been given to Ireland under a condition of things very different from that which existed at present, when the population of the country was so much larger than it was at present, and very much larger as compared with that of the Three Kingdoms. At that time the population of Ireland nearly approached to one-third of the population of England. But there was nothing like that proportion at the present time. His right hon. and gallant Friend proposed to cut down the representation of Ireland to 90, and that of Wales to 25 Members. He did not believe that any hon. Member who spoke in that House wished to say anything objectionable to any body of Members; but as reference had been made to the existence of disloyal feelings among a part of the Irish people, he must say that he did not think the best way of reinforcing those who entertained feelings of loyalty was by subjecting Ireland to what might be considered an act of injustice. He had already expressed his opinion as to what ought to be regarded as the representation of that country, and, as a resident of Wales, he must say that he could not altogether approve of an actual reduction in the number of Welsh Representatives. He did not think that a more loyal or law-abiding population than the people of Wales could be found among Her Majesty's subjects, and although most of their Representatives in that House sat on the Ministerial side, he should be very sorry that the people of Wales should be induced to think that they were not treated with fairness or due consideration by the House of Commons because of their small number and their inability to defend themselves as compared with others. He could not help thinking that the representation of the Metropolitan districts under the Bill was less than it ought to be; but he would not go into that question now. What he wished to ask his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay) was, whether he could see his way to confining his Motion to the first portion of it—

> "That it is inexpedient that the numbers of this House shall be increased,"

leaving to the Government, upon whom the responsibility would fall, the duty of saying how the increase in the case of Scotland should be provided? He thought it was most undesirable that the House should assume a responsibility which properly belonged to the Government. He had sufficient confidence in the ingenuity and knowledge of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) and of the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), to feel satisfied that they would have no difficulty in making provision for the 12 seats proposed to be given to Scotland, if it was left to them to say what the arrangement should be.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, that complaint had been made by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down against his hon. Friend the Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar) for not having proceeded with his Motion. His hon. Friend had made an interesting speech, in the course of which he had complained of the Government for not having been sufficiently explicit in reference to its promise with regard to an increase in the representation of Scotland. His right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) replied to that complaint, and replied to it in such terms that he was glad to find his hon. Friend was quite satisfied, and intimated that he would not proceed with the Motion. It was true that other Members who followed his right hon. Friend had expressed themselves not altogether satisfied with the declarations of the Government on this point. For instance, the hon. Member for Buteshire (Mr. Dalrymple) said he considered that no actual promise had been given by the Government in regard to the increase of Scotch Members, and that he did not attach much importance to the words of the President of the Local Government Board. The hon. Member then proceeded to say, that after all, the Government ought to perform its promise. Now, what was the promise? His right hon. Friend said he considered it essential that the same line which had been observed in regard to the representation of Ireland should be observed in Scotland also, and that practically involved an addition to the number of Scotch Members. In point of fact, the Government carried out exactly the same policy of enfranchisement and disfranchisement in all of the three countries, and the effect of that was that Scotland would receive 12 Members, which was the number it was entitled to receive, if the population at the Census of 1881 was to be taken into consideration. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) had expressed himself as being, on the whole, against increasing the number of the Members of the House, and had said that he was quite prepared to support the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), so far as the first part of it was concerned, but that he was not prepared to support the last part. His right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge had rather flinched from carrying out his principles. The right hon. Gentleman was ready to say that the numbers of the House should not be increased; but he was not prepared to say how that should be effected. He said that Scotland ought to have an addition of 12 Members. Then where were those 12 Members to be obtained? Were they to be obtained from Ireland, or from England, and in what proportion? He did not know what negotiations the right hon. Gentleman might have had with the Irish Members, or what it was that induced him to be so little anxious to follow the right hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir John Hay) in affirming the second part of the Motion. The speeches of right hon. Gentlemen opposite only showed the difficulties by which the whole of the question was surrounded. If the House determined that 12 additional seats should be given to Scotland, how were those additional seats to be obtained except by increasing the numbers of the House? It was the belief of the Government that that was the only way in which this operation could be effected. His right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board said the Government believed the House would accept that proposition, and they were, therefore, determined to support it, believing that it would be carried, and it rested with any Member who objected to the propostion to suggest something else. But the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) had put forward no alternative plan. He declined to support what the right hon. and gallant Admiral suggested as an alternative, but did not submit any other proposal to the House. They had listened to an interesting speech from the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton), in which, speaking as an Irishman and as the Representative of one of the counties of Ulster, he, nevertheless, expressed himself in favour of a diminution in the number of Irish seats. The right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), replying to that speech, said he did not think it the right way of reinforcing the Loyal Party in Ireland to deal with that country in such a way as would involve an injustice. It appeared to him (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) that those words were just and true, and he would commend them to the noble Viscount, whom he would ask to consider whether, speaking as an Irish Member, he thought that his recommendation to the House to reduce the number of Irish seats was altogether the best way of reinforcing in Ireland the Party of which he was such a distinguished ornament? For his (Mr. Shaw Lefevre's) part, he would be very loth to see any reduction in any of the loyal Members for Ireland, and he trusted that that would not be the case. He firmly believed that the effect of establishing a universal system of one-Member districts in Ireland would be to enable the minority to be represented in many more places than hon. Members supposed. But he would ask the noble Viscount, how it was likely that the Loyal Party could receive reinforcement by adopting the proposition which had been made by him? He should be very much surprised if those hon. Members who sat on that side of the House, and who were also Members of the Loyal Party in Ireland, though not quite in accord with the noble Viscount —he should be much surprised to find that they supported the views of the noble Viscount. He certainly thought it would be a most unwise course to reduce the number of Irish Representatives. Perhaps some argument might be adduced in favour of going back to the number which was fixed at the time of the Union; but after all that would only give a reduction of three, and was it worth while, for so small a reduction, to raise a great Constitutional question, which would probably give rise to great discontent? He ventured to think that, on the whole, the House would do wisely to adopt the proposal of the Government to increase the representation of Scotland by the number proposed in the Bill—namely, 12—and to provide for the addition by increasing the number of Members of the House, and not by entering upon the very difficult and arduous question of reducing the numbers either in Ireland or Wales, or in any other part of the Kingdom, in order to do an act of justice to Scotland.

Mr. BIDDELL said, he thought that before deciding on the number of Members of the House, hon. Members would do well to bear in mind coming events—namely, the federation of the Colonies with the Mother Country, when he thought the chief of them would have a claim to have a Representative in the House. At present they had nothing to guide them but population. He thought they ought to take another element into consideration, and that was taxation. Through the kindness of a former Member of the House (Sir Henry Peek), he held in his hand certain statistics showing approximately what the general taxation of each of the Divisions of the nation was, taking the Property and Income Tax as an index. He found that in England there were 465 Members, representing an assessment to Property and Income Tax of £418,000,000, giving each Member the representation of taxation equal to £810,000. In Wales there were 30 Members, representing taxation amounting to a little more than £14,500,000, so that in the case of each Member the taxation was represented by a Property and Income Tax assessment of £487,000. In Ireland the 103 Members were only assessed to the Property and Income Tax at £35,000,000, giving to each Member a taxation only of £340,000. He, therefore, thought that this was an element which ought to be taken into consideration; and although it was practically impossible to provide Members in proportion to the taxation of the country, he thought they ought not to overlook entirely the question of taxation, as they had done under the present Bill. He should have great pleasure, if the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay) went to a division, in supporting the Motion. Only one word more. An hon. Gentleman opposite had spoken of the over-representation of the Eastern counties. If that remark was meant to apply to the county of Suffolk, he begged to tell the hon. Member that each Member for that county would represent a population of over 50,000, and he thought the Government would not have done its duty if they had not provided for an increase in its representation, for which he begged to thank them.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD remarked, that he was nearly and almost entirely in accord with the first part of the Resolution of the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay)—namely, that it was inexpedient that the numbers of the House should be increased; but, at the same time, he would venture to express a hope that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would not press that Motion to a division. The question to which it referred was no new question. It had arisen upon every Reform Bill—namely, the question of compensation to Scotland, and the increase of the numbers of the House. But on former occasions the subject had not been dealt with by a proposal on the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair, but had invariably been dealt with by a proposal of a more practical character. He was extremely glad to notice that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was sensible of the great irregularity he had committed when he referred particularly to an Amendment which stood in his (Mr. Arnold's) name on the Paper dealing with this question. He declined to imitate the bad example of the right hon. Gentleman, and would only say that immediately they got into Committee, the second Amendment on the Paper would raise this very question in a direct form. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, in his second speech, had referred to the great disproportion in the representation which prevailed in different parts of the United Kingdom, and the House could not fail to observe what an extremely strong argument his right hon. Friend had supplied, in his remarks, against the proposal to increase the numbers of the House, because, by showing that disproportion, his right hon. Friend had given conclusive evidence that the Bill could not be accepted as one of a final character. Probably at no distant date—perhaps at the issue of the next Census Returns—the House would be called upon to consider whether it could not give this scheme a more effective character. That formed an additional reason why they should not increase the number of Members. He had been surprised to hear hon. Members opposite complain of the hon. Member for Haddington (Mr. Craig-Sellar) for not having submitted the Amendment which stood on the Paper in his name. Judging from the nature of his speech, his hon. Friend evidently perceived that the proposal before the House was not exactly accurate. But there was an alternative proposal which had been pursued in former Reform Bills, and which he (Mr. Arnold) hoped would be pursued in this—namely, to give compensation to Scotland on the line of the Reform Bills of 1832 and 1868 without increasing the number of Members of the House. He was certainly more surprised than all at the request which had been made, not by the hon. Member for Haddington (Mr. Craig-Sellar), but by the right hon. and gallant Admiral opposite (Sir John Hay) and the right hon. Gentleman who sat behind him (Mr. Raikes), for positive declarations on the subject from the Government. It was said that it was a very little matter; but the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill was a Minister of great skill and ingenuity, and knew far better than to say that the Government would treat the increase of the House as a vital part of the Bill. Such a declaration would be resented by every Member of the House. It would have been altogether wrong if the Government had come down to the House and announced their intention of making a question of a domestic character relating to the House itself a vital point. He congratulated his right hon. Friend on the discretion he had shown in refusing to make such a declaration, with a view of coercing the action of any Member of the House.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE expressed a hope that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay) would press his Motion to a division, and, in that case, he would certainly support him. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), in commenting on the speech of the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), had said that he thought the effect of carrying out the proposal of the right hon. and gallant Admiral would be rather to discredit the loyal representation of Ireland instead of having any effect in improving the representation of that country. He was afraid that an important question, which would have to be presented to the next Parliament, would be how they were to deal with the Irish Nationalists, who entertained views entirely opposite from those represented by the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton). How were they to hope, under the present Bill, to increase the power of the Loyal minority in Ireland? In plain words, it was perfectly certain that in the next Parliament there would be an overwhelming body of Irish Nationalists; and he confessed that his own feeling was that they should try to take some action in the direction of diminishing, instead of increasing, the power of that overwhelming Nationalist majority, rather than start off on a wild goose chase for the purpose of increasing the power of the small Loyalist minority. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), in a speech which he made earlier in the evening, had taken occasion to censure the views which had been put forward in *The Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews;* but, at the same time, the right hon. Gentleman laid considerable stress on a newspaper article in which the Conservative Party were advised to go in for the reduction of the Irish representation from 103 to 100 Members. If he might quote the words of an hon. Member who sat below the Gangway (Mr. Parnell), and which were now historical, he would not "venture to take his coat off" for the purpose of securing a reduction in the Irish representation from 103 to 100 Members, because he thought such a small and insignificant reduction would not make such a substantial inroad upon that dangerous force of Irish Nationalists as would make it worth while for any independent Conservative to "take off his coat." The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said the House had already declared itself in favour of fixing a population of 15,000 for one Member, and of 50,000 for two. He did not know upon what the right hon Gentleman based his assumption that those figures would be acceptable to the House. He could well understand that such a scheme as that, which was shadowed forth some months ago in *The Standard* newspaper, in which 10,000 population for one Member was made the unit, might commend itself to a large section of the House—10,000 as the unit of single representation, and 40,000 for two Members. Or he could understand why a sweeping scheme based on the limit of 50,000 or 54,000 population, might have been advocated on the ground that it would secure finality; but he was astonished how any scheme of this kind, which secured nothing in the shape of finality, could be considered satisfactory. In regard to the Instruction placed on the Paper by the hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar), he confessed that in his opinion the Scotch Members had made out a fair case for an increase of the representation of Scotland; but he would qualify this by saying that they had only made out their case on the supposition that the Government intended to deal in a reasonable way with the whole question of representation in that House. Speaking as an independent Conservative, he had not the slightest objection to an increase in the number of the Scotch Members, although, as a general rule, the Scotch Members belonged to that Party with whom he had not the honour of agreeing. But although he might concede to Scotland an increase of Members, he would only do so on strict grounds of reason and justice, and he would not be prepared to do so unless those grounds could be advocated and supported by Her Majesty's Government. He agreed with the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) and the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold), that there was the greatest possible objection to an increase in the total number of Members in the House of Commons, and he would again, even at that hour, suggest to Her Majesty's Government that it might be possible still to re-cast their scheme, so as to provide for the necessary and inevitable increase in the number of Scotch Members, by dealing in a more fair and reasonable manner with the second-class constituencies of England and Wales. At the same time it might be found possible to deal more fairly with the second-class constituencies in Ireland also. The hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny), whose Amendment the Speaker had ruled out of Order, had intended to move that the City of Limerick should be omitted from the provisions of the Bill; not that the City of Limerick should be deprived of representation, but that its boundaries should be extended, and such additional areas included as would increase the population of the Parliamentary borough to the limit necessary to entitle it to retain its present representation. Now, he confessed that he was in the same boat with the hon. Member, because he had the honour to represent a constituency (Exeter) which was almost in exactly the same position as the City of Limerick, and he would express a hope that Her Majesty's Government would be able to see their way to some alteration in the details of their scheme by which they might deal more fairly with second-class constituencies, such as Limerick and Exeter, by enabling towns where the population was close upon 50,000 to increase their area, and thus retain their second Member. He thought that would be a more reasonable scheme of representation, and one that would be more just to the country generally, than the present proposals of the Government.

Mr. WEBSTER observed, that the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir John Hay), while evidently introduced with a view of serving the interests of Scotland, proposed to do so by depriving the two Sister Countries of England and Wales of a portion of their present representation. He thought that the question had assumed a very awkward aspect indeed as regarded the interests of Scotland. The Government had told them now, even more distinctly than before, that the claim of Scotland to have 12 additional Members, must depend solely and entirely on the success of the proposal to add 12 more Members to the numbers of the House. It was quite true that the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Admiral opposite did not, in the first part of it, advert to the additional provision for Scotland. It did, however, deal with the question whether there was to be an increase in the numbers of the House; but, unfortunately, the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was accompanied by other conditions which other Members did not feel inclined to support. He wished to state distinctly that he had no desire whatever to be involved in any hostile division with Members from Ireland. He had no desire whatever to take part in a sort of triangular duel between Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. On the other hand, he confessed that he could not avoid attaching much importance to the entire absence of any declaration from the Front Opposition Bench that the arrangement come to between the Leaders of the two Parties in the House would be adhered to. The hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote), who might be supposed to know what was in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition, had made a most extraordinary speech.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE said, that he had spoken absolutely and entirely for himself.

MR. WEBSTER frankly accepted the statement, but certainly the speeches which had been delivered on the other side of the House were sufficient to justify the Scotch Members in asking for further explanations from Her Majesty's Government. It appeared to him that the Scotch Members ought to have a positive pledge from the Government that they considered it essential to give effect to the fair claims of Scotland. It was, therefore, desirable that the question as to where the additional Scotch Members were to come from should be brought to an issue as soon as possible. He thought that it was not properly dealt with by the proposition of his right hon. and gallant Friend opposite, or by any Amendment upon going into Committee; but that it should be dealt with by means of a substantive Motion that would not be embarrassed with additional provisions which he was satisfied most of the Scotch Members would not vote for. He wished to express the great satisfaction with which he and other Scotch Members had received the assurance that Scotland was entitled to 12 additional Members. He could not help recollecting how different was the way in which the claims of Scotland were now treated from that in which they were treated in the debate of 1868, when a far more moderate demand, on the part of Scotland, was resisted by the English Members. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would give an assurance to the House that Scotland would have its increase of Members. If the Scotch Members did not receive such an assurance, it would become necessary for them to consider what course they ought to take. It was all very well to say that the majority of Members on the other side of the House admitted the fairness of their claim, if they objected to its being obtained by an increase in the number of Members of the House. He wished to emphasize as strongly as possible his fear that the question as regarded the fair and admitted right of Scotland might be seriously jeopardized by this uncertainty, and he thought that at this early stage it ought to be brought to a conclusion.

COLONEL NOLAN was certain that no one could say a word against the conciliatory speech which they had just heard from the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Webster); but he could not say as much for that of the hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote). That hon. Member objected to the Irish Members, because they were termed "National;" but what was the good of having Members from Ireland if they were not to express the national feeling? The hon. Member assigned that as one of his reasons for desiring to reduce the number of Irish and Welsh Members, in order that a second Member might be given to a few second-class constituencies. That was the second argument on which the hon. Member relied; but it would not bear the light of examination, and fell altogether to the ground. No doubt, Exeter was a very nice town, but it was of very little importance; and were they for the sake of keeping up the number of its Members to reduce the entire Irish representation? He now came to the broad question—What were the Irish Members to do? The question of Ireland was a very serious one for England. At present, perhaps, 10 or 12 Irish Members more or less was not of much consequence, because the Government had them completely in their power. [Mr. HEALY: No, no!] Well, he was afraid he had not the courage of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). Nearly the whole of the Press in this country was against them; they were unable to secure by their own action the passing of any Irish measure. Therefore, they were entirely in the power of the Government, and it was absurd to suppose that they were in any other position. The question of Ireland, as he had said before, was a very serious one. It was not a question whether they had 10 or 12 more Members in that House; but it was more important to England, in the first place, to use Ireland as a friend. In the present state of things that was impossible; but he really believed that if they would govern Ireland with ordinary common sense for even eight or 10 years, they might make Ireland their friend. Sydney Smith, in one of his witty remarks, said that Englishmen were sensible in ordinary matters; but whenever they began to talk of Ireland they threw their common sense to the winds. He repeated, that their first object should be to make Ireland their friend, and to convince the world, and the Irish people in the United States, in Canada, Australia, and the other Colonies, that they were treating Ireland with justice. If they reduced the number of Irish Members, would it stand before the world that they were treating Ireland with justice? Some hon. Members said that the population of Ireland was less than her present number of Members justified. But what was the case for 60 or 70 years before? The population of Ireland was enormously in excess of her representation in the first instance, and it was only within the last 20 years, or, strictly speaking, at the last Census, that the population of Ireland had been so much reduced in proportion, and that hon. Members were heard to say that Ireland ought to be represented in proportion to her population. When the population was in excess of the representation they heard nothing about increasing the Irish representation. No doubt, to a small extent, amounting to some five Members, there had been an increase since the Union; but the moment the Census turned the other way there was a cry for a reduction, and the hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote) expressed a strong opinion that there ought to be fewer National Members in the House. He did not believe that a reduction would make very much difference to Ireland. If the Irish Members had any power, it was because they had the public opinion of the United States, Australia, Canada, and the English Colonies on their side; but he did not care, nor would he give a fig, for 10 or 12 votes more or less. There was another point. Some hon. Members thought the number of Irish Members was in excess of the number provided at the time of the Union, but that it was not worth while to knock of the extra three. Of course, if they did, one of the three must be a University Member. Personally, he would not object to see both of them knocked off; but if they reduced the number to that which was provided by the Act of Union there would be 99 county and borough Members, and one for the University. If they adopted any other system of dealing with Ireland, they would still be violating the Act of Union, which, although binding upon this country, was not binding upon the Irish people, seeing that they had never consented to it. They had never had an opportunity of agreeing to it. On the contrary, the English Government bribed wholesale in order to obtain it; they were now enjoying the fruits of it, and the Irish people had no voice in it. He thanked the House for having allowed him to make these remonstrances, and to point out the difficulties and the dangers of the course which some hon. Members seemed desirous of embarking in.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, there was a great contrast between the plausible and interesting speeches which had been delivered by English Conservative Members, and the sentiments uttered regarding the Irish representation by the Irish Tory Members who had spoken during the debate. He need only refer to the speeches of the hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote) and the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes). Those two speeches contrasted most favourably with the speeches they had listened to from the Irish Tory Members. On both sides of the House they heard the Scotch Members advocating increased representation for their country, and strongly supporting the proposal of the Government for conceding additional Members. But what did they hear from the Irish Tory Members? The noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton) advocated a reduction in the number of Irish Representatives, and suggested that Ireland was over-represented, that a number of her Members should be taken away and given to Scotland. That was a curious illustration of Irish patriotism, coming from a noble Viscount who represented the loyal county of Fermanagh. Nothing was heard of the over-representation of Ulster, when the Ulster Tories held the 29 seats, and when no Catholic or Presbyterian had a voice in the representation, and when, before the Ballot Act, Catholics and Presbyterians were driven like cattle to the poll to vote in accordance with the will of their landlord. What happened now, when the franchise was about to be extended, and the tenant farmers, under the benefits of the Land Act, had been made secure in their holdings and were now in a position of independence? The noble Viscount told the House that the agricultural population of Ireland was over-represented. He should like to know what the loyal farmers of Ulster would say to-morrow when they read that speech? What did the noble Viscount also advocate? He said that Armagh should lose a Member, and also Tyrone. Why should Armagh lose a Member? The population of the county was 162,000, and it had only got three Members. Under the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill the noble Viscount would leave the county only two Members, which meant one Member for every 81,000 of the population. The population of Tyrone was 198,000, and under the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill it would have four Members, or one for about every 50,000 persons. The noble Viscount however, made no reference to his own county (Fermanagh), which only contained a population of 84,000. That county was still to return two Members, whereas the representation of Armagh was to be cut down. The noble Viscount thought that the agriculturists of Ireland were over-represented, but he was in favour of continuing the anomalies of the old borough system, which was a curious commentary upon what had taken place during the last few years since the passing of the Land Act. The noble Viscount and his Friends were now complaining of the people they had formerly relied upon. He hoped the noble Viscount and his Friends would act upon the advice they had received from the Marquess of Salisbury by going over to Ireland and trying to convert the people there to their views. He agreed with the hon. Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge that to adopt the Resolution now before the House would be a most unwise policy to pursue towards Ireland. Let the people be represented, no matter what their opinions were. If there was a disloyal Ireland, and no one could question the fact, let it be represented on the floor of the House, and do not let them have a seething mass of disaffection in Ireland, claiming that it was not represented, or that it was under-represented. The present proportion of 103 Members to Ireland was not too many, considering the difficulties which the Irish Members had to contend with in attending Parliament. Some of them had to cross the Channel once or twice a-month, and found it necessary to travel sometimes 1,000 miles a-month in order to attend to their duties in the House of Commons, and at the same time to attend to private business in Ireland. English Members quietly living at home, and having easy access to the House, could scarcely realize the difficulties which an Irish Member like himself, living in the extreme North of Ireland, experienced in having to travel constantly between the two countries. He was satisfied that if hon. Members realized the position which the Irish Representatives occupied they would agree that Ireland was not over-represented.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, the hon. Member who had just spoken had contrived thoroughly to misunderstand his noble Friend the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton). What his noble Friend urged was simply this—the Government were now bringing in a Bill which based the representation, to a very large extent, upon population; and unquestionably, if that was the test, Ireland was over-represented, and his noble Friend had pointed out the consequences. What would be the result? It was all very well for the hon. Member to get up and state his opinion that every section of political thought in Ireland should be represented. But did the hon. Member know that the political Party to which he belonged would under this Bill be practically dead? [Mr. T. A. DICKSON: No.] It would be, practically, politically dead. [Mr. T. A. DICKSON: No; decidedly no.] He would qualify the expression by saying that the Party would be politically dead if the number of votes behind it were taken into account—that was to say, that the political Party represented by the hon. Member would be universally under-represented. The same thing applied to the Conservative Party. [Mr. HEALY: Hear, hear!] He was glad to get that acknowledgment from the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy). And who would be the Party who would be over-represented, for that was the matter to bear in mind? It would be the Party of which the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan was an able and prominent Member. What were the feelings which would animate the majority of the Members of that Party in the next House of Commons? They had recently had a speech delivered by one of the ablest Members of the Party at a mass meeting in Ireland, and the statement then made was that the relations between England and Ireland were those of civil war, tempered by a scarcity of firearms. [*A laugh.*] It was no laughing matter, because, unfortunately, it was perfectly true of that particular section represented by the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien), and led by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). That Party would be enormously over-represented in the next House of Commons. He wished the House thoroughly to understand that in making this change they were doing it with their eyes open. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had just now stated on behalf of the Government his firm belief that under this single-Member system the representation of the landlords of Ireland would not be reduced. Was there a single man of any authority in Ireland who would express a similar opinion; if so, they had only to wait for a few months in order to see how utterly delusive that opinion was. His complaint was that Her Majesty's Government were acting altogether in the dark, just as they had been acting throughout the Egyptian business; and the result would be a precisely similar failure. They had been warned, in the most unmistakable manner, of the danger of the line of action they were adopting; they were again ignoring the advice which had been given to them; and, in his opinion, difficult as the situation was now, they would find themselves placed in a much more serious and difficult position with regard to Ireland a few years hence. He did not believe that any Redistribution Bill could immediately diminish the nature of the danger; but the danger which was ahead was chiefly due to the reduction of the franchise in Ireland. He had done all in his power to oppose that measure, because he knew perfectly well its dangerous character. Every man in the House, and especially every Irish Member on both sides of the House, knew what the reduction of the franchise would do in Ireland. They were told that if they treated Ireland with justice the feeling of disaffection which now existed in Ireland would be removed, and that the people of Ireland would be better disposed towards this country. They had passed a Bill for the reduction of the franchise in Ireland, and it was a tremendous concession to Ireland. Never before in any civilized part of the world had such a thing been done as to give largely increased political power to a people who, in consequence of their turbulence and disaffection, they had been compelled to deprive of their civil rights. Nevertheless, that was the course adopted by Her Majesty's Government. Was the feeling of Ireland one whit better towards England than it was before? On the contrary, the language used was even more violent. He therefore warned the House against listening with favour to the platitudes which fell from the Treasury Bench, by which Ministers maintained and tried to prove that the reduction of the franchise would not increase the Irish difficulty. It would increase the Irish difficulty; and when the danger came upon them, on those who had tampered with or failed to resist this line of action in time, and upon them alone, would rest the responsibility. He could not support the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman behind him (Sir John Hay); but he must point out to Her Majesty's Government that those who were pledged to the principles of this Bill were placed in a position of some little difficulty in consequence of the Government so unfairly applying the main principles of the measure. It was proposed that Ireland and Wales should be over-represented; but when they came to the Metropolis of the Empire the Government turned round and applied the strict population test, and declined to recognize any other principle. Was that fair, or just, or right? Was it fair, because, simply because, a better class of houses had sprung up in the City of London of late years, and there were, in consequence, fewer inhabitants, to reduce the representation, a line of action which they persistently refused in the case of Ireland and Wales? The Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had laid down a very rigorous principle. He said that if they increased the representation to be given to those parts of the country in which the population had largely increased, it must be done by adding to the Members of the House, and not by taking away Members from those parts of the country which were at present over-represented. Therefore, as the population of the country increased, the number of Members of the House must constantly increase. Yet everybody must admit that for deliberative and legislative purposes the number of Members was already too great; but whether it was too large or too small, the Chamber in which they sat was physically unable to contain the whole, or more than a moiety of the Members entitled to be present and take part in the deliberations of the House. As he had already intimated, he could not support the proposal of his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay). He should, however, be glad if the Government would give a Return, which he thought would very much facilitate the discussions which were likely to take place upon the provisions of the Bill. In the maps and in the Reports of the Boundary Commission which had been issued, the population of certain boroughs and of certain new constituencies was given; but a large number of the constituencies were not included in the maps. As far as he knew, no accurate Return had been presented to the House of the population of all of the constituencies.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that a Return had been given, on the Motion of the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill). It might, however, be necessary to give a further Return.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, it seemed to him that if an accurate Return were supplied it would greatly facilitate the discussion. He hoped there would be one, and he should be glad to learn whether the Return referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, although not perfectly complete, was to be relied upon for accuracy as far as it went?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE intimated that an additional Return would probably be laid upon the Table to-morrow, and circulated within a week.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON continued: As he had said before, he could not support the proposal of his right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), and he thought it was perfectly useless to discuss whether the representation of Ireland should be reduced from 105 to 103 to the number of Members for whom provision was made by the Act of Union—namely, 100. But if the representation was to be maintained at the present number of Members, with a reduced franchise and the inevitable result of a still larger number of Nationalist Members being returned, it was perfectly certain that in the next Parliament a difficulty would be introduced which would require the highest statesmanship to deal with satisfactorily.

MR. ILLINGWORTH expressed a hope that in this important discussion the House would have the advantage, before the debate closed, of hearing something from the Front Opposition Bench as to their attitude in the matter. They had just had a speech from the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), in which the noble Lord had displayed a considerable amount of anti-Irish feeling; and he wished to know whether the noble Lord was speaking simply as the Member for Middlesex, or whether his past connection with the Conservative Government enabled him to throw any light upon the views of his Party sitting on the Front Opposition Bench; and whether the opinions he had expressed were indicative of the attitude and disposition of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who sat with him on that Bench in regard to the important question now before the House? He (Mr. Illingworth) could not abstain from noticing the fact that the English Members strongly objected to an increase in the number of Members of the House, for which they were to get no equivalent or compensation whatever. The proposal made by Her Majesty's Government to increase the number of Members by 12 was simply made in order to satisfy the claims of the Scotch Members. That claim, undoubtedly, was a reasonable one to put forward; and, being so, the Scotch Representatives, at any rate, ought to exercise that wariness and shrewdness which characterized their proceedings generally by not attempting to raise the question whether 658 was or was not a sacred number, beyond which the House of Commons ought not to go. As to the reduction in the number of Irish Members, it was the wish, he understood, of a certain section which sat above the Opposition Gangway to cut down the representation, and not to trouble or embarrass the House in any way. He would ask, however, whether hon. Members who were usually demonstrative in regard to their loyalty were pursuing a politic or rational course, when it was the object of the Government and of the House generally to cement the good feeling which ought to exist between different parts of the Empire, to say that they wished to decrease the influence of the Irish Members inside the House? The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) spoke in a despairing tone of the prospect of bringing about a better condition of things in Ireland, and warned the House against taking any step which might have the effect of placing increased power in the hands of the Nationalist Party. Now, he (Mr. Illingworth) did not despair of the future in Ireland, and had every hope that a better condition of things might, before long, be brought about. He therefore endorsed the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), and of Her Majesty's Government generally. The work might be slow and tedious; but the mistake which hon. Gentlemen made, both inside the House and out of it, was to say that as yet they had done a tithe of what was necessary in order that justice might be done to the Irish people. They were endeavouring to do now a substantial act of justice in giving the franchise to Ireland, in spite of the remonstrances of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton). They would be doing a further act of justice if they supported the Government in their resolution to act in no niggardly spirit towards the Irish people in regard to their representation, and to continue the number of Members on the present basis, regardless of the fact that, in comparison with other parts of the United Kingdom, the Sister Country might be, to a slight extent, over-represented. It was, in the opinion of some hon. Members, a most impolitic thing to extend at that moment the Irish representation. His hope was that the House of Commons, by a large majority, would adhere to the main lines laid down in the Bill as submitted to them by Her Majesty's Government. He appealed to Irish Members, and to the whole body of English Members, not to seek to alter the lines of the present measure, but to adhere to the proposal of Her Majesty's Government. With reference to the remark of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Suffolk (Mr. Biddell), who had brought forward the question of taxation as being one of some force, and an argument which the House ought to take into consideration, and who produced figures to show that Ireland contributed a far smaller sum to the general taxation in proportion to population than the other parts of the Kingdom, he (Mr. Illingworth) admitted the force of that argument; but if the statement were correct he drew from it the very opposite inference. He held that it was not property, but people—the poor and the down-trodden—who stood in need of additional representation. It was the people of this country who, in his opinion, had the right to claim that the House of Commons should be their Representatives, and it was their desire in this matter which should dominate in the present case.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he should not have taken any part in the debate of that evening but for a very curious coincidence which had occurred. The House was doubtless aware that certain Gentlemen, hon. Members of the House, had recently, inspirited by the example probably of other hon. Gentlemen on that side, resolved themselves into a Party, which he believed might with propriety be called the Fifth Party, in the House. He referred to some of the Irish Representatives, several of whom had spoken that evening. He believed that this was the first time that the Fifth Party had taken action; and he must congratulate the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) and the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton) upon the able way in which they had put before the House and the country generally what the policy of their Party was intended to be in Parliament. He did not think that the Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition need, in the slightest degree, be jealous of the object or the policy of that smaller body which was within the Party of which he was Leader. But it might be interesting for the people of Ireland to know and fully appreciate what the action of the Irish Conservative Representatives had been in the House that evening. A question had come up for discussion, brought forward, he believed, on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), which proposed to decrease the number of the Irish Representatives to 90. Now, the Irish people should very clearly understand what that proposal meant; and they should also very clearly understand the action which the hon. Gentlemen he had referred to had taken with reference to the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay). The hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) actually, through his loyalty, no doubt, had shrieked aloud for the loyal minority in Ireland; and the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton), whose constituents would, no doubt, appreciate his efforts in that direction, also endeavoured to alarm the House with reference to the future position of the loyal minority in Ireland. He had been in Ireland during the last Recess, and had travelled in many parts of the country which the loyal minority were supposed to inhabit; and he found amongst the Protestants in Ireland, and generally amongst the Irish National Party, a very great deal of indignation at the miserable and beggarly way in which the views of the so-called loyal minority in Ireland had been urged on the House of Commons. The loyal minority was composed of men who could very well take care of themselves—it was composed of men to whom it was distasteful, in the highest degree, that Members such as the hon. Member for Tyrone and the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh should come down and beg and cringe before the English Parliament to obtain protection for them. Several of the Conservative Members from Ireland had very cordially supported the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman for the decrease of the Irish representation; and why? Because they affected to be vastly alarmed at the result which would occur at the next General Election, when the Irish National Party in that House would be considerably strengthened in numbers. Why, he asked, were the hon. Member for Tyrone and the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh so frightened at the Irish National Party attaining power and strength in the House of Commons, and in the country generally? They were afraid because they knew the way in which their Party, when in power, treated the Nationalists — they were afraid because their guilty conscience warned them to expect that the Irish Nationalists, in the day of their power, would extend to the Irish Tories the same unjust and bigoted treatment which they themselves had received. He held, however, that the loyal people in Ireland were very different from their Representatives in that House. The constituents of many hon. Members who talked about the loyal minority, and its position with regard to the future, knew very well that they had nothing whatever to fear from the ascendancy of the Nationalist Party in Ireland; it was only their Representatives who shrieked at the very idea of the Nationalists gaining power, and they did so not because they feared Nationalist ascendancy, but because the majority of them were connected with the landowning class—a class which had been driven effectually to the wall by the Nationalist Party. It was a feeling very different from that of patriotism which prompted hon. Members to whom he referred to come down to that House and protest against Nationalist ascendancy, in Ireland; it would be all the same to them who was in the ascendancy, so long as the broad acres of the class which they were connected with were left to them. English Members should have their minds disabused of the idea that the Protestants in Ireland had any fear of the Nationalists. The number was increasing day by day of the Protestant people of Ireland who were no longer opposed to the Nationalist views, and who were beginning to recognize that Protestants, as well as Catholics, suffered a great many disadvantages from having the laws of their country made in that House. It was proposed by the Motion before the House that the representation of Ireland be reduced, because that representation was likely to be overwhelmingly in the Nationalist interest. What was it that hon. Members wanted? Did the House want to have the opinion of the people of Ireland represented, or did they wish to have Representatives there who would give them nothing but a fictitious and unreal idea of that opinion? The majority of the people of Ireland were Nationalists; they were disaffected by their country being ruled in that House; and they were determined to do everything which man could reasonably do to win back to their country that rule and self-government which they desired. No matter whether the whole of the Irish Representatives in that House were Conservative or Nationalist, the spirit of the majority of the people would be the same. The Government might, if they so willed, bring in a Bill to-morrow that no one but Protestants and Orangemen should be returned from Ireland to that House, and the Bill might have the effect of returning Representatives who would be very desirable, perhaps, in the Government, or in a majority of the House; but even a Bill of that kind could not alter the feelings of the majority of the people in Ireland, who were distinctly Nationalists. And he would put it to any Member of the House representing either English or Scotch constituencies, whether, as long as there was disaffection, as long as there was disloyalty and discontent in Ireland, it was not better to have that discontent ventilated? Or was it desired that there should be no Members at all in the House to give voice to the discontent of the people in Ireland? He assured hon. Members that the will and feeling of the majority of the people of Ireland could not be slighted. The Government might place restrictions upon the men who represented them, but it would avail nothing; even in the days when it was impossible for a Roman Catholic to be a Member of that House, and when there were only Protestants there and in the old Irish Parliament—even then the spirit of the people was not affected; and, therefore, he said that, whatever Members might represent them in that House, the Government could not prevent the majority of the Irish people being Nationalists. They could not stifle their aspirations; and, as one who desired anxiously to be on fair terms with hon. Members, he assured them that it was better for this country, and for Ireland, that Irish discontent should have voice in the House of Commons, and not be turned into channels which might render it very disastrous to the British Empire generally. Now, the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh had given them one of his reasons why the representation of Ireland should be decreased, and it was that the population of Ireland was decreased. In a very cheerful way, he told the House, in flippant style, that the population was decreasing considerably, that no doubt it would continue to decrease, and that, while it was decreasing, it was extremely unfair that this Bill should give to Ireland a number of Representatives which, in a few years, would be still more out of proportion to the population of the country. The noble Viscount went on to say that the population was decreasing, because the people were starving. Irish Members on those Benches cheered that statement, and the noble Viscount answered their cheer by saying that Home Rule was starving the people; but he could assure the noble Viscount that Home Rule would never do that. It was the landlords who starved the people; and he challenged the noble Viscount to ask his constituents on the hill-side at Fermanagh, at the next Election, whether that was not the case; and he was confident they would reply, on every occasion, that they believed there was a greater chance of improving their position by Home Rule than there was of obtaining any improvement from the selfish class represented by the noble Viscount that evening. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) had been very condescending to the people of Ireland in his speech, and he had no doubt that the condescension of the right hon. Gentleman would be duly appreciated by them. The right hon. Gentleman said that the advantages of the Union of Ireland to England should be maintained, and that as the Act of Union provided for 100 Members for Ireland, and that as Ireland was to enjoy all the advantages of that Union, the 100 Members could not very well be interfered with, or words to that effect. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that if he could point out to the people of Ireland the advantages of that Union they would be very glad to recognize them; but he could also assure him that, during the 84 years which had elapsed since the Union, the people of Ireland had failed to see any advantages in it at all. It was a most unreasonable thing that certain Members in that House should approve of the argument that the number of Members who were wanted to increase the Scotch representation should be taken from Ireland. Now, Irish Members had not the least objection in the world to the Scottish people having full representation in Parliament. He did not believe that Scotch Members themselves were more glad that Scotland was to have full and fair representation in that House than were the Irish Members; but to say that 12 Members should be taken from Ireland in order to increase the representation of Scotland was a suggestion so sinister and so monstrous as hardly to be worthy of any criticism whatever. If any move were to be made in the direction indicated of decreasing the number of Irish Members, he was afraid that the Nationalist Party would be obliged to cause itself the great pain of recommending that the two Members who represented the University of Dublin should be suspended from their duties in that House. It was a monstrous thing that a University like the University of Dublin, the majority of those connected with which were altogether opposed to Nationalist aspirations, should have the privilege of returning two Members of Parliament. Reference had been made to the manner in which some boroughs were proposed to be disfranchised by the Bill. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had said that a considerable stretch had been made in drawing the boundaries of London, because of the antiquity of the City of London. He (Mr. W. Redmond) was glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman had respect for things which were ancient, which was not at all characteristic of the Party to which he belonged, and very fully appreciated the feeling which prompted the Government to leave to the City of London two Members of Parliament; but he remembered a borough which he believed was much more ancient than the City of London, and in the Government's treatment of which he could discern none of that respect for antiquity which prompted them to deal liberally with the former. The City of Limerick could vie very fairly with the City of London in point of antiquity, and yet he did not find that the Government had acted in the same way towards it by leaving it with its two Members. In many respects the disfranchisement of boroughs in Ireland had been most unfair. It was extremely hard that Drogheda should be deprived of separate representation, and there were other hard cases which he could enumerate if he had any desire to occupy the time of the House. ["Oh, oh!"] He might, in passing, just inform hon. Members that if they wished him to cease speaking they must not jeer him; jeering only made him speak the more. He merely rose for the purpose of giving vent to a certain amount of indignation which he felt at hearing the Irish Conservative Members monopolizing the debate, and making strenuous efforts to have the representation of their native country curtailed. In conclusion, he wished to emphasize this fact, which he hoped the people of Leitrim, Tyrone, and Fermanagh would remember well at the next General Election—that the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton), and the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney), and some of their Friends, had done everything they possibly could to have the representation of Ireland cut down to 90 Members. He did not think the farmers of Fermanagh and Tyrone would appreciate the action adopted by those hon. Gentlemen; indeed, he was perfectly certain that what had been attempted only needed to be brought under the notice of the farmers to induce them, at the next General Election, to tell the noble Viscount and the hon. Member for Tyrone to go about their business. He believed that if any serious attempt were made by Parliament to decrease the representation of Ireland, that attempt would receive an amount of opposition which would very greatly astonish the House. He and his hon. Friends were not particularly anxious to sit in the British House of Commons. They appreciated to its due extent the privilege of being allowed to sit upon those Benches; but they must have one of two things—they must either be allowed to make their own laws in their own country, or if they were to come to Westminster they must be permitted to muster in their full force.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think if anyone who had not been made aware of the character of this Bill had come into the House while the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down was speaking he would have come to this conclusion—that the Bill which we are discussing is one that is to greatly diminish and unfairly destroy the power and influence of the Party to which the hon. Gentleman belongs; that it is, in fact, a Bill intended to give to the Members who have been described as the Loyalists—the Conservative Members from Ireland—an opportunity of entirely overriding the Party led by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). Sir, I venture to say that in this House we have no right to listen to language of such a character as that which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. Redmond) has used with regard to the Loyalists of Ulster and other Members from Ireland. I must say that scant justice is done to the feelings of their constituents, that large and important loyal body in Ireland who cling to the principle of the Union with a spirit of true loyalty and of true affection. That there are large numbers of persons in Ireland who take a different view is perfectly true, and very much to be regretted; but that there is not a strong, firm, unselfish, and loyal Party in Ireland, and that that Party is not prepared to stand by the Union with this country, is entirely untrue. Now, I think we ought not to listen to attacks of this sort by the hon. Member without repudiating them, and without claiming for those to whom the hon. Gentleman refers that they have acted in this matter in a spirit of entire devotion to what they believe to be, and what we in this country believe to be, the general good of the Empire. While we allow every possible latitude, and every possible power of speech, to those who take a different view, we ought to insist that those who represent the Party who are attached to the British connection should be allowed to have their say, and to argue their points, and fight their own battles, without improper and unworthy language being used in reference to them.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I rise to a point of Order. The right hon. Gentleman has imputed to me the use of unworthy language with reference to several Members of this House. I should be very glad if you, Mr. Speaker, or the right hon. Baronet, would point out in what particular I have used language which could be described as unworthy.

Mr. SPEAKER called upon Sir Stafford Northcote to resume.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am within the recollection of the House. The hon. Member imputed to those who were arguing in favour of the loyal principles which they maintain low and base motives, and spoke of them as being mere land-grabbers.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg your pardon, Mr. Speaker. I really must interrupt the right hon. Baronet. Of course, I differ very much from the politics of the Ulster Members, and I disagree very much with the opinions they have expressed to-night; but I should not think of applying to them a term which I think is the worst term which can be applied by one Irishman to another—namely, that of land-grabbers. I would not call them land-grabbers.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I can only say I am glad I have called forth from the hon. Gentleman a disclaimer of language which I should be very sorry to let pass in this House unchallenged. Now, Sir, with regard to the actual position of affairs, I think we must look at it in this way. In the first place, with regard to the vote we are called upon to give. The Question which is immediately before us is the Motion that you, Mr. Speaker, do now leave the Chair, and to that an Amendment has been moved by my right hon. and gallant Friend (Sir John Hay) to the effect that the House objects to an increase of the number of its Members, and that the number of Representatives for Ireland and Wales shall be reduced in certain proportions. Sir, I think everybody must feel that it is important that we should go on and make progress with this Bill, and that we should deal practically with it, and that we should not be taking a prudent or convenient step if we were to vote against proceeding with the Bill, in order to pass a Resolution of this kind. When we get into Committee will be the time for Members to consider whether they have any proposals to make which will mitigate the difficulties which they feel with regard to the scheme which is laid before them. There is, no doubt, a great deal to be said against the proposal to increase the number of Members of the House. Whether we can see our way to a settlement of the difficulty in a better way is another question; and I am not sure we shall not find, when we examine the different proposals which will be made in the course of the Committee, that each of the proposals contain so many difficulties that, after all, we may be driven to the increase of the number of Members of the House as being the best way out of the difficulty. I am not insensible at all to the objections there are to increasing our numbers. It is not merely a question of convenience as regards our accommodation, but it is a step which may hereafter be pleaded as a precedent for further increases, and I do not think that would be a very convenient state of things. It is a point upon which there is a very great difference of opinion; very strong opinions, I am bound to say, are held against the step of increasing the number of Members by a great many hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, and those opinions are very deserving of consideration. How we will deal with the questions as they arise, how we will deal with the redistribution of seats, is, as I have said, a question we must determine in Committee. I only hope that hon. Gentlemen will not beforehand make up their minds on questions of such nicety and difficulty, but that they will, in Committee, deal fairly and intelligibly with all the proposals that may be made. Sir, I frankly admit that this measure, taken in connection with the alterations effected by the Franchise Bill, will introduce very considerable changes in the composition of the House, and that it will affect, amongst other things, the composition of the Irish representation. I believe that the lowering of the franchise will produce a change which is apprehended by some and desired by other Members from Ireland in the influence of the Nationalist Party. It is not so much a question of redistribution of seats as of the extension of the franchise; but I think that, in considering the redistribution of seats, we ought, undoubtedly, to take carefully into consideration any proposals that may be made to give the fairest possible expression to that which is the main principle, or one of the main principles, upon which the Bill is framed—namely, that constituencies should be so arranged that there should be a fair representation of the different classes and interests throughout the United Kingdom. That was the principle upon which the Boundary Commissioners were instructed to proceed in settling the boundaries of the different counties, and that same principle ought to be our guide in any proposals which may have to be considered with regard to the grouping or arrangement of the different constituencies of the country. I hope that we shall be permitted to-night to vote the Speaker out of the Chair, so that we may be in a position to-morrow to go practically to work with regard to the details of the Bill. I do not wish to detain the House any further at the present time; but my own opinion is that when we come to work the matter out, and work it out in a practical spirit, we shall find that the solution which is suggested by Her Majesty's Government will probably be the one which we shall adopt.

Mr. WILLIAMSON said, that as this Motion had been made apparently in the interest of Scotch Members, perhaps he might be permitted to address a few words to the House. After what had been said on the part of the Government, and especially after what had been recently said by the Leader of the Opposition, he was not alarmed about the Motion. Indeed, he was astonished that the right hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir John Hay) had proposed it in the interest of Scotland, because the right hon. and gallant Gentleman placed himself first in antagonism with a great part of the Irish Members, with the entire body of Welsh Members; and then he put an effectual veto upon the increase of the number of Scotch Representatives by asking the House to affirm that it was inexpedient to increase the number of Members of the House. Anything more absurd he (Mr. Williamson) could not imagine. It was said that, having regard to the accommodation which the House afforded, the numbers ought not to be increased. As a matter of fact, it was only once or twice a Session that the attendance was very large, so that, practically, no discomfort would be experienced by an increase of the number of Members. In his opinion, to increase the number of Members was the best and most reasonable way of solving the difficulty; and, therefore, he hoped the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay) would withdraw his Motion.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) said just now that he (Mr. Macartney) supported the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay). As a matter of fact, he did not say a word about it.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND begged the hon. Gentleman's pardon. If he said so, he did so inadvertently, and because he was of opinion that the hon. Member was in favour of decreasing the representation of Ireland.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, his face must have spoken very plainly, because he did not know how the hon. Gentleman could have ascertained his opinion on the subject unless it was through his facial expression. In his former speech he complained of the representation of Wales and Leinster; and now he wished to say to hon. Gentlemen who sat below the Gangway that, even in the event of them getting a Parliament in Ireland, the Loyalists and Protestants of Ireland had no reason to be afraid. He could assure the hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. Redmond) and his hon. Friends that the loyal men of Ireland were not afraid. Whatever reason they might have to be alarmed lest their rights should be taken from them as regarded representation in Parliament, whatever reason they might have to object to the present measure, which certainly swamped them unfairly, they were not afraid. They did not come from a race which ever was afraid. Having said so much to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, he merely wished to make one remark with regard to what fell from the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who had charge of the Bill on the part of the Government. In comparing the different countries, the right hon. Baronet spoke of the boroughs and counties in each country. Now, he (Mr. Macartney) took a broader view than that. He thought that in the redistribution of seats each country ought to have been taken according to its rightful representation; and the redistribution of the representation should have been made as was thought best. However, that course had not been pursued, and he and others could only complain of the fact.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy.*)

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he hoped that the debate would not be adjourned. If, after this, any other question was raised which was likely to occupy time, it would, of course, be impossible for him to resist the adjournment; indeed, he should not think of pressing the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair if there was any desire to raise any other question.

Mr. SEXTON said, it was necessary that an opportunity should be afforded of a reply to the speeches of the Irish Conservative Members. Although the proposition of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay) referred to the representation of Wales and Scotland, the debate upon it had really resolved itself into an attack upon the representation of Ireland; and the House had had the pleasure of witnessing a monstrous combination of Scotch Radicals, English Tories, and Irish Orangemen. He hoped the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would see his way to agree to the adjournment of the debate.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he would remind the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down that, after all, the most conclusive argument was a majority.

An hon. MEMBER: Oh, no; not at all!

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: At any rate, it was so considered by those who obtained it. They had discussed at considerable length the question of whether or not the number of Members in the House should be increased; and after such a debate as they had had, particularly as it must be evident to the Irish Members that they were sure of a large majority—some believing in the expediency of the proposed increase for some reasons, and others advocating it for other reasons—he urged those hon. Members to allow the judgment of the House to be now taken on the subject. The decision of the question would clear the way very much for what was to come hereafter. The Scotch Members were anxious that the number should be increased; therefore, for their sakes, it was undesirable that the House should defer the decision of the question. The Irish Members were also anxious that the proposal of the Government should be affirmed; and he need not say that the Government themselves, who had produced the Bill, were strongly in favour of their own proposal. The Opposition also had declared that, on the whole, in spite of the difficulty of apportioning the seats, they were in favour of the proposed increase. This being the case, surely it was not undesirable that they should now take a division; for, after all, if the debate were adjourned, all that those who would continue it could do would be to reiterate and reinforce arguments which were practically accepted by an immense majority of the House. Under the circumstances, he trusted the House would allow the Amendment to be decided, so as to allow the Main Question to be proceeded with.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, that no doubt it was by inadvertence that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had stated that the question before the House was whether or not the number of Members should be increased, and that it had been decided affirmatively by large majorities on either side of the House. He (Mr. Arnold), for his own part, could only say that, though he voted for the Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair," he should consider the question of the proposed increase in the number of Members as still remaining open.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HEALY: I understand my hon. Friends near me to have challenged a division on the Question of the Adjournment.

MR. SPEAKER: I did not hear any hon. Gentleman challenge.

MR. HEALY: In that view, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: I have now to put the Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. HEALY: Upon that I beg to move the adjournment.

MR. SEXTON said he wished to point out to the House that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had come forward most unnecessarily and interfered with the Minister who had charge of the Bill, that right hon. Baronet having stated that he would not oppose the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: With the permission of Mr. Speaker and the House I will explain. What I said was exactly what subsequently fell from my right hon. Friend. I said that the House should come to a decision on the Amendment of the right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay), but that, as I believed there was a desire on the part of the hon. Member for Wexford and some of his Friends to go on with the discussion on the Main Question, I should make no objection to the adjournment of the debate after the division on the Amendment.

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 132; Noes 25: Majority 107.

AYES.

Acland, C. T. D.
Armitstead, G.
Arnold, A.
Asher, A.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.

Balfour, J. S.
Baring, Viscount
Barran, J.
Bass, Sir A.
Biggar, J. G.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Brassey, Sir T.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Buchanan, T. R.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Caine, W. S.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Cheetham, J. F.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clarke, S.
Colman, J. J.
Cotes, C. C.
Cropper, J.
Davenport, H. T.
Davies, R.
Dawson, C.
Deasy, J.
Dickson, T. A.
Dilke, right hon. Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Dundas, hon. J. C.
Earp, T.
Edwards, P.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Errington, G.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Findlater, W.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, R. N.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Grant, A.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Healy, T. M.
Henderson, F.
Heneage, E.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Holden, I.
Holms, J.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Illingworth, A.
Ince, H. B.
James, Sir H.
James, hon. W. H.
James, C.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kenny, M. J.
Kinnear, J.
Lea, T.
Leahy, J.
Leamy, E.
Lee, H.
Lloyd, M.
Lyons, R. D.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Mahon, E.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Maxwell-Heron, Capt. J. M.
Meagher, W.
Moore, A.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Northcote, rt. hon. Sir S. H.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Kelly, J.
O'Shea, W. H.
O'Sullivan, W. H.
Parker, C. S.
Peddie, J. D.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Roe, T.
Rogers, C. C.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Russell, G. W. E.
Ruston, J.
Sellar, A. G.
Sexton, T.
Sheil, E.
Small, J. F.
Smith, Lieut.-Col. G.
Smith, S.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Talbot, J. G.
Thompson, T. C.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Walker, S.
Warton, C. N.
Webster, J.
Whitbread, S.
Williamson, S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, right hon. Lord R.
Kensington, right hon. Lord

NOES.

Archdale, W. H.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beresford, G. De la P.
Biddell, W.
Buxton, F. W.
Campbell, J. A.
Corry, J. P.
Ebrington, Viscount
Ewart, W.
Hicks, E.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Howard, E. S.
Lennox, rt. hon. Lord H. G. C. G.
Levett, T. J.
Lewis, C. E.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Northcote, H. S.
Onslow, D.
Scott, M. D.
Severne, J. E.
Sykes, C.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Whitley, E.

TELLERS.

Crichton, Viscount
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In accordance with a promise I gave the House, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

HOLDINGS NEAR TOWNS (IRELAND).

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Colonel NOLAN, in moving—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the tenure on which Houses and Holdings are held in or near towns in Ireland, and the manner in which the improvements of tenants in or near towns are affected by the existing Laws, and if any changes in the existing Law could be now beneficially made,"

said, although this question was one of extreme importance, he would promise not to make a long speech upon it; he only intended, in fact, addressing the House for a few minutes. That the subject was one of vast importance to Ireland, and one which excited the greatest interest amongst the people of that country, was abundantly shown by the fact of so many Irish Members, of different shades of opinion, remaining in the House at that late hour—1.15 A.M.—to hear the matter discussed. A great many Irish towns were in a most dilapidated state; in fact, their condition was disgraceful. From Returns which had been presented showing the manner in which dwellings were built and held in other parts of Europe, hon. Members would see that nowhere else was the Irish system adopted. In France, Germany, Austria, Russia, and Italy, persons could build their own houses, and make their own improvements; but that was not the case in Ireland. Where there were good landlords the Irish towns were kept in good order, no doubt; but there were a great many more towns where a different state of things prevailed, owing to the present defective condition of the law. He might remind the House that a Bill had been brought forward in the House some time ago to remedy the law, and that the measure was only defeated by eight, a very small majority. Since the discussion of that Bill the subject had been ventilated in nearly every town in Ireland; letters had been written to the newspapers upon it; and it had been mentioned at every election. Would the House, under these circumstances, say it would not allow the Irish Members to inquire into the law which secured the tenure of house property in the Irish towns—would it say that the Irish people should not be permitted to get up this legal agitation? They had done all they could to bring the subject to the fore, without attempting anything illegal. No damage had been done; nobody had been shot; and all that was asked was that an inquiry should be permitted into the matter. The English Members would not be asked to take part in the inquiry unless they desired to do so, for, of course, the Irish Representatives would welcome the assistance of English Members if they were desirous of taking part in the investigation. Without saying more, he would move the Motion on the Paper.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the tenure on which Houses and Holdings are held in or near towns in Ireland, and the manner in which the improvements of tenants in or near towns are affected by the existing Laws, and if any changes in the existing Law could be now beneficially made."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he sympathized with the Motion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, but felt great difficulty in dealing with the part regarding houses. It did not affect them in the North of Ireland as much as it did the people of the South; but he would prefer that the hon. and gallant Member should eliminate from his Motion what referred to houses, and would confine his proposal to town parks. ["No, no!"] Well, he believed the question of dealing with houses in towns was so important, difficult, and intricate, that, in his opinion, nothing practical could result from the passing of the Motion this Session. It would be better to refer that question to the reformed Parliament, and to keep to the question of town parks. He would read what the Prime Minister had said during the passing of the Land Act, in order to show what the right hon. Gentleman's opinion was in 1881. The Prime Minister said—

"I am not prepared to admit that the present law bearing on this subject—"

that was, the subject of town parks—

"is satisfactory. We regard the question as open to consideration, and we may find it our duty to investigate it during the Recess."

On March 6, 1882, the Prime Minister, when questioned by the hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Marum), replied—

"That some legislation might be desirable with regard to town parks; but he was obliged to say that, viewing the present condition of affairs, and the pressure on the time of the House of Commons, he did not think the period had arrived when the Government could ask Parliament to entertain the subject."—(3 *Hansard*, [267] 187.)

Having put before the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) what the opinion of the Prime Minister was with regard to town parks during the passing of the Land Act in 1881, and the opinion expressed by him since then in 1882, he (Mr. Dickson), in order to arrive at something practical, would ask the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Nolan) to omit from his Motion the reference to houses, and to deal solely with town parks. The question of town parks was a vital one in Ulster and the North of Ireland. A great deal of feeling had been excited on the matter since the passing of the Land Act; the holders of town parks conceiving it a grievance that they should be excluded from the benefits of that Act. He should be glad, if he had the opportunity, of proposing—

"That a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into the tenure on which town parks were held in Ireland, how they were affected by the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881, and to report whether any changes in the existing laws could be beneficially made."

At present, however, he would ask the hon. and gallant Member to omit the words "Houses and" from his Motion, to leave that matter to be dealt with by the reformed Parliament, and to be content with obtaining this Session a settlement of the town parks' question.

MR. O'SULLIVAN said, he had great pleasure in supporting the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member. There was great truth in what the hon. Gentleman the Member for Tyrone (Mr. Dickson) had said as to the desirability of having town parks dealt with; but the hon. Member's proposal was beyond the present question altogether. They all knew the great interest taken in this question all over Ireland. Everyone who knew the country towns in Ireland knew that from time to time the hard earnings of the working classes, the artizans, and the shopkeepers, were spent in the building of houses; and they knew how many families had been enriched, and how many families, at the same time, impoverished, by the confiscation of those houses. The Land Act was a great measure of relief; but it only affected the rural districts. An Act was wanted for the towns, for, owing to the want of legislation, many towns were decaying. The families who owned the houses were not content with the rent they got in the first instance; but 50 or 60 years after the building of the houses the successor of the original landlord came in, and confiscated the whole of the hard earnings and savings of the artizan, or shopkeeper, or whoever he might be. He hoped the House would not refuse the reasonable request made by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway County, for a Committee to inquire into the state of facts concerning the tenure on which houses were held in or near towns in Ireland. No doubt town parks formed a good subject of inquiry; but let the two things be kept separate. Let houses be dealt with now, and town parks in a separate Motion or Bill. He hoped the Government would not be so unreasonable as to refuse a simple inquiry. That was all the hon. and gallant Member asked for; and if, at the conclusion of that inquiry, no case had been made out, and there was not sufficient evidence to warrant the Government in bringing in a Bill on the subject, he was sure the hon. and gallant Gentleman would withdraw from the subject altogether.

MR. MOORE said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would consent to the appointment of the Committee. The question proposed for inquiry was one of the most important questions which could possibly be brought before the House; and, numerically speaking, it concerned a most important section of the people of Ireland. It was a question which must be looked at from a similar point of view, and dealt with on the same lines as the Irish labourers' question. If anything was to be done for the labouring classes in Ireland, the movement should be followed by the measure of relief now indicated, if, indeed, the two movements did not go side by side—*pari passu*—in the interests of the labouring class and the artizan class in towns. This was, perhaps, the most important question in Ireland at the present moment. He could not agree that justice had been done to it—that, considering its importance, it had been brought sufficiently before the public. He was sure that in the reformed Parliament it would form one of the most important matters with which they would be called upon to deal. As to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Dickson), he could not flatter the hon. Gentleman that he saw much in his argument. The town park question seemed to him (Mr. Moore) to be a very simple one. It appeared to him to be a question for Parliamentary pressure—for Parliamentary insistance and arrangement. There was no reason why town parks could not be put on the same footing as other tenancies in Ireland. If the lands were more valuable than was at present assumed, it should be easy to assess their true value in a Court of Law. In fact, he did not know what there was to inquire about in the matter of town parks. The law, he believed, left in considerable doubt the question as to what town parks were. He questioned whether such things really existed at all; but, if they did exist, he submitted that Parliamentary pressure should be brought to bear on the question in order to bring them within the scope of the Land Act. He could not see what further inquiry was needed. To his mind what was wanted was action, and not inquiry. They required something to induce the shopkeeping and artizan classes to build houses—some adequate protection which would induce them to invest their earnings in this manner. At present there was no such security for invested money, and no means by which a man could safely procure a house for himself. The question was not only an Irish one—it was important for England as well as Ireland. It would be settled in England, and some 10 years afterwards, perhaps, Ireland might expect to have it settled. The Irish Members, however, wished Ireland to be placed on a footing of equality with England in this matter as early as possible. They wished Ireland to be as far advanced in the race as England. Whilst hon. Members were turning over in their minds some plan for improving the condition of the labouring and artizan classes in England by enabling them to invest their hard earnings in well-secured property and in other ways, he sincerely hoped that the claims of the Irish people for similar consideration would not be overlooked.

MR. SEXTON said, it was surely not reasonable to limit inquiry to a special matter in which some hon. Members took an interest, and to endeavour to withhold inquiry into a subject which other hon. Members in that House took an interest in. He said that sedulous and careful inquiry into the condition of the law in regard to the holdings of shops and houses in towns in Ireland had become a matter of absolute necessity and importance. The case of Ireland in this respect was entirely different to that of Great Britain, inasmuch as in the latter there was an increasing and thriving agricultural population, the consequence of which was that the towns were growing in extent, the shops were always let, and if a tenant found his relations with the landlord disagreeable he could easily obtain another residence. In Ireland, however, the towns were either stationary or retrograde, and the population increasing faster than the accommodation in the towns, if a man lost his house he had no chance of getting another; and it was upon that view that the supporters of the Motion of his hon. and gallant Friend based the claim for inquiry. He did not say that the grievance was so great as that which had led to the alteration of the Land Law in Ireland; but it was a question which had been coming to the front, and must be regarded as one of great importance. His hon. and gallant Friend had taken, as was his custom always, the most Constitutional and proper course with reference to this question; he did not ask the House to commit itself to any principle with regard to it, but merely asked for an inquiry; and he (Mr. Sexton) would point out that if the Government would not seriously take the initiative of inquiring into the hardship complained of and providing a remedy for the grievance, hon. Members on those Benches would be compelled to press it upon the House in a more disagreeable manner.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, there could be no doubt that the grievance referred to had been reasonably pointed out by hon. Members who had spoken on the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway. The hon. and gallant Member wished Her Majesty's Government to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into two classes of tenures; one, that of shops and houses; the other, that of holdings in or near towns in Ireland. They were told that in many of the towns in Ireland there might be great hardships inflicted upon tenants in consequence of the tendency of houses and shops to go up in value. He quite admitted that; but the case was the same in England and in Scotland, and the Government considered the question was one which should be dealt with upon general principles, and not upon principles applicable only to Ireland. The question relating to land in Ireland was in a different position from that relating to land in the rest of the Kingdom; the circumstances were different; and it had, therefore, been dealt with in an exceptional way. But the same facts did not apply to houses and shops in towns in Ireland; and if inquiry were necessary—and he was not prepared to say it was not—into the whole of the circumstances under which houses and shops were held by tenants in towns in Ireland, with the view, if possible, of securing for the poorer classes of the community greater privileges than they now enjoyed, the Government thought that it ought to proceed upon general, and not upon purely Irish, principles. An hon. Member opposite had said that it was a very easy and simple matter to appoint a Committee. So it was; and it was also a very useful thing to appoint a Committee; but what would be the effect of doing so? It would probably raise some special and peculiar expectations, which it would not be possible to satisfy at the present time; and the Government, not being prepared to admit that there was any special reason for it in Ireland, would not be prepared to agree to what the Committee might recommend. The hon. Member for Clonmel (Mr. Moore) had admitted, in his speech, that this was not an Irish question only; he said it was an English question as well; and, therefore, putting it on that ground, it would not be proper for the Government to assent to the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the tenure of houses. But the question with regard to holdings, in or near towns in Ireland, was another matter altogether. Reference had been made to certain words of the Prime Minister with reference to town parks. No one could say that the state of the law with regard to them was quite satisfactory; and if the hon. and gallant Member for Galway would accept it as an instalment, the Government were quite ready to agree to the appointment of a Committee to inquire into that subject. The Committee would inquire as to whether the present state of things was satisfactory; but whether any of the principles of the Land Act of 1881 should be applied to town parks was a matter that would have to remain open.

Mr. HEALY said, he attributed the statement of the hon. Gentleman, that this was not purely an Irish grievance, to the fact that he did not know much about Ireland. It was peculiarly an Irish question, and presented an entirely different aspect to that relating to houses and shops in English towns. To begin with, the soil of Ireland was owned by absentees; the soil of England was not. It was known that those absentees had been proved to be thieves—persons who took money out of the pockets of the Irish people, and that they absolutely refused to give land in towns for building purposes. Take the town of Bantry, for instance. The people there were refused land lately, on which to put up Gas Works to light the town, which contained 20,000 inhabitants. Where in England could a savage be found to refuse land for such a purpose? Why, even in Scotland, a man who should refuse a little bit of ground for the building of Gas Works would be hunted with the dogs at his heels. Take another case which occurred a short time ago in a country town. The lease held by a gentleman who carried on a large business there dropped, and his landlord would not renew it, or allow him to occupy a house in the place, and would not give a plot of ground on which he could build one, and the result was that the man was driven from his native place. Take another place — Carrickmacross. On one side of the road there was the Shirley estate, and on the other the estate of the Marquess of Bath. There was £20,000 worth of property, and for all that there was no security for the tenants; the landlords in question could turn out any shopkeeper they pleased. British law did not prevent that. He was bound to say that of all the inhuman savages by whom a country was ever cursed the worst were the men who were allowed to rob the people of the fruits of their toil. In the towns in Ireland no one in trade could enjoy a moment of quiet tenure; even if they wanted to extend their premises for the purposes of business, the lord of the soil refused them permission to do so. Why did this state of things exist? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland came forward and dogmatized about this being an Imperial question. The right hon. Gentleman simply knew nothing of the subject he had spoken about; and he (Mr. Healy) said that with regard to no other country but Ireland would the Government have put forward anyone to dogmatize on a question of this kind after he had been only six weeks in the country. The right hon. Gentleman came down and told Irish Members, who knew the country, who suffered for the country, and who lived in the country, that this was a grievance which they suffered from in common with the rest of the Kingdom. But there was no parallel between the two countries in that respect. The Government would, probably, hear more about the rights of the tenant shopkeepers in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman said that the appointment of a Committee might lead to the raising of expectations which could not be realized. But let not the right hon. Gentleman imagine that the people of Ireland were to be deluded with false expectations. They expected no more from this country than what they could drag out of it. The Prime Minister had promised a Committee to inquire into the subject of town parks.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think he promised a Committee. He promised to inquire, but not to appoint a Committee.

MR. HEALY: A Government inquiry; to be conducted, he supposed, up in a balloon. Well, the Government has promised an inquiry by microscope from this side of the Channel, and that promise had not been kept. The right hon. Gentleman now said they would be willing to grant that inquiry. There was no harm in granting that inquiry; but he said that the people would be a great deal more deluded by the inquiry offered by the Government than by that asked for by his hon. and gallant Friend. It would simply give the holders of land in and near towns in Ireland the idea, which would not be realized, of getting an amendment of the Land Act; but as they belonged to a body not large enough to commit a sufficient number of outrages to induce that House to work, the Government could afford to trample on them.

MR. ARCHDALE said, the statements of the hon. Member who had just spoken were so contrary to his own experience with regard to every town he was acquainted with in Ireland that it was difficult to give very great credence to them.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 32; Noes 33: Majority 1.—(Div. List, No. 39.)

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

NOMINATION.

MR. HIBBERT moved to nominate the Select Committee on Public Accounts, as follows:—

"Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT, Mr. GORST, Mr. LAING, Sir JOHN LUBBOCK, Sir CHARLES MILLS, Mr. RYLANDS, Mr. SALT, Mr. SEELY, Mr. SHAW, Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, and Mr. HIBBERT."

MR. HEALY inquired if the Mr. Shaw nominated was the hon. Member for Cork; and, if so, how many Committee meetings had he attended during the last few years?

MR. HIBBERT believed the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Shaw) attended the meetings last year; but he was not able to say how often.

MR. SHEIL said, that a Return of attendances was made every year, and from that Return the Secretary to the Treasury could see how often the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Shaw) had attended.

MR. HIBBERT said, he did not know how often hon. Members attended the meetings last year. He was not able to give the information desired.

MR. HEALY said, that this was a most important Committee; and he thought if it was found that a Member continued to absent himself, in the interest of the public service the House ought not to re-appoint him.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

MUNICIPAL VOTERS (RELIEF) BILL.

(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)

[BILL 64.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

MR. SEXTON said, that the Bill pressed very severely upon the burgesses of Dublin. It was intended to relieve municipal voters, but in Dublin it was necessary for a man to have two years and eight months residence in order to obtain the burgess vote. Now, that was a very oppressive state of things; and he asked the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Henry James) if he could not arrange to extend the Preamble so as to remove the anomaly he had referred to?

MR. HEALY desired to point out a most curious fact. While it was proposed to extend very properly to Ireland the benefits of the English Act for municipal purposes, the Act for Parliamentary purposes was not to apply to them at all. He trusted the Government would see their way to remedy this defect.

Mr. DAWSON said, he had intended to propose an Instruction to the Committee with regard to the two points which had been mentioned by his hon. Friends. He thought the Committee should have power to insert a clause reducing the qualifying period from two years and eight months to one year, as in England and Scotland, and to incorporate the Act, which had been done in the case of Scotland, relating to relief granted to Parliamentary voters. He hoped the Government would consent to remove one of the grossest anomalies that it was possible to exist. It could easily be done by the insertion of a clause to that effect in this Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that he would consider the matter, and see whether what the hon. Gentleman wished could be done.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

COUNTY COURTS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Findlater, Bill to amend the Law relating to County Courts in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Findlater, Mr. Gregory, and Mr. Small.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 78.]

House adjourned at a quarter
after Two o'clock.

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When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to direct by Proclamation that certain persons who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in army service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to order by Proclamation the embodiment of the Militia" (*The Earl Granville*); after short debate, Resolutions agreed agreed to, *nemine dissentiente*

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Her Majesty's Message considered *Mar* 2, 1784

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Most Gracious Message communicating to this House that Her Majesty had thought it necessary to direct, by Proclamation, that certain persons who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserve, shall continue in Army Service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserve and called out for permanent service, as to Her Majesty may seem expedient" (*The Marquess of Hartington*)

Amendt. to add, at end, "but that this House regrets that Her Majesty's Ministers have thought it right to advise that certain persons, who otherwise would be entitled to be transferred to the Reserve, should continue in Army Service, in connection with a determination to interfere by force of arms in the internal Government of the Soudan, and to engage in military operations in that Country, beyond those required to enable the Troops under the command of Lord Wolseley to withdraw from it" (*Mr. Labouchere*); Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after debate, Question put; A. 19, N. 149; M. 130; (D. L. 36); after short debate, main Question put, and agreed to

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[*cont.*

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Compensation for Improvements (Ireland) Bill (*Colonel Nolan, Mr. Martin, Mr. Biggar, Mr. O'Shea, Mr. Small, Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. Sheil, Mr. Sullivan*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Nov* 19, 12; after short debate, Question put; **A. 32, N. 40; M. 8 (D. L. 18)** [Bill 35]

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill
(*Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Courtney*)
c. Res. [Nov 21] reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Nov* 22
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(*Mr. Waugh, Mr. George Howard, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Ferguson*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *Feb* 19, 896 [Bill 26]

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(*Mr. Rankin, Sir Joseph Bailey, Mr. Biddell, Mr. Duckham*)
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(*Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Attorney General*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 20 [Bill 66]

Corry, Mr. J. P., *Belfast*
Ireland — Queen's Colleges — Report of the Commissioners — Premature Publication, 1758

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(*Mr. James Howard, Mr. Broadhurst*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 2 [Bill 77]

County Courts (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Findlater, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Small*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 3 [Bill 78]

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c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 24 [Bill 70]

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(*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Feb* 20 (No. 17)

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Kassala, Questions, Lord Ellenborough, The Marquess of Salisbury; Answers, Earl Granville *Mar* 3, 1881

Egypt and the Soudan—The Papers
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Egypt and the Soudan
The Vote of Censure, Notices of Resolutions, The Marquess of Salisbury, Lord Wentworth *Feb* 23, 1002
Moved to resolve, "That this House, having taken into consideration the statements that have been made on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, is of opinion that—
(1.) The deplorable failure of the Soudan expedition to attain its object has been due to the undecided councils of the Government and to the culpable delay attending the commencement of operations;
(2.) That the policy of abandoning the whole of the Soudan after the conclusion of military operations will be dangerous to Egypt and inconsistent with the interests of the Empire" (*The Marquess of Salisbury*) *Feb* 26, 1311
Amendt. To leave out from "That," insert "an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should not employ British forces to occupy the Soudan or to prevent the exercise by the Egyptian people of their

[*cont.*

Egypt and the Soudan—cont.
right to select their own government" (*The Lord Wentworth*); after long debate, debate adjourned
Debate resumed *Feb* 27, 1522; after long debate, on Question, that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion? resolved in the affirmative
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Military Co-operation of the Colonies, Question, Mr. W. E. Forster; Answer, Mr. Gladstone; Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor [no reply] *Feb* 20, 923

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Public Prayer for the Troops, Questions, Sir John Hay, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 24, 1173

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Egypt

Moved, "That the Copy presented of further Correspondence respecting the affairs of Egypt (by Command) do lie upon the Table" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Feb* 19, 873; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure

Notice of Motion, Sir Stafford Northcote *Feb* 19, 859; Notice of Amendment, Sir Henry Tyler *Feb* 20, 906; Notices of Amendments, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Mac Iver *Feb* 23, 1020; Notice of Amendment, Lord George Hamilton *Feb* 25, 1310; Notices of Amendments, Mr. Heneage, Mr. C. B. M'Laren *Feb* 26, 1394

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to the Queen, humbly representing to Her Majesty that the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan has involved a great sacrifice of valuable lives and a heavy expenditure without any beneficial result, and has rendered it imperatively necessary in the interests of the British Empire and of the Egyptian people that Her Majesty's Government should distinctly recognise, and take decided measures to fulfil, the special responsibility now incumbent on them to assure a good and stable Government to

[cont.

Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure—cont.

Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to its security" (*Sir Stafford Northcote*) *Feb* 23, 1052

Amendt., to leave out from the first word "That," add "this House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi" (*Mr. John Morley*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Debate adjourned

Debate resumed [Second Night] *Feb* 24, 1193; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Third Night] *Feb* 26, 1425; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Fourth Night] *Feb* 27, 1627; after long debate, Question put; A. 288, N. 302; M. 14; Div. List, A. & N. 1719

Question proposed, "That the words 'This House, while refraining from expressing an opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the Mahdi' be there added" (*Mr. John Morley*)

Amendt. to proposed Amendt., to leave out from "This," add "Government has failed to indicate any policy in reference to Egypt and the Soudan which justifies the confidence of this House or the Country" (*Lord George Hamilton*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c;" after short debate, Question put; A. 112, N. 455; M. 343 (D. L. 34)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Government has failed to indicate any policy in reference to Egypt and the Soudan which justifies the confidence of this House or the Country' be there added;" Question put, A. 277, N. 299; M. 22 (D. L. 35)

Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) Bill (*Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Cochran-Patrick*)

c. Read 2°, after short debate *Dec* 3, 558 [Bill 19]

Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *Dec* 4, 767

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Sexton*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Original Question again proposed, 778; after debate, original Question put, and agreed to; Committee, 796

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again on Saturday;" Question put, and agreed to; Committee—R.P

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c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 20 [Bill 61]

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c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 20 [Bill 59]

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Land Law (*Ireland*) *Act,* 1881 —*Irish Land Commission*
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Ireland—Holdings near Towns
Moved, " That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the tenure on which Houses and Holdings are held in or near towns in Ireland, and the manner in which the improvements of tenants in or near towns are affected by the existing Laws, and if any changes in the existing Law could be now beneficially made" (*Colonel Nolan*) *Mar* 3, 2004 ; after short debate, Question put ; A. 32, N. 33 ; M. 1 (D. L. 39)

Ireland—Nationalist Meetings (*Derry*)
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Feb* 20, To leave out from " That," add " in the opinion of this House, the conduct of those responsible for the action of the Police and Military in Derry was one-sided, tyrannical, and unconstitutional" (*Mr. Sexton*) *v.*, 943 ; Question proposed, " That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put ; A. 59, N. 15 ; M. 44 (D. L. 25)

Ireland—Piers and Harbours
Motion for a Return (*Mr. Thomas Lea*) *Feb* 27, 1726 ; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Ireland—Salmon Fisheries
Moved, " That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the operation of the existing Law regulating Salmon and Trout Fishing in Ireland, and to Report whether any Amendments in the Law are desirable" (*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*) *Feb* 20, 1000 ; Question put, and agreed to

Ireland—State-aided Emigration
Moved, That there be laid before the House—" Return from the Land Commission in Ireland, showing what part of the purchase money of the Kilclooney Estate (bought by the Company of which Mr. Parnell is chairman) was advanced on loan from the Treasury" (*The Lord Oranmore and Browne*) *Feb* 23, 1002 ; after short debate, Motion agreed to

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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Dec* 3 [Bill 48]

Marriages Legalization Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 23 (No. 19)
Read 2ª * *Mar* 2

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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Dec* 3 [Bill 46]

Metropolitan Board of Works (Further Powers) Bill (*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Bryce*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Dec* 2 [Bill 44]

Metropolitan Improvements — Parliament Street
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Metropolitan Railways — District and Metropolitan Railways
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- Public Meetings—Riot at Aston Hall, Birmingham, 1036, 1038

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- Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure, Res. Amendt. 1071, 1098, 1690

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- Charity Commissioners—Scheme for Christ's Hospital, 1902
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    - The Highlands, 622
- Endowed Schools—Milton Abbas School—New Scheme, 135
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Municipal Voters (Relief) Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)
- c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 20 [Bill 64]
- Read 2°, after short debate *Mar* 3, 2014

MUNTZ, Mr. P. H., *Birmingham*
- Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure, Res. 1462

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Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure, Res. 1565

National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Parnell, Colonel Nolan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Healy, Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Dec* 4, 747; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*); after debate, Question put; A. 83, N. 14; M. 69 (D. L. 22)
Debate resumed *Feb* 19, 896; after short debate, Debate further adjourned

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Leading Stokers, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Caine *Mar* 2, 1781
Pay of Stokers, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Caine *Dec* 2, 439
The Royal Marines, Question, Viscount Lewisham; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *Mar* 3, 1905
Time-Expired Men, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Caine *Feb* 26, 1406
Bacon Contract, The, Question, Mr. Deasy; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *Nov* 24, 255; Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith, Sir Edward J. Reed; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey *Feb* 19, 861
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Established Skilled Labourers, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Caine *Mar* 2, 1781
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Portsmouth Dockyard, Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Dr. Lyons, Mr. Stewart Macliver; Answers, Mr. Caine *Dec* 2, 436
The Hand-Drillers at Portsmouth Dockyard, Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *Nov* 24, 249; Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Caine *Feb* 23, 1025

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H.M.S. "Active"—Bursting of a 6-inch Gun Questions, Mr. Carbutt; Answers, Mr. Brand *Mar* 2, 1751
H.M.S.S. "Ajax" and "Agamemnon," Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *Nov* 21, 130; Questions, Mr. Gourley, Sir John Hay; Answers, Sir Thomas Brassey *Nov* 24, 273
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The Troopship "Poonah," Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *Feb* 24, 1177; Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Mr. Caine *Feb* 25, 1309

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Admiralty Intelligence Department, Question, Observations, The Earl of Camperdown; Reply, The Earl of Northbrook *Dec* 5, 835
Armaments, Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *Feb* 20, 906
Progress of Vessels Building, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey *Feb* 20, 907

Navy—State of the Navy
Moved, "That there be laid before this House, Tabular Statement of the ships laid down by the Board of Admiralty since 1880, and Diagram illustrating the armoured and unarmoured tonnage built in Her Majesty's dockyards and by contract; and the total naval expenditure from 1865-66 to 1883-84 inclusive" (*The Earl of Northbrook*) *Dec* 2, 395; after debate, Motion agreed to

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Navy—State of the Navy
- Moved, "That there be laid before this House, a Return respecting the Ships built and building for Her Majesty's Navy during the last four years" (*Sir Thomas Brassey*) *Dec* 2, 448; after long debate, Question put, and agreed to
- Personal Explanation, Sir Donald Currie *Dec* 4, 656

NEWDEGATE, Mr. C. N., *Warwickshire, N.*
- Ireland—Criminal Law—Execution of Joseph Poole, 319, 331
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- Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Motion for Leave, 391
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New Guinea
- *Annexation by Foreign Powers*, Questions, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. Lowther, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice *Feb* 20, 926
- *Negotiations with Germany*, Question, Mr. Coleridge Kennard; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Mar* 3, 1900

New Zealand—The Treaty of Waitangi
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NOLAN, Colonel J. P., *Galway Co.*
- Army—Questions
  - Egyptian Campaign—Promotion of Non-Commissioned Officers and Soldiers, 1618
  - Ordnance Department—Explosion at Shoeburyness, 1621
  - Removal of an Insane Soldier from England to Ireland, 1151
  - Royal Artillery and Engineer Officers—The New Half-Pay Rule, 1617
- Army Reserve Force—Message from Her Majesty, 1795
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  - Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Arrests under Sec. 11—Case of Messrs. Coen and Welby, 1023, 1024
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- Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Res. 940
- Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. 1978
- Supply—Supplementary Estimates, 1884-5—Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, &c. 976
  - Fishery Board in Scotland, &c. 999
  - Patent Office, &c. 996
  - Public Works, &c. in Ireland, 969

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- Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure, Res. 1568

NORTHBROOK, Earl of (First Lord of the Admiralty)
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  - Finance, &c.—The Earl of Northbrook's Report, 24, 26, 69, 71
- Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure, Res. 1331, 1334, 1341, 1342
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NORTHCOTE, Right Hon. Sir S. H., *Devon, N.*
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  - Finance, &c. 1050, 1779;—The Earl of Northbrook's Report, 278
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NORTHCOTE, Mr. H. S., *Exeter*
- Income Tax, 2R. 200, 203
- Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—Boundary Commissioners, 647
- Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), 2R. 700; Comm. 1974, 1977

NORWOOD, Mr. C. M., *Kingston-upon-Hull*
- Board of Trade — Ship Insurance Return (No. 258)—Mr. Mac Iver, M.P., and the President of the Board, 124, 125
- Navy—State of the Navy, 208

Oaths Bill (*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Percy Wyndham, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Noel, Mr. Pennington, Mr. Arthur Elliot*)
- *c.* Res. considered in Committee *Feb* 20, 999; after short debate, Res. agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 62]

O'BRIEN, Sir P., *King's Co.*
- Army Reserve Force—Message from Her Majesty, 1792

O'BRIEN, Mr. W., *Mallow*
- Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll), Comm. 775, 787

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  Ireland—Irish Land Commission—Sittings at Nenagh, 1599, 1600
    Prevention of Crime Act, 1882—Boycotting—Mr. Cusack, 1601

O'Connor, Mr. T. P., *Galway*
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O'Shea, Mr. W. H., *Clare*
  Shannon Navigation, 2R. 1875

O'Sullivan, Mr. W. H., *Limerick Co.*
  Holdings near Towns (Ireland), Motion for a Select Committee, 2007

Otway, Sir A. J. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Rochester*
  Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll), Comm. *cl.* 1, 1866, 1868
  Manchester Ship Canal Bill, 1163, 1165
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  Supply—House of Commons Offices, 982

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  Asia (Central)—Russia and Afghanistan, 1901
  Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts — Foot-and-Mouth Disease—Importation of Foreign Cattle, 871
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Parliament
LORDS—
  Standing Orders Committee—appointed *Mar* 3; List of the Committee, 1881
  Committee of Selection—appointed *Mar* 3; List of the Committee, 1881

  Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod
  Moved, "That the Lords following be named of the Committee" *Dec* 5, 834
  Moved, "To leave out the name of the Marquess of Lansdowne" (*The Earl of Camperdown*); after short debate, on Question? agreed to; original Motion, as amended, agreed to; Committee appointed accordingly

  Private Bills
  Ordered, That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill after *Friday* the 13*th day of March* next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice after *Tuesday* the 12*th day of May* next
  That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after *Tuesday* the 12*th day of May* next
  Ordered, That this order be *printed* and *published*, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall (No. 23) *Feb* 24
  All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Standing Orders Committee unless otherwise ordered *Mar* 3

  Business of the House, Observation, Earl Granville *Nov* 24, 228

  Rules and Orders of the House (Admission of Strangers) — Admission to the House of Lords, Observations, Earl Granville; short debate thereon *Feb* 20, 903; Question, Observations, Lord Oranmore and Browne; Reply, Earl Granville *Feb* 23, 1003

Parliament—Business of the House
  Postponement of Resolutions, Lord Stratheden and Campbell *Nov* 24, 222
  Moved to resolve "That in the event of two or more Lords rising to address the House at the same time, the Lord Chancellor or Chairman of Committees, whichever then presides, shall call on one of them to speak, and the Lord so called upon shall speak, unless the House do order otherwise" (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) *Dec* 4, 585; after short debate, on Question? Cont. 8, Not-Cont. 46: M. 38; resolved in the negative

PARLIAMENT—*cont.*

COMMONS—

Committee of Selection nominated *Feb* 20; List of the Committee, 906
Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Speaker, 906
Ordered, That the Committee of Selection consist of Nine Members; That Mr. Justin M'Carthy be added to the Committee (*Mr. Sexton*) *Mar* 3, 1882

Standing Orders, Select Committee nominated *Feb* 20; List of the Committee, 906
Moved, "That the Select Committee on Standing Orders consist of Twelve Members; That Mr. Edmond Dwyer Gray be added to the Committee" (*Mr. Sexton*) *Mar* 3, 1882; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Public Accounts Committee
Moved, "That the Select Committee on Public Accounts be nominated" (*Mr. Hibbert*) *Mar* 3, 2013; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; List of the Committee

Order
Motions and Questions—Amendments, Notice, Mr. Craig Sellar; Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Dec* 2, 433

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE
Notices of Motions and Orders of the Day
Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion for leave to bring in a Bill for the Redistribution of Seats (*The Marquess of Hartington*) *Dec* 1
Ordered, That the Notice of Motion for a Return of ships in Her Majesty's Navy have precedence of the other Notices of Motions (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Dec* 2
Ordered, That the Orders of the Day be postponed until after the Notice of Motion relating to Egypt and the Soudan (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Feb* 23
Moved, "That the Notices of Motions be postponed until after the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Feb* 24, 1179
After debate, Amendt., after "Motions," insert "except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy) (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*), 1186; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. Gladstone*); Question put; A. 207, N. 46; M. 161 (D. L. 29)
Question put, "That the words 'except the Motion relating to the Royal Irish Constabulary (District Inspector Murphy)' be there inserted;" A. 235, N. 19; M. 216 (D. L. 30)
Main Question again proposed, 1190; after short debate, main Question put; A. 222, N. 19; M. 203 (D. L. 31)
Moved, "That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Egypt and the Soudan have precedence of other Orders of the Day" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Feb* 27, 1623; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

[*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*cont.*

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE
Rule 1 (*Putting the Question*)—Mr. Speaker puts the Question *Feb* 24, 1186; Notice of Amendment, Mr. Sexton *Feb* 26, 1395
Ruling of Mr. Speaker on the 24th ultimo
Entry in the Votes *Mar* 3, 1917
Rule 5 (*Irrelevance or Repetition*)—Mr. W. Redmond directed to discontinue his speech *Feb* 24, 1185
Rule 9 (*Order in Debate*)—Mr. O'Brien suspended from the service of the House *Feb* 24, 1187; The Entry in the Votes, 1192
Suspension of Mr. O'Brien, Questions, Mr. Sexton, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Healy, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Speaker *Feb* 26, 1421

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
Moved, "That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next" (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*); Observations, Lord Randolph Churchill; short debate thereon *Nov* 24, 284; Question, Lord John Manners; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Dec* 2, 446
Moved, "That the House, at its rising on Saturday next, do adjourn till Thursday 19th February" (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) *Dec* 4, 796; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
Moved, "That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Saturday" (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) *Dec* 4, 798; after debate, Question put; A. 43, N. 9; M. 34 (D. L. 23)
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Lord Richard Grosvenor*) *Dec* 6, 843
Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and Mr. Speaker declared that 37 Members only were present
The Sitting was then suspended at five minutes to Two o'clock
The House was adjourned at two minutes after Four o'clock till Thursday 19th February

PRIVATE BUSINESS
Railway Rates and Charges Bills, Question, Mr. Rolls; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Feb* 20, 908;—*Railway Bills*, Question Sir Bernhard Samuelson; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain, 909

THE STANDING COMMITTEES
The Standing Committees on Law and Trade, Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 26, 1417

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS
Questions, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, Lord Richard Grosvenor *Nov* 19, 24; Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith, Sir Joseph Pease; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 20, 72; Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. J. Lowther; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, 75; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Wil-

[*cont.*

Parliament—Commons—*Business of the House and Public Business*—cont.

frid Lawson, Mr. Warton; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 21, 189; Question, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Nov* 22, 221; Ministerial Statement, Mr. Gladstone, 657; Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Feb* 23, 1142;—*Egypt* (*Finance, &c.*)—*The Earl of Northbrook's Report,* Observations, Mr. Gladstone; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Bourke, Lord Randolph Churchill, Baron Henry De Worms; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 20, 69;—*Questions,* Questions, Mr. D. Grant, Sir Alexander Gordon, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Dec* 4, 649;—*The Vote of Censure* (*Sir Stafford Northcote*), Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Onslow; Mr. A. J. Balfour, Sir Trevor Lawrence, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Richard, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Finch-Hatton, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Theodore Fry, Mr. Kenny; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. J. K. Cross, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Hibbert *Feb* 19, 863; Questions, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Onslow; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 20, 931;—*Procedure on the Vote of Censure,* Question, Observations, Sir Stafford Northcote; Reply, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 26, 1420;—*The Amendments on the Vote of Censure,* Questions, Mr. Bryce, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 27, 1622;—*National School Teachers (Ireland) Bill,* Question, Mr. Justin M'Carthy; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Feb* 23, 1021;—*Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill,* Questions, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Courtney; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke, The Marquess of Hartington *Mar* 2, 1783; Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 3, 1911;—*The Registration Bill,* Question, Mr. E. Stanhope; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 3, 1904

MISCELLANEOUS

The Ministry

Illness of the Prime Minister, Personal Explanation, Mr. Warton *Mar* 3, 1885

Resignation of Mr. Courtney, Question, Colonel King-Harman; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Dec* 2, 442

Parliamentary Elections—Conservative "Relief" Tickets, Question, Mr. Jesse Collings; Answer, The Attorney General *Feb* 26, 1409; —*Cost of County Elections,* Question, Mr. H. Tollemache; Answer, The Attorney General *Dec* 4, 624

Parliamentary Papers—Delivery to Members, Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Courtney *Nov* 20, 73

The Conservatives and General Gordon, Questions, Sir Frederick Milner; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Dec* 1, 370

Parliament—House of Lords

Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Nov* 21, To leave out from "That," add "in view of the fact that the Conservative party is able, and has for many years been able, through its permanent majority in the House of Lords, to alter, defeat, or delay legislation, although that legislation has been recommended by the responsible advisers of the Crown, and approved of by the Nation through its elected representatives, it is desirable to make such alterations in the relations of the two Houses of Parliament as will effect a remedy to this state of things" (*Mr. Labouchere*) *v.*, 141; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 145, N. 71; M. 74; Div. List, A. & N. 164

[*cont.*

Parliament—House of Lords

Sat First

Nov 20—The Lord Howard of Glossop, after the death of his father

Feb 19—The Earl of Scarborough, after the death of his father

Feb 26—The Marquess of Cholmondeley, after the death of his grandfather

The Earl Vane (Marquess of Londonderry), after the death of his father

Took the Oath for the First Time

Feb 24—The Lord Bishop of Newcastle

Parliament—House of Commons

New Writs Issued

Nov 19—*For* Scarborough, *v.* William Sproston Caine, esquire, one of the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland

Dec 2—*For* Knaresborough, *v.* Thomas Collins, esquire, deceased

Feb 19—*For* Tipperary County, *v.* Patrick James Smyth, esquire, Secretary to the Loan Fund Board in Ireland

For Gloucestershire (Western Division), *v.* Colonel Robert Nigel Fitzhardinge Kingscote, C.B., one of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues

Feb 20—*For* Mid Somerset, *v.* William Stephen Gore-Langton, esquire, Chiltern Hundreds

New Members Sworn

Nov 20—James Stuart, esquire, *Hackney Borough*

Dec 1—William Sproston Caine, esquire, *Scarborough*

Thomas Sutherland, esquire, *Greenock*

Dec 4—Richard William Blackwood Ker, esquire, *Down County*

Feb 19—Robert Gunter, esquire, *Knaresborough*

Feb 23—John O'Connor, esquire, *Tipperary County*

Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act—Expenses of Candidates

Questions, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Gorst; Answers, The Attorney General *Mar* 2, 1760; Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 3, 1909

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill

Question, Mr. A. R. D. Elliot; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Nov* 24, 280; Observations, Mr. Gladstone, 282; Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir George Campbell, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr. Gorst, Mr. D. Grant, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Tottenham; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Gladstone *Dec* 2, 442; Questions, Mr. Arthur Arnold, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Sir R. Assheton Cross, Dr. Lyons; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Dec* 3, 556

The Boundary Commissioners, Questions, Mr. H. S. Northcote, Mr. H. H. Fowler, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Dec* 4, 647

The Disfranchised Boroughs, Question, Mr. Creemer Clarke; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Dec* 4, 650

Instructions to the Boundary Commissioners, Questions, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Newdegate, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Gorst, Mr. O'Donnell, Sir John Hay, Dr. Cameron, Mr. H. H. Fowler, Mr. Gray; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Gladstone *Dec* 4, 652

Reports of the Boundary Commissioners, Question, Mr. Sydney Buxton; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Feb* 20, 929; Observations, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 2, 1746

Irish Boundary Commissioners, The—Letter of the Bishop of Raphoe, Questions, Mr. Healy, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Feb* 27, 1611

The Irish Boundary Commissioners, Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 2, 1763

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill

Moved, "That the several stages of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, up to, and including the Consideration of the Bill, as amended, have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motions, on every day on which it shall be set down, by the Government, as the first business of the day" (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Feb* 20, 933; after short debate, Question put; A. 223, N. 15; M. 208 (D. L. 24)

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill (*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*)

c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Gladstone*) *Dec* 1, 372 after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 40]

[*cont.*

Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill—cont.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Dec* 4, 658

After debate, Amendt., to leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, the principle of Representation in proportion to Population should be adopted in place of arbitrary figures as a basis, in order to obtain a logical, judicious, and permanent settlement of the question of Redistribution of Seats" (*Sir Henry Tyler) v.,*: Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after further long debate, Question put, and agreed to

Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *Feb* 19, 880; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Committee; Report; as amended, to be printed [Bill 49]; re-committed

Order for Committee (*on re-comm.*) read *Mar* 2, 1806

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power in all cases where an elector is entitled to one vote only, to enable the elector to nominate more than one candidate to whom under certain circumstances that vote might be transferred in the manner indicated by the elector" (*Sir John Lubbock*); after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Gorst*); after further short debate, Motion agreed to

Debate resumed [Second Night] *Mar* 3, 1917; after debate, Question put; A. 31, N. 134; M. 103

Div. List, A. and N. 1937

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert an Amendment that Medical relief shall not disqualify any voter under £12 valuation" (*Mr. Healy*), 1938; after short debate, Question put, and negatived

Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," 1943

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "it is inexpedient that the numbers of this House shall be increased, and, in the opinion of this House, Ireland will be sufficiently represented by ninety Members, and Wales by twenty-five Members" (*Admiral Sir John Hay*); Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Justin M'Carthy*); after further short debate, Question put, and negatived

Original Question again proposed, 2002; after short debate, original Question put; A. 132, N. 25; M. 107

Div. List, A & N. 2002

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker, &c.;" Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Sir Charles W. Dilke*); Question put, and agreed to

Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Woodall, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Coleridge Kennard, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Yorke, Baron Henry De Worms*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Woodall*) *Nov* 19, 23; after short debate, Question put; A. 29, N. 8; M. 21; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 39]

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork City*
Ireland—Criminal Law—Execution of Joseph Poole, 323, 325, 332
Post Office—Cork Mail, 263
Navy—State of the Navy, Motion for a Paper, 536
Parliament—New Rules of Procedure, 1188, 1189, 1190
Vote of Censure and Business of the House, 868
Parliament—Orders of the Day, Res. 1625

PATRICK, Mr. R. W. COCHRAN-, *Ayrshire N.*
Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll), 2R. 560

Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881—*Licences to Carry Arms—Case of James Lord*
Questions, Mr. Biggar; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Feb* 27, 1598; *Mar* 3, 1897

Peasant Proprietary and Acquisition of Land by Occupiers Bill (*Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. George Palmer, Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Dec* 1 [Bill 43]

PEASE, Sir J. W., *Durham, S.*
Parliament—Business of the House, 72
Private Bill Legislation, 2R. Amendt. 1276, 1309, 1520

PEASE, Mr. A., *Whitby*
Excise Licences—Railway Refreshment Rooms, 627
West India Islands — Reported Firing on Coolies at Trinidad, 608

PEDDIE, Mr. J. DICK-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*
West India Colonies—Trinidad and British Guiana—Finance, 263

PEEL, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* SPEAKER, The)

PEEL, Right Hon. Sir R., *Huntingdon*
Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure, Res. 1475, 1481, 1482, 1483, 1486, 1487

PICTON, Mr. J. A., *Leicester Bo.*
Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure, Res. 1119
India—The Covenanted Civil Service, 1768
[*cont.*

PICTON, Mr. J. A.—*cont.*
Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Motion for Leave, 393
Vaccination Acts, (Leicester and other Towns), 1395

PLAYFAIR, Right Hon. Sir Lyon, *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
Private Bill Legislation, 2R. 1300

Pollution of Rivers Bill [Bill 34]
(*Mr. Hastings, Earl Percy, Colonel Walrond*)
c. 2R. *Nov* 21, 203; after short debate, [House counted out]

Poor Law (England and Wales)—Roman Catholics in Workhouses—Right of Attending Mass out-doors — The Sheffield Board of Guardians
Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. George Russell *Nov* 24, 264

Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) Bill
(*The Lord President*)
l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *Nov* 20, 26; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª (No. 6)
Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee" (*The Marquess of Waterford*); after further short debate, Motion agreed to
Select Committee nominated *Nov* 21; List of the Committee, 120
Feb 23, Earl of Milltown *added*
Feb 24, Lord Sudeley *added*

POST OFFICE (*Miscellaneous Questions*)
Acceleration of Mails to Scotland, Questions, Mr. Craig-Sellar, Mr. Barran, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Harrington; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Feb* 27, 1608
Contracts—The Mail Service to Cyprus—The Peninsular and Oriental Company, Question, Mr. Marriott; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Dec* 4, 632
Despatch of Sunday Letters, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Feb* 23, 1039
Parcel Post to Egypt for Soldiers serving in that Country, Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Feb* 24, 1162
Postage Stamps, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Dec* 4, 618
Telegraph Department—Press Messages, Question, Mr. Ecroyd; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Dec* 4, 626

Post Office Sites Bill
(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Mr. Hibbert*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 26 [Bill 72]

POWER, Mr. J. O'Connor, *Mayo*
Ireland—Manufacturing and Productive Industries, 181

POWER, Mr. P. J., *Waterford Co.*
Ireland—Questions
Criminal Law—Execution of Joseph Poole, 336
Manufacturing and Productive Industries, 179
Royal Irish Constabulary—12 & 13 *Will.* IV., Sec. 12—Extra Police, Co. Waterford, 267
National School Teachers (Ireland), 2R. 765
Parliament—Adjournment of the House, 807

POWER, Mr. R., *Waterford City*
Salmon (Weekly Close Time) (Ireland), Nomination of Committee, 1900

Prevention of Crime (*Ireland*) *Act*, 1882
Application to Cases arising from Party Riots in the North of Ireland, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Dec* 1, 345
Arrests under Section 11—*Case of Messrs. Coen and Welby*, Questions, Colonel Nolan; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Feb* 23, 1023
Boycotting—Mr. Cusack, Questions, Mr. John O'Connor; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman; Question, Mr. Sexton [no reply] *Feb* 27, 1601
Extra Police Tax at Currans, Co. Kerry, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Nov* 24, 236
Extra Police, Co. Mayo, Questions, Mr. Kenny, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Dec* 4, 629
Police Protection at Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo, Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Nov* 24, 247
Police Protection at Kilmoon, Co. Clare, Question, Mr. Kenny; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Nov* 24, 244
Police Protection at Swanlinbar, Co. Cavan, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Nov* 24, 251
Renewal, Questions, Mr. Lewis, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Speaker; Question, Mr. Mac Iver [no reply] *Feb* 23, 1047
The Tubbercurry Secret Inquiry—Joseph Wall, Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Dec* 2, 431

Prevention of Crimes Amendment Bill [H.L.] (*The Earl of Milltown*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Feb* 24 (No. 20)
Read 2ª * *Mar* 3

Prisons (*England and Wales*)
Executions at Lincoln Gaol, Question, Mr. Ruston; Answer, Mr. H. H. Fowler *Mar* 3, 1892
Failure of the Execution of John Lee at Exeter (*the Babbicombe Murder*), Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Feb* 24, 1155
[See title *Law and Justice* (*England and Wales*)

Private Bill Legislation Bill [Bill 25]
(*Mr. Sellar, Mr. Davey, Mr. Raikes, Sir Lyon Playfair*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Feb* 25, 1264
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "whilst this House is prepared to take such steps as may be needful to strengthen its own Committees sitting on Private Bills, or by arrangement with the other House of Parliament, to refer opposed Private Bills to Committees consisting of Members of both Houses of Parliament, and thus obviate the present cost to promoters and opponents of having to appear before Committees of both Houses of Parliament, it is unwilling to delegate its legislative functions to paid Judges or tribunals" (*Sir Joseph Pease*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 58, N. 160; M. 102 (D. L. 32)
Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after short debate, Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *Feb* 26, 1520; Question again proposed, "That those words be there added;" Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Healy*); after short debate, Motion agreed to

Private Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) Bill
(*Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Mayne, Mr. Dillwyn Mr. Dawson, Mr. Richard Power*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 20 [Bill 60]

Public Expenditure
The late and present Government, Personal Explanation, Mr. Edward Clarke *Nov* 21, 140
The Select Committees on, Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith, Lord George Hamilton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer *Feb* 24, 1178

Public Health Acts Amendment (Improvement Expenses) Bill (*Mr. Dodds, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Arnold Morley*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 27 [Bill 76]

Public Meetings
Meeting on the Victoria Embankment—Speech of Mr. H. M. Hyndman, Questions, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. O'Brien; Answers, Sir William Harcourt *Feb* 20, 918
The Riot at Aston Hall, Birmingham, Question, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answer, The Attorney General *Nov* 20, 64; Questions, Sir Frederick Milner, Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Onslow; Answers, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Speaker *Feb* 23, 1036;—*Speech of Mr. Chamberlain*, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Feb* 24, 1170
Prohibition of Public Meetings and Processions, Question, Mr. Marum; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Feb* 24, 1166

Public Offices, The New—The War Office and Admiralty — Messrs. Leeming's Designs
  Question, The Earl of Wemyss; Answer, Lord Sudeley *Nov* 24, 222; Questions, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Warton, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answers, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, 269; Question, Observations, Lord Lamington; Reply, Lord Sudeley *Nov* 25, 337; Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, Mr. Herbert Gladstone *Feb* 23, 1030

Public Works Loans Commissioners — Railway Mortgages
  Question, Sir Hervey Bruce; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *Mar* 3, 1910

Puleston, Mr. J. H., *Devonport*
  Egypt (Finance, &c.), 932
  Estimates—Vote of Credit for the Soudan Expedition, 1782
  Navy—Engineer Officers of the Navy, 1160, 1161
  Navy—State of the Navy, Motion for a Paper, 531
  Peace of Europe — Diminution of Armaments, 651

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Bill
  Question, The Earl of Donoughmore; Answer, Lord Carlingford *Nov* 20, 38
  Legislation, Question, Mr. T. A. Dickson; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Feb* 26, 1399

Queen Anne's Bounty Fund
  Question, Mr. St. Aubyn; Answer, Mr. H. H. Fowler *Mar* 2, 1756

Raikes, Right Hon. H. C., *Cambridge University*
  Parliament—Standing Committees on Law and Trade, 1417
  Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Motion for Leave, 388; 2R. 722; Comm. 885, 1963
  Private Bill Legislation, 2R. 1297

Railway Bills — Railway Rates and Charges
  Proposed Legislation, Question, Mr. Rolls; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Dec* 2, 438
  Petitions presented, Sir Walter B. Barttelot *Mar* 3, 1885

Rankin, Mr. J., *Leominster*
  Emigration to the Colonies—Industrial Schools, 920

Read, Mr. Clare S., *Norfolk, W.*
  Contagious Diseases (Animals) — Foot-and-Mouth Disease—Outbreak in Nottinghamshire, 281
  Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Motion for Leave, 386

Redesdale, Earl of (Chairman of Committees)
  Metropolitan Improvements — Parliament Street, 1144
  Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, Appointment of Select Committee, 834, 835
  Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 588
  Representation of the People, Comm. 38, 339

Redmond, Mr. J. E., *New Ross*
  Nationalist Meetings (Derry), Res. 963, 964
  Parliament—Business of the House, 931
  Parliament—Orders of the Day, Res. 1179, 1180

Redmond, Mr. W. H. K., *Wexford*
  Army Reserve Force—Message from Her Majesty, 1789, 1792
  Egypt and the Soudan—Vote of Censure, Res. 1135
  Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll), Comm. 769, 793
  Ireland—Questions
    Criminal Law—Execution of Joseph Poole, 332
    Fishery Piers and Harbours—Proposed Pier at Moville, Co. Donegal, 46, 47
    Irish Land Commission—Court Valuers—Mr. J. Haughton, 439, 440, 441
    Public Meetings — Murrintown Meeting, (Proclamations), 1399, 1400
  National School Teachers (Ireland), 2R. 758, 761, 762
  Parliament—Adjournment of the House, 818, 822
  Parliament—Orders of the Day, Res. 1185;—New Rules of Procedure, *ib*
  Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution), Comm. 1989, 1996, 1999

Reed, Sir E. J., *Cardiff*
  Navy—Questions
    Armour of Ships of War, 1159, 1160
    Designs — Unarmoured Ships — Vote of Censure, 1752, 1753;—New Designs for Ships, 1415
    Engineer Officers of the Navy, 1160
  Navy—State of the Navy, Motion for a Paper, 499

Registration (Occupation Voters) Bill
(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Attorney General*) *Feb* 20, 1000; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* [Bill 63]

Representation of the People Act, 1884—*Registration of Voters (Ireland)*
  Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Feb* 23, 1026

Representation of the People Bill
  The Redistribution Scheme, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Causton

[*cont.*

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l. Presented; read 1ª * *Nov* 24 (No. 10)
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c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Feb* 19 [Bill 54]
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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Feb* 19 [Bill 55]

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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Dec* 1 [Bill 41]

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c. Committee *; Report *Nov* 19 [Bill 37]
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l. Read 1ª * (*Lord FitzGerald*) *Nov* 21 (No. 8)
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Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Camperdown*)
l. Presented; read 1ª* *Feb* 24 (No. 21)

Waterworks Clauses Act (1847) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Daniel Grant, Mr. Torrens, Mr. Sclater-Booth, Mr. Arthur Cohen, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence, Baron Henry De Worms*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *Feb* 19, 886 [Bill 7]

Waterworks (Local Authorities) Bill
(*Mr. Dodds, Mr. Barran, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Coddington, Mr. Slagg*)
c. Ordered; read 1°* *Feb* 27 [Bill 75]

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Mr. R. Barnes, Collector at Warrington, Question, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Hibbert *Mar* 2, 1762
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Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty, for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, the sum of £2,049,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom
Resolution reported *Nov* 22

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West India Colonies—Trinidad and British Guiana—Finance
Question, Mr. Dick-Peddie ; Answer, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Nov* 24, 263

West India Islands
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Westminster Abbey (*Restoration*)
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Westminster Hall (*Restoration*)
Moved, "That the Committee on Westminster Hall (Restoration) have leave to sit and proceed, notwithstanding any Adjournment of the House" (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*) *Dec* 4 ; Motion agreed to

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WOODALL, Mr. W., *Stoke-on-Trent*
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Women's Suffrage Bill (*The Lord Denman*)
l. Presented ; read 1^{a} * *Mar* 2 (No. 27)

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Read 2° ; after further short debate, Committee ; Report ; read 3°
l. Read 1^{a} * (*Lord FitzGerald*) *Dec* 4 (No. 14)
Read 2^{a} ; after short debate, Committee negatived ; read 3^{a} *Dec* 5, 833
Royal Assent *Dec* 6 [48 *Vict.* c. 4]

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SPEECH OF MR. W. E. FORSTER, FEBRUARY 27,

VOL. CCXCIV., *PAGE* 1687.

IN the report of the above Speech the following literal errors occur, which, in one instance at least, materially affect the sense:—

Page 1687, line 19, "*thereto*" should read "*though.*"

Page 1694, line 55, "*a stable*" should read "*an orderly.*"

Page 1696, line 15, "*had thought*" should read "*had not thought.*"

Page 1696, line 17, "*as he*" should read "*who.*"

Page 1696, line 42, "*earnestness*" should read "*great earnestness.*"

Page 1697, line 19, "*avowed policy*" should read "*this avowed policy.*"

END OF VOLUME CCXCIV., AND SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1884-5.

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